

LETTERS OF J.C. PHILPOT



J. C. PHILPOT

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LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1831 - 1834)

September 7, 1831.

My dear William Tiptaft,—I trust you will deliberate much and long, and seek much the direction of the Spirit, before you venture on the step you meditate of resigning your living. You are placed in a very important station, and, according to your own testimony, have many opportunities of usefulness. You say your congregation is undiminished, that many come to hear you from distant parts, and that you have many spiritual hearers. You have no wish to remain for the sake of the 'loaves and fish', and would willingly give up your house and furniture and live in any obscure place that you might be placed in. All those who have left the Church agree in this, that a man should have a clear direction from the Spirit, and that if he leaves it without sufficient grounds, and seeing his way clearly, he will repent of it. Your eyes are partially open to see its defects, and most of your present intimates have either left her communion, or are dissatisfied with what they see in her. All this works on your mind and perplexes you.

Now, a good deal of what is merely carnal may here influence your mind. Your objections may arise, not from the teachings and leadings of the Spirit, but may be merely the workings of the flesh and the temptations of Satan, who would gladly see you removed from your present sphere of usefulness. I do not say you may not be under the leadings of the Spirit, but I say they should be very manifest and clear, much more so than they now seem to be, before you should take so important a step. My dear friend, do nothing rashly. Seek only to be led and taught of God. Cease from man—even spiritual men. They cannot direct you in such difficult circumstances. I would not wish you to stay a moment, if you were really led of the Spirit to leave the Church; but I am afraid of your acting on the suggestion of others, or from feelings merely carnal. The flesh, you know, is incredibly changeable, and can work just as well one way as another. It may work to keep you in, and it may work to turn you out. All I would say is, seek earnestly the direction of the Spirit, and do not move until you see your way clearly, either by inward light and manifestation, or outward providence. I think the Bishop will not bear with you much longer, and then you will see your way clearer.

You may think me carnal, and so on, but I cannot be wrong in advising you to seek earnestly direction from the Lord, and not to move without it. It will be a heavy blow for Sutton and its vicinity if you leave. I feel very sorry to think that many who now can hear you will not then be able, and I think, too,

of Stadham. May the Lord guide and direct you. Do not act precipitately, or from merely carnal feeling, but wait to have your way very clearly made out.

I hope you will go over to Stadham, before you go away for a time. Can't you go over the day this reaches you? it is the usual lecture-night. I could wish that Brenton had more the gift of preaching, and could speak more to the comfort and edification of the people. His sermons are too dry and abstract, too much the reflections of his own mind, and need simplicity of statement and application. They are good and true as far as they go, but they lack that energy and speaking to the heart, and suiting it to the cares and needs of the hearers, which make preaching profitable. They require too much attention to follow, and a mind in some degree imbued with the truth, and able to catch it when obscurely stated, to be generally useful. I am thankful, however, for the seasonable help the Lord has sent me in him, and feel a confidence in him which I could not have done in another. Besides which, I trust the Lord will teach him, and apply the truth with such power to his heart, that he will be constrained to speak it with power to others. Preaching without book, too, will, I think, be useful in leading him to greater simplicity of statement, and bringing him out of that essay style into which he has fallen.

I fear I shall not be able to comply with the wishes of the Stadham people in taking a part of the service. In the first place, I need rest, especially during the winter, when each cold affects my chest; and, secondly, if I were sufficiently strong, I would not think it right to interfere with Brenton. I have left him there to be in my place, which he has kindly consented to occupy; and if I were to return, of course the whole would seem to revert to me, and he be only my assistant. I think it best to leave him in sole charge, and am thankful I can do it so much to my own satisfaction. His visits and conversation, and his lectures, perhaps may be more profitable than his preaching, and it may lead the children of God to pray for him, and so be beneficial to their souls and his.

I was much pleased with a little note from Mrs. T., in which she expressed herself as thankful for Brenton's being there, and seemed to imply this was the general feeling. I am anxious to know all about them. When you go over, make a point of seeing some of them, and let me know how their souls fare. I am glad Mr. — has come to hear you. There seems something like a shaking there. Few have, I believe, abused you more. His conversation was a web of oaths. I rejoice that Husband and you are so intimate. Your preaching at S. M. would, I am sure, give offence. The Pharisees can bear the Law better than the Gospel, and even the mild Husband now gives offence, and will do so more and more.

Miss — is, I fear, something like the robin spoken of in the "Pilgrim's Progress," who can eat sometimes grains of wheat and sometimes worms and spiders. I am quite sick of modern religion; it is such a mixture, such a medley, such a compromise. I find much, indeed, of this religion in my own heart, for it suits the flesh well; but I would not have it so, and grieve it should be so. We sadly need stirring up here. It is a trying situation to live altogether without spiritual society, and more worldly company comes to this

house than is profitable to me, as I cannot altogether refuse to enter occasionally into their conversation.

I think of leaving about the 16th or 17th, and going to London, and thence to Petersfield. I cannot yet decide where I shall go to spend the winter. I wish to go to Plymouth, and think it very likely I may decide to go there. The back of the Isle of Wight would be better for my health; but I would have no fellowship there, and no opportunities of hearing anything profitable. At Plymouth I would find many friends, and have the opportunity of hearing the word. My sister is now staying at Stoke. The climate, I am told, is very damp and rainy, which is bad for me. I trust I shall be guided right. I heard Fowler preach at the little "Refuge" in Deal. Old John Kent, the author of "Gospel Hymns," was there, and I had the pleasure of shaking hands with him. He had heard and drunk tea with Bulteel about three weeks before. I do not think it likely I shall speak to the people at Deal; I do not see my way clear. I do not wish to give up Stadham and forget my licence, which I should in that case do. I trust I am not unwilling, should the Lord please, to forsake worldly honors and gain for Him; but I must see my way clear.

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I shall be glad to hear from you shortly again, and let me hear something about my Stadham people. I am sure Brenton would be glad for you to speak to the people, but on Tuesday night, being harvest-time, he was most likely apprehensive of not getting a congregation. May the Lord teach you out of His Holy Word, and make your ministry profitable to all His dear children.

Believe me to be, with true affection,
Yours in the Lord,
J. C. P.

September 23, 1831.

My dear Mrs. Rackham,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. I take the opportunity of my friend and brother Mr. Tiptaft's meeting me in London to send you a few lines to express my remembrance of and affection towards you in the Lord. I trust, during the season that has past since I saw you, that you have been enabled to trust in Him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. I hope the Lord has shown you more and more of His cleansing blood and justifying righteousness, and given you faith to look to the one and lay hold of the other. To feel our deep need of forgiveness and reconciliation is God's gift; to see that there is a Savior provided, who by His life and death put away sin and brought in everlasting righteousness, is God's gift; to lay hold of and believe on this Savior, so precisely suited to our lost and condemned state, is God's gift.

The whole plan and scheme of redemption in its first devising, after-execution, and individual application to the heart and conscience of the child of God is, from first to last, the work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is a truth of which we should be deeply and firmly persuaded. We must learn and feel our lost and helpless state as sprung from our Covenant Head,

Adam, by natural generation. We must be deeply and inwardly persuaded that we are utterly dead and powerless in consequence of this original sin of Adam, in which we are involved by being in him at the time of his fall, and that we have neither will nor power to see, relish, or believe the things of the Spirit of God.

This conviction, applied by the Holy Spirit to our hearts, will stir us up to earnest prayer that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened, that we may have the truth, as it is in Jesus, applied to our souls with power and the Holy Spirit, and much assurance, and that we may have an experimental divine faith in the Person and work of the Son of God wrought in our souls. I trust the Lord has shown you this, and thus stirred you up to true and earnest prayer that you may have the truth brought home to your soul by the Holy Spirit, and are desirous to experience all the powerful teachings of the Lord the Spirit, though the word of God in His hands should even, as in the Virgin Mary (Luke 2:35), be a sword to pierce your own soul, and divide asunder soul and spirit, and the joints and marrow, by discerning and revealing the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12). I mean by this that through grace you are willing to have the secret chambers of your heart laid open to your view, and be stripped of your own righteousness, that you may learn only to glory in the Lord. We must come to this, if we hope to be saved, and earnestly seek the Spirit's teachings, whatever sharp lessons He may teach us, and however He may humble us in our own sight.

Through mercy, my health is much recovered, though my chest continues weak, and is soon irritated by exertion; my general health is much restored, and I feel stronger and less nervous than I did at Stadham. The sea air has, through God's blessing, braced me, and, my chest excepted, I feel nearly as well, though not so strong, as before this attack. I was forced, by a concurrence of circumstances, to take an afternoon service a few Sundays back, as if I had not done so the church must have been either shut up, or served by a carnal minister. I was much helped at the time, and preached for nearly three-quarters of an hour, but suffered from it afterwards, my chest being weak and heated for two or three days. I trust that, during the interval which I have allowed myself for rest, it may please the Lord so far to restore me as to allow me to preach once more in the pulpits I have, through His mercy and providence, occupied among you.

I sincerely hope that during that time the Lord may teach and bless your present minister to the edification of many. Fail not to pray for him, that the Lord may speak in him and by him to the hearts of His people, and furnish him with food suitable to the weak and to the strong. I look to the prayer-meeting as a means of great good in the Lord's hands. May He give a spirit of grace and supplication to its members, and lead them privately and publicly to intercede with Him for a blessing for minister and people. Those who do not pray aloud in these meetings may plead earnestly with God, both at home and when assembled together, and these prayers He who searches the hearts will answer, if offered up by the Spirit who dwells in them.

Pray also that your own eyes, and the eyes of the church at Stadham and Chisleton, may be enlightened to discern the devices of Satan, and that that cruel wolf may not be allowed to rend the sheep. A praying church and a

watchful church must flourish. When it becomes cold and lukewarm, when prayer is restrained and it ceases to be watchful, then the great adversary gains an advantage, and everything that is miserable creeps in, to the grief of God's children, to the joy of the world, and to the destruction of souls. Do not be unmindful that you have a God to glorify by your holy life and conversation, especially as being the mother and mistress of a family, before whom you should let your light shine, that they may see there is a truth, reality, and power in religion, and that it is not a mere change of opinions.

I was glad to hear Mr. B— has borrowed a religious book of Mr. Brenton. In your conversations with him I would have you avoid all disputes about election and such doctrines, and speak rather of such subjects as our natural sinfulness and condemnation, the necessity of having Christ for our perfect Savior, the efficacy of His blood and His blood alone, and the need of embracing this by faith, together with the necessity of being born again and being taught of God. Such subjects will either be so distasteful that he will cease to speak upon them, or will be of use to him. Disputes about election will only harass your own mind, and stir up in him a mere spirit of carnal reasoning which will only do him harm. Seek wisdom from the Lord to direct you, and speak in His strength only, and not your own. But a holy, self-denying, and separated life is the best preacher.

I trust that, with respect to your temporal concerns, the Lord is teaching you the meaning of that text, Matt. 6:33, 34. Read the whole of that chapter, from verse 19 to the end, and seek of the Lord faith to believe and feel it in all its truth and power. Read also what the Apostle says to Timothy, 1 Tim. 6:6-16. Observe how God there tells us to be content with food and clothing, and declares that godliness with contentment is great gain. See what he says of those that desire to be rich; how that they err from the faith, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows, and bids the man of God flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness; and bids him keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is much instruction in these words if the Lord is pleased to seal it home on your heart and make it a principle of action. Let me advise you, my dear Mrs. Rackham, to be much in reading the Scriptures. Be like the Bereans, and search the Scriptures daily, Acts 17:11, and like David, Psalm 119:11, 97, 105, 140, 162, where he expresses his delight in God's word. See also the character given of the righteous man, Psalm 1 verse 2. Pray earnestly that the word may be wrought into your heart, that its precepts, truths, and promises may be the comfort of your days and nights, the motive of your actions, and the guide to all your ways. Remember that the Lord has helped you through many afflictions, and turned them into blessings; and so He will be ever with you, to keep, guide, and bless you. Only trust in Him.

Do not hanker after this wretched world, or desire its honors and riches for yourself or your children. Give them up to the Lord, and ask Him to put them into such situations of life as may be for their spiritual good and for His glory; and be willing that they should be poor and despised, if it be His will. Seek also earnest blessings for the church where you live and the Church of Christ in general, that the Lord may pour out His blessing richly upon it. Seek for a spirit of humility, faith, and love, and avoid everything that may

produce contrary feelings in the brethren. Set your face against everything that is ungodly and profane, wherever you may meet it; and in the regulation and management of your own household act as a Christian mistress and a Christian mother. A Gospel practice is the only outward proof of a Gospel faith, and wherever the principles of God's word are wrought into the heart they must and will produce the fruits of holiness and godliness in the life and conversation.

I hope Elizabeth is able still to attend the Sunday-school, and that her class is improving. I would not wish her to set the children too long lessons, as I would sooner they should learn accurately and well, than much. And I would wish her to consider the different ages and capacities of the children, and set them their tasks accordingly. I do not like that they should learn to hate school, and what they are there taught, as it may have an unhappy influence all their days; and the way to teach them to love school and their teachers is by giving them to learn what they are able to accomplish easily, and by treating them with the greatest kindness and gentleness, and yet due strictness and severity, if needful.

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend in the Lord Jesus,
J. C. P.

November 17, 1831.

My dear Mrs. Rackham,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you through the love of God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. I thank my God that the word which I preached among you did not return unto God void, but was accompanied with the power of the Spirit to the heart of some, and among them, I trust, to you also. This gives me confidence in writing to you, and I hope I shall be enabled to say something which may profit and comfort you. It grieves me to think that the sheep of Christ among you should not be walking in that light and comfort which is their portion and privilege. It has pleased our heavenly Father, who does all things in wisdom and love, to unfit me for that work which once I performed among you, and which it is my desire again to commence when it shall be His will. But why should you not still enjoy what you once enjoyed? Christ is the same, and His Spirit is the same, and the word of God is the same. I am afraid the children of God have been looking at times past too much to the instrument, and not been looking simply to Christ, that they might be filled out of the fullness that is laid up in Him. And, therefore, I trust God is teaching them this lesson, to cease from man, and to wait only upon Him.

My desire is to labor again in the vineyard where I labored in times past, and I trust in God's good time I shall be allowed once more to go in and out among you. God has wonderfully restored my health since I left Stadham, though I am by no means so strong as I was before my illness, and am obliged to continue indoors when the weather is at all cold. Sir William Knighton discovered, I think, the cause of my illness under God, and said it arose entirely from over-exertion and exhaustion of the vital energy. By rest, through God's mercy, it is recovering; and here, I think, we may see the good hand of God in afflicting me with illness at the time He did. If I had gone on

as before, most likely when illness came my constitution would have sunk under it. I trust now, by resting some little time longer, I shall have recovered sufficiently to labor again in the vineyard of the Lord. By this dispensation also God may be teaching His children at Stadham, Chisleton, and Ascot to depend more simply on Him for His teaching.

We know what the children of Israel said in the wilderness (Numb. 21:5), "Our soul loaths this light bread," and so, perhaps, where the children of God hear the sound of the Gospel so continually, they may become indifferent to it, and not receive it with that sweetness and power which they once did; and God has various ways of training up His children, and His ways are most wise, deep, and unsearchable. Jacob once said (Gen. 42:36), "All these things are against me," when those very things were working together for his good. But afterwards, when he saw his beloved son Joseph (Gen. 46:30), he could say, "Now let me die, since I have seen your face, because you are yet alive"; and again (48:11), "I had not thought to see your face; and lo, God has showed me also your children." And thus it is now; we cannot see the wisdom of God's dealings at the time, but can afterwards look back and see (Psalm 107:7), "He has led us forth by the right way, that we might go to a city of habitation." "Those that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

The advice which I would give to the children of God at Stadham, etc., is to search the Scriptures much for themselves, and be much in prayer for themselves and for each other. If they cannot derive that benefit which they would wish from their present minister, let them pray much for him, that God would teach him, and speak in him and by him to their souls. You may call to mind that when I left Stadham for a little while in May, 1830, the children of God were much in prayer that when I returned I might be enabled to preach more to their comfort and edification. I think they acknowledged at the time that the Lord, in a measure at least, heard their prayers. Let them now pray in the same way for their present minister, and the Lord will hear and answer. I really do not know where I could get a more satisfactory person. You all know how much trouble and anxiety it cost me, when Mr. T— left, to procure the aid of anyone even from Sunday to Sunday, and scarcely any except my dear friend Mr. G— preached to the edification of the saints. You should consider how much worse you might be off, and probably would be, should the Lord remove Dr. P—. I don't mean, my dear Mrs. Rackham, when I say "you," to admonish you in particular, but I speak to all the people of God who love to hear the sound of the Gospel. I believe that you love the truth, whoever preaches it, and desire to receive the engrafted word with meekness and humility.

In all your various trials, both personal and domestic, and what regards the Church of God, put in practice the command of the apostle, Philip. 4:6. If you do this, you will find the promise in the seventh verse made good, "And the peace of God," etc. Pray for yourself, for your family, for the children of God around you, for your present minister, for all saints (Ephesians 6:18), and for me also—that my health, if the Lord will, may be restored, and that I may come again to you, when I do come, "in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:29). Pray that I may come unto you with joy, by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed (Rom. 15:32). Seek to be guided in all things by the Spirit; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of

God, they are the sons of God." Meditate upon James 1:5; John 16:13-15; 14:13, 14; Luke 11:13; 18:1; Prov. 2:3-6; 3:5, 6; Jer. 29:11-13.

I could fill my letter with sweet and comfortable passages, as, indeed, the Word of God is full of comfort and instruction. "Only believe; all things are possible to him that believes." If you are in trouble about temporal concerns, read over, and pray upon, Matt. 6:25-34, and Jer. 49:11, and ask the Lord for faith to believe and live upon these promises. The Lord seems to have helped you in inducing Mr. and Mrs. B.— to continue with you. The Lord, in sending bread, does not promise there shall be no trials and crosses with it. The bread is to be eaten in the sweat of the face (Gen. 3:19), and so those that do not labor bodily for it must often labor for it in their mind. We are obliged sometimes to "eat our bread by weight and with care" (Ezek. 4:16); but, if God wills, our countenances, if we eat only vegetables, "may appear fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat of the portion of the king's food" (Daniel 1:12, 15).

With respect to placing E— with Mrs. W—, I would have you do what you think right in your conscience. Do not for temporal advantages do anything which you think might hurt her soul. But I am not sufficiently acquainted with all the circumstances to give my advice. Seek the will of God in the matter, and act as you think right in His sight, without regard to man.

Remember me very kindly to your nieces, the Miss R—s. I trust they are cleaving to the Lord through evil report and good report, and glorifying their Savior in their life and conversation, separating themselves in heart and spirit from the world. The greatest kindness that you could do them is to tell them where they are wrong, if you see anything of that kind in them. "In many things," you know, "we all offend." Give my Christian love also to Mrs. L—, and tell her to look to Jesus for strength in all things; and let her light shine in that wicked neighborhood where she dwells, that they may take knowledge of her that she has been with Jesus. Remember me also very affectionately to Mrs. L— and Sally N—, and bid them watch over their hearts and tongues where they live, that they may not speak unadvisedly with their lips. May the Lord comfort and teach them, and make them shine as lights in the world. Give my Christian love also to Sally and Nanny H—. I trust the Lord is with them, to comfort them, and to say unto their souls, "I am your salvation."

Your mind may, perhaps, be troubled by what you hear from Oxford about Mr. Bulteel's change of views. Let not that trouble you. You know what truth God formerly blessed to your soul; hold it fast. Remember you are a poor sinner who can only be saved by Jesus, and that the promise is given to those that believe in Him, that they shall be saved. Cleave simply to this, that His blood cleanses from all sin, and let nothing drive you from that. Avoid all questions and strifes of words, and look simply to Him that died on Calvary, and is now risen again to make intercession for His people, and to appear a second time for their salvation. I trust I do not forget any of the children of God, though I may not now mention them. I have spoken to you of those whom you chiefly know; but I send my love to all.

Believe me to be,
Yours in true affection,
J. C. P.

November 28, 1831.

My dear Tiptaft,—When Brenton made me the offer of my coming to Stadham, it seemed to me, at first, the very opening I had been desiring and praying for. But since I have considered the subject more maturely, I have thought it best not to accept his offer. My desire is to do just what God pleases in the matter, and to be willing to go or stay just as He thinks best. At the same time, I find myself counting the weeks to next spring, and feel somewhat of what Laban said to Jacob, "You greatly longest after your father's house." But I think, all things considered, I am doing what is best in staying here. Though it has pleased God to restore me to much better health, yet it is not so far established as to enable me to face the fatigues and cold of the winter, and I could not think of turning Brenton out of his lodgings at this time of the year. Besides which, I trust I am not altogether without use here. If I did not think Brenton a child of God, and one who had the spiritual welfare of my people at heart, I would not stay away from them a day; but though he may not preach with power, or to much edification, I fully believe he declares the truth. I at times feel very anxious about them, and trust it may yet be the Lord's will that I may return to them.

I am glad you are not likely to leave the neighborhood of Sutton, as I believe you have been made useful there. You should take care to have your chapel sufficiently large to hold a good number, as it is likely to be much crowded. This step of yours is not likely to meet with the approbation of the vicar of Abingdon, nor, indeed, of many of our friends in your neighborhood; but if the Lord gives you His blessing, you need not mind what is said or thought. . .

To make light of "experience" cannot be right, for all the power of religion consists in it, and I fully believe, what you have often said, that where there is no experience there is no religion. I am sure, for my own part, that the only time when the truths of Scripture influence my mind and practice, is when they are felt experimentally in the heart; and, I am quite sure, if I knew more of the mighty operation of the Spirit in my soul, I would walk much more happily, humbly, and consistently. I fully agree to all you say about the work of grace in the soul, and earnestly desire the gift of the Spirit, that I may feel more and more deeply the things of Christ. God has given us His Son; in addition to that, He has promised to give His Spirit, to take the things of Christ, and show them to us; and if the possession of the Spirit does not distinguish the believer from the unbeliever, I know not what does.

Though it may be a trial, it is perhaps best for you to have no friend with whom you may readily consult upon the matters that interest you, as it must throw you more immediately upon God to obtain wisdom and counsel from Him. There are many promises of this in the word of God, and I believe, where the eye is single, the path is not in many cases very difficult. Scripture speaks much of patience, and I suppose we must be still before we shall see the salvation of God. I observe in the Old Testament that the saints waited much and long for the fulfillment of God's promises, and that, generally, help

was delayed to the last extremity, and then afforded promptly and effectually. I was much struck the other day with Proverbs 16:9; I found it very applicable to my own case, as I was much perplexed about coming back to Stadham. My inclination is to go there, but I certainly, at present, do not see the way clear.

I often think of you and your great kindness to me last winter; indeed, I trust I shall never forget your unwearied attention to such an invalid as I was then. May the Lord richly reward you! I think I have, on the whole, enjoyed more of the power of the truth since I have been here, than I had done for some time previously; but I daily feel how much I have to learn. What I need is the gift of the Spirit; this is the promise of the Gospel, and without it all that Christ did, taught, and suffered, is nothing to us. I trust the Spirit has not left my people at Stadham. I am sometimes apprehensive of their becoming lukewarm and dead. But the Lord must keep those who are faithful to His promises, and can keep them without human means.

Yours affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

October 11, 1833.

My dear Joseph Parry,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you through the experimental, soul-humbling, soul-melting, soul-rejoicing knowledge of the gracious and living Immanuel.

I am thankful to the God of prayer for having put a spirit of prayer into your heart for such a hard-hearted sinner as myself, as I doubt not you mingled, among your petitions for my coming among you, sundry desires for my own experimental acquaintance with divine things. I cannot, however, see my way to come among you at present, as I am still ministering to the little flock among whom I have been going in and out for some time past. My connection with the Establishment is not yet broken, but I am inclined to think it shortly will. The Lord, in answer to prayer, brought me back in so remarkable a way not two years ago, and so wonderfully strengthened me for my work, after being laid aside by illness one and a quarter years, that I have always felt I could not leave until I should see the way very clearly. For these last few months past I have laid the matter before Him, and sought of Him wisdom and guidance, as the corruption of the Establishment in practice and principle has been much opened to my mind. I think I now see symptoms of my way being about to be laid open, and that I am very likely to be put out of the curacy. If this should be the case, my way is open at once, as it is my ministry here which chiefly detains me in the Establishment. A few days will probably decide, and, should I be removed from the curacy, my present intention is to remain here until the spring (God willing), and then go into Kent for a season, where my friends reside, and where I would have an opening to preach the word.

There is not a soul upon earth to whom I have communicated these particulars, and therefore I beg you will for the present keep them secret. I have been informed upon the best authority that a complaint has been, or will be, laid against me before the bishop for certain comments, which I

lately made, respecting the conduct of clergymen taking out shooting-licences; and if I stand to the ground I have taken, which I trust the Lord will give me grace to do, I think he will remove me. I would sooner be turned out, than go out. Let them thrust me out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage and my way is clear enough. No one knows what it is to give up a people who love you, and whom you love, and a situation where the Lord has blessed you, but those who have the trial. I can safely say that my return here, Christmas, 1831, was the most direct answer to prayer I ever had in my life, and therefore I cannot leave until I see my way clearly opened in providence or grace. Be pleased to keep what I have communicated secret, as not a single person, not even my assistant, knows what steps are pursuing against me but the parties concerned.

Let me have your prayers that the Lord will guide me aright, give me a spirit of faithfulness, joined with meekness and humility, and separate me in His own time and way from a corrupt system; and more especially that He would be pleased to take present matters into His own powerful hand, and lead the devices of men to accomplish His own gracious and eternal purposes. Oh! for grace to believe and love, to seek His will, to have the mind of Christ, and a single eye to His glory! Oh! for a heart to fear none, and to please none, but the risen Lord, and to taste His love, constraining the soul to love, delight in, and obey Him!

Present my affectionate remembrance to Mrs. Parry; and believe me to be
Yours affectionately in Him who is the Lord of all.
J. C. P.

February 1, 1834

My dear Joseph Parry,—I have been partly prevented from answering your letter earlier by a painful inflammation of the eyes, which has been upon me this last fortnight, off and on, and is not yet subsided.

I could wish I could give a more satisfactory answer to it than I fear you will find this to be. But my own mind is very dark, and the arm of the Lord is not yet revealed to me. The affair which I communicated to you went off more quietly than I had expected. Either the bishop was not applied to, or did not think it worth while to interfere. While that matter was pending, I was quite satisfied to leave it in the hands of the Lord, and was indeed more desirous to be removed than to remain. But I felt then, that if it was not to turn me out, it would more settle me than before. And so it has proved, my mind being now less at work upon leaving than it was at the time I saw you. Towards this place and people I can almost say, 'Reuben, you are my first born; the beginning of my strength.' And thus I feel unwilling, I may say unable, to leave them without some clear direction in providence or in grace.

And I think, if you knew what a dark, dead, ignorant, lifeless, corrupt creature I was, your desire to see more of me would be much abated. Often do I seriously doubt whether I was ever converted at all, so much darkness, corruption, and infidelity do I find in myself. And as to the ministry, I feel

myself more and more unfit for it, as having so little light, life, and power in my own soul, and knowing so little how to deal with the souls of the heaven-taught family. And these, I do assure you, are not the common-place confessions which every one professes to make, but what I really see and feel in myself. And what a grievous thing it is for a church to invite a man to minister for a few weeks, to be satisfied with his gifts and graces, and then find they have saddled themselves with one who knows nothing of the things of God spiritually, and therefore cannot build them up in the experimental truth as it is in Jesus! The people here are ignorant, and do not discern my deficiencies so clearly, perhaps, as I do myself; and as they profess at times to obtain good, I am led on from time to time to preach to them. But, as to leaving them and undertaking a new work in a new part of the vineyard without seeing my way clearly marked out, it is what I dare not do.

At the same time I adhere to what I have long felt and said, that is, that if I had more grace I would not remain in the Establishment. But this very lack of grace, which keeps me in it, would render my ministry unprofitable outside of it. In this day there is too much of the cry, 'Put me into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread;' and as it is like people, like priest, it is not very difficult for a man with tolerable gifts to secure himself a pulpit in a respectable chapel. But I trust this is far from my views and wishes. A minister to be profitable must be sent; and he who is sent will seek the glory of Him that sent him, and will desire, above all things, grace in his soul as a Christian, and grace as a minister, that the work of the Lord may prosper in his hands. And amid all my darkness and corruptions I desire nothing more than to have light, and life, and unction in my soul, both privately and ministerially.

This, then, you must accept as my answer to your very kind letter, that I do not see my way to leave my present post, and that I hope you will not delay on my account to settle over you such a minister as the Lord may send you. But should I come into your parts, and I consider myself at liberty to preach in chapels, and it meets your wishes, I would be very glad to accept your offer of preaching for a Lord's-day or so. But whether that time will ever arrive, or when it may arrive, I cannot just now say. The Lord will hasten it in His time. He is a Sovereign, and I would willingly see His sovereign hand and hear His sovereign voice directing me in the path wherein I should go. I have not seen Brother Tiptaft for some time, and am inclined to think he must be from home. I do fear he will think this letter unsatisfactory. I feel it to be so myself, but I know not how I can write otherwise. Give my Christian regards to Mrs. Parry, and accept the same from,

Yours very sincerely and affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 19th, 1834.

My dear Mr. Parry,—Our mutual friend Tiptaft informed me a few days ago of his visit to Allington and of your wish to hear from me. So dark, ignorant, and benighted is my mind, that if I were to give you a view of what is doing in the chambers of imagery, it would afford you but little pleasure or profit. The first time that I saw you, as we were standing in the churchyard

together, I think I observed that I knew more of the dark than of the bright side of religion, and I feel it to be so still. I cannot, like some professors, make to myself wings to soar when I please to the third heaven, nor kindle a fire and compass myself about with sparks, and then walk in the light of it. I am obliged to come to this—"Behold, He shuts up a man, and there can be no opening." "When He hides His face, who can behold Him?"

Some of our professors here can always lay hold of the promises, and so strong is their faith, that they neither doubt nor fear; but this is a religion which I cannot come up to. And when I see that this faith of theirs is the work of man, and born of the flesh, I tell them that I would sooner have my unbelief than their faith. Not that I think unbelief and darkness good things, but this I learn from them, which few know in our day, that faith is "the *gift* of God"; and this, too, I know, that the feeling sense of our own helplessness and unbelief is the necessary, yes, the only preparation of the soul for the inward discovery and manifestation of Christ.

We have in our day too many spiritual thieves and liars. They first get their assurance by climbing over the wall, and then "boast themselves of a false gift," which, as Solomon says, is "like clouds and wind without rain," *that is*, has all the appearance of watering our souls, and then goes off without giving them a drop. From such a religion may the Lord keep us. It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. It is better to sigh and mourn over a heart full of unbelief and corruption, than to take to ourselves one promise which the Lord does not apply. Many will tell us to believe, and say, "You are idle, you are idle," who have never been in the iron furnace, nor sighed out of the low dungeon.

I believe, for myself, that the souls which can really and spiritually rejoice in the Lord are very few, and that their experience is very much chequered with seasons of darkness and distress. And as for that religion which tells us we must rejoice, because believers are told in the Bible to rejoice always, it savors to me too much of man's power and free-will to be of God. The religion which I want is that of the Holy Spirit. I know nothing but what He teaches me; I feel nothing but what He works in me; I believe nothing but what He shows me; I only mourn when He smites the rock; I only rejoice when He reveals the Savior. I do not say I can rise up to all this, but this is the religion I profess, seek after, and teach; and when the blessed Spirit is not at work in me, and with me, I fall back into all the darkness, unbelief, earthliness, idleness, carelessness, infidelity, and helplessness of my Adam nature.

True religion is a supernatural and mysterious thing. It is as much hidden from us, until God reveals it, as God Himself, who dwells in the light which no man can approach unto. It is the work of the Holy Spirit from first to last; and no text is truer than this—"No man knows the Son, but the Father; neither knows any man the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will *reveal* Him." He will have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and He will have compassion on whom He will have compassion; and these favored objects of mercy, and these alone, know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. And that happy soul which is thus experimentally taught of the Holy Spirit, and brought into a heavenly fellowship with the

Father and the Son, will enjoy forever the Triune Jehovah; when professors, high and low, doctrinal, experimental, and practical, Calvinist and Arminian, will be cast into the blackness of darkness forever. A man thus experimentally taught will be humble and abased, will be swift to hear and slow to speak, will have a tender conscience and a godly fear, will seek rather to please God than man, and would sooner speak with God for five minutes than with a frothy professor for an hour. This religion I am seeking after, though miles and miles from it; but no other will satisfy or content me.

I cannot say I am at all nearer leaving my post here than when I last wrote; indeed, while I am heard with acceptance, and have nothing to perform which presses on my conscience, I cannot move until I see my way. I am praying to be delivered from a carnal religious system, but my way out seems at present hedged up. Let me have your prayers that I may see my way clearly, and neither run before I am called out, nor stay after I hear the warning voice. I can't move just when and as I please, but must wait for "the pillar and the cloud".

Give my Christian regards to —, and believe me to be,
Yours affectionately, in Jesus Christ,
J. C. P.

October 1, 1834.

My dear Tiptaft,—I have been kept from writing to you, sometimes from occupation, sometimes from sloth, and sometimes from the feeling that I could write nothing profitable. Every day, indeed, I seem to see more and more that I have little or no grace. And at these times, when I can draw to the throne of grace and ask the Lord to work in and upon my soul, I seem to have less grace than ever. At such times, and I have been occasionally favored with a little earnestness, I feel everything in me so shallow, so unreal, so little like the mighty work of the Spirit on the soul. The fountains of the great deep are not broken up, and all my religion seems to consist in a little natural light, just as I know any point of history or language. These are my best seasons, at least in private, when, feeling I have no grace or religion, I ask the Lord to work on my soul. At other times, what with the workings of infidelity, unbelief, carelessness, pride, evil temper, and conceit, with all the silly, foolish, filthy, lustful imaginations which crowd in one upon another, my soul seems like the great deep, "without form and void" (in the original, "confusion and emptiness"), before the word of God said "Let there be light."

In my ministry, if I am shut up and cannot come forth, I care more for my own failure than the lack of profit to the people. And if I am favored with a little liberty, my proud heart takes all the glory, and gives none to God. So that what can you expect profitable to read from so silly and graceless, so earthly and carnal, a creature as I am? When I am in my right mind I would gladly feel something—law or gospel, conviction or consolations, cries or praises; anything of God would seem better than my present dark, blind, earthly, graceless state. I feel I shall run on so to perdition, unless sovereign grace interpose, and lift me up out of this fearful state. And yet at times only do I feel this, and at other times am as careless as if all was a fable from

beginning to end. And then infidelity, with all its subtle doubts and questions, will creep in, and turn my prayers into mockeries. Your heart, I dare say, will echo all this; but what evidence is that to me? I shall perish in my carnal state unless sovereign grace steps in; and from that nothing can shake me. But I will not detail any more of my complaints. Only picture to yourself the proudest, hardest, most unbelieving and carnal person you can—and you have my picture.

I enjoy the Pinnells being so near very much. I have seen them quite often, and we always speak on the best things.

I scarcely expected by this time to have been curate here, as the bishop wrote to me about five weeks ago, reprimanding me for having had an assistant so long without his permission, and requesting an immediate answer, if I was able or willing to resume the whole duty immediately. I answered him very concisely, neither calling him "My Lord" nor "Right Reverend," and, after having stated a few particulars, said I could not dispense with an assistant. Of course, I expected to hear, in reply, of his intention to remove me; but no such answer has come, nor indeed any answer at all. I committed the affair to the Lord, and as fully expected to be turned out, and return to Abingdon. But here I still am, unmolested.

Clamp and three others walked over here on Lord's-day. I had much conversation with Clamp, and felt my soul refreshed, and found a union with him. On Sunday, 14th, I preached at Kennington, and was favored with some little liberty—at least, as far as I felt myself. G— was there, who seems awfully departed from the narrow way; and though I knew nothing of the circumstance at the time, I have been told that the sermon fitted him exactly. But so it is. We can hear so well for others, and never hear for ourselves. Mr. Clowes has been down at Wallingford, and is coming again for three weeks, so that we shall see him. I feel much union with, and regard for him. Jones, Mr. P—'s butler, a man of some light, though little grace, heard Gadsby at Gower Street. He described the congregation as excessive, and mentioned, though not to me, an expression of Gadsby—"There is enough filth in the hearts of the people here to make the very walls stench." His subject was Isa. 63, but this was said in explaining Zech. 3:3, 4.

A notion has got abroad that in your new edition of "Gadsby's Hymns" you mean to leave out all the experimental ones adapted to peculiar metres. This I have contradicted.

The Miss G—s are come to live here. They contend for the inward power of religion, and have been led to see P—'s "wood, hay, stubble." Much, however, still remains to come down. They speak of his ministry as powerless, and of his people as dead. He used to call on them about once a week, and never once talked on the things of God. I tried to bring his people to a point, but they seem to me like stones. If we are dark and dead, we know it; but they seem satisfied with their ignorance, and much like the Laodiceans of old. Tysdale preached the charity sermons for me, but did not, I hear, enter very deeply into the mystery of iniquity or the mystery of godliness. S— has been here lately. I liked him much. He has gone through Lam. 3 since we saw him, and spoke much of his dark paths. I took him to the Pinnells, who

were much pleased with him, and were very kind to him. Pray come over soon after you arrive. I fear this letter will only carnalize you.

Kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Keal.
Yours affectionately in Christ,

J. C. P.

December 11, 1834.

My dear Friend Parry,—Having a favorable opportunity of transmitting you a letter by a private hand, I sit down to write you a few lines.

And, first, let me ask how the things of the Lord are going on in your soul? Are you, like most of us in these parts, saying "My leanness, my leanness! woe unto me!" Are you putting your mouth in the dust—if so be there may be hope? Are you crying with Paul of old, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Are you indulged with views of the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of Immanuel? Do you see yourself complete in Him, and is He to you the chief of ten thousand and altogether lovely? Or are you buried in your farm and worldly business, and find your soul as hard as a rock and as barren as the sand? Is your continual experience, "The good that I would I do not, and the evil which I would not that I do"? And do you go about your farm restless, dissatisfied, weary of self, and yet unable to deliver your soul from darkness, guilt, and wretchedness?

It is commonly said that a fool can ask questions which a wise man cannot answer, and I find it a great deal easier to ask people about their souls' experience than to answer them myself. As to my own state, I have but little life, feeling, or power in my soul, and sometimes seem to have none at all—and to care no more for the things of God than a horse. The Bible seems at times to have neither food nor savor in it, and all its mysteries appear shut up from my view. The love of idols fills my heart, and I go a whoring after them all the day. No trifle is too foolish to engage my attention, and take off my thoughts; and my heart seems to be a sink of infidelity, lust, pride, filth, and obscenity. I am, indeed, kept from 'outward evil', but so very wicked and vile is my heart that I can throw a stone at nobody.

Rumor brings strange things to our ears respecting Mr.—. I fear he has departed from those things to which he once testified as the very life and power of inward religion and vital godliness. The last account represents him as renouncing baptism. These things must sadly trouble the church at —, and shake the weak and unestablished, more especially, I believe, his doubt of the reality and power of his own religion. But we are to meet with everything to trouble and perplex us, and what is more trying than when "a standard-bearer faints"? The fall of the officers is much more trying than the fall of the soldiers. "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered," was true of the great Shepherd, and is to a certain extent of the under-shepherds.

The young gentleman who will convey this either to Allington or, at least, to Devises is a son of Mr. L., of that place, and has, I trust, in him something good toward the God of Israel. He comes over sometimes to my lectures on a week-night, and seems really desirous after an experimental work upon his soul.

How is your health? Do you sometimes murmur that you are not so strong and healthy as those around you; and does pain never depress your spirits, and almost make you say, "I do well to be angry"? Oh, our natural hearts are strange compounds of rebellion, peevishness, and perverseness, and full of unkindness and ingratitude. It is well if we are sometimes melted down with a sense of our baseness and unkindness towards the great God who has so blessed us. My health is always very weak in winter, and I stay pretty much at home; but I find the old corrupt, earth-loving nature as much at work as in the streets of London.

Believe me to be, with Christian regards to Mrs. Parry,

Yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,

J. C. P.

December 12, 1834.

My dear Mrs. Rackham,—Having an opportunity of sending a letter to town, I avail myself of it to redeem my promise of writing to you. You are now, doubtless, thoroughly settled in your new abode, and in some measure reconciled to your mode of life. The noise and bustle of Rochester must have seemed very strange to you at first, and I dare say you have often turned in thought to your former quiet abode, where almost the only noise was from the brook that ran by your window. But if faith is in exercise, the hand of God will be seen in this change. And besides, what does it really matter where we spend the few years of our pilgrimage here below? God is to be found, known, loved, and served as much in all the stirring noise of a town, as in the seclusion of a country village. His abode is in the heart, according to His promise, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them" (2 Cor. 6:16). Thus, also, He speaks in the following passages, to which you can easily refer—Exodus 29:45; Leviticus 26:11, 12; Isa. 57:15; Zech. 2. But you will say, "Would indeed it were so with me! Oh, that I could have the Lord God to dwell in me and walk in me!" If we look to our own fitness, we must say with Solomon of old (1 Kings 8:27), "Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain You—how much less this house that I have built?" If God indeed dwells with any soul, it is only through the Son of His love that He does so.

As to us, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in us, but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." "As a fountain casts out her waters" (Jeremiah 6:7), so we cast out our wickedness. And in our hearts—I speak from experience—there is nothing to be found by nature but pride, unbelief, worldliness, idolatry, infidelity, and sensuality. It is a cage of unclean birds, a nest of scorpions, and often seems to realize John's description of Babylon (Rev. 18:2), "the

habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit." In ourselves, then, we shall ever be vile and sinful, and utterly unfit that Jehovah should dwell in us and walk in us. If we are acceptable to God at all, it is only so far as we are "accepted in the Beloved."

The Holy Spirit describes the Church (Ezekiel 16:5) as cast out in the open field, to the loathing of her person, in the day that she was born. This is our state by nature. But then He adds, verse 8—"Now when I passed by you, and looked upon you, behold, your time was the time of love." There is nothing beautiful or lovely in man to attract the notice of the Lord. No! on the contrary, he is vile and loathsome in His sight. Love, on the part of God, is free, as He says (Hos. 14:4), "I will love them freely." And it is from this free, eternal, sovereign, and unalterable love on His part, and not from any goodness or fitness on theirs, that He spreads His skirt over any poor soul (Ezek. 16:8), and enters into covenant with it.

But you, or rather your unbelieving heart, will say, "This is not for me." But, why not for you? Are you not a poor, helpless, sin-burdened creature? Are you not without hope, and without help? Well, these are the people for whom this free salvation is appointed! "He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent empty away." The wine and milk of the gospel "is without money and without price." If you are weary and heavy laden, Jesus speaks to you, and invites you to come to Him, Matt. 11:28. I know well what an unbelieving heart is, and how it always takes part against us, and writes up bitter things; but still I would encourage you "to hope," like the father of the faithful, "against hope"; yes, "to hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:10).

Your trials, doubtless, are many, and I dare say at times you are well-near ready to sink under them. But these are the appointed lot of the true children of God. There is a needs-be for all their temptations, crosses, and afflictions, as Peter speaks, 1 Peter 1:6, 7.

It gives me pleasure to learn that you have met with a profitable ministry. I hope your present minister will wear well. It is one thing to hear profitably for a short time, and another to find a living spring in the minister's soul for a long time together, so as to minister grace and good to the children of God. I would advise you to be slow in forming any connection, either with a church as a member of it, or with professors in general. The best are the hardest to find out, and the most obtrusive are likely to be those whose religion lies more in word than in power. If the Lord sees good He can raise up for your comfort Christian friends, but it is better for a stranger like yourself to wait, than to form acquaintances which you must afterwards give up.

We are going on here much as usual. "My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me!" seems to be the general cry. But, indeed, from the shortness of the days and my liability to cold I have not been able to see much of the people lately. S. Hall seems to be a little revived from her deadness, though she is still full of complaints, and often speaks of you with affection. Indeed, I trust we all remember you with affection, and regret your departure. You mention, I think, in one of your letters, your thanks to me for having taught you much

of the evil of your heart. I could wish I had been enabled to have taught you as much or more of Christ. We have two lessons to learn, one full of pain, the other full of pleasure. The first you have been learning, hitherto, in a small measure. The second, which consists in the experimental knowledge of Christ, is that which you have still to learn. And as you learn to know the cleansing, healing, purifying efficacy of His blood, love, grace, and righteousness, so will your heart rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Whatever some may say about experimental ministers building up their people in doubts and fears, I do not believe it is so. They are no enemies to gospel joy, if it be joy of the right sort and obtained in a right way. They are, indeed, enemies, and so may they ever be, to rotten hopes and false assurances; but when they see a heart truly *broken and contrite*, they love to see it *healed* by the great Physician. Though I have advised you to be slow to form religious friendships or even acquaintances, still if you can in your vast population find a few humble souls who are experimentally taught sin and salvation, it would be profitable for you sometimes to converse with them. Our cold, dead heart needs refreshing, and "as iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend."

But seek the Lord in solitude, as David of old; "commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." The food which Christ gives is called "hidden manna," and the new name written on the white stone no man knows, except he who receives it (Rev. 2:17). One spiritual, believing view of Him in secrecy and in solitude is far better than to talk of Him with the tongue, and to hear of Him by the hearing of the ear for a twelvemonth. He will give you such visits as He sees good for you, and I believe you will generally find them *before* trouble, or *in* trouble, or *after* trouble.

Our assemblies at church and lecture have been fairly well attended of late, especially the latter. What we need is to be endued with power from on high. We need showers of blessing to make our hard hearts soft, and our barren hearts fruitful. When He is present with us, all is well; when He is absent, all is ill. Believe me to be, my dear Mrs. Rackham,

Your sincere and affectionate Friend,

J. C. Philpot.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1835 - 1836)

March 30, 1835.

My dear sister Fanny,—The tidings I am about to communicate may concern you more than surprise you. After many trials of mind about it, I have come

to the resolution of seceding from the Church of England. In fact I have already resigned my curacy, and shall, in a day or two, give up my Fellowship. I could have wished to have retained my income and independence, but, as I could not do so with a good conscience, I was compelled to give it up. The errors and corruptions of the Church of England are so great and numerous that a man, with a conscience made tender by the blessed Spirit, cannot, after a certain time, remain within her pale. And though I have thus resigned my ease and income, I feel my mind more easy and at liberty, and trust I shall never come to poverty. My needs are now much less than they used to be, and I trust I shall be content with such slender fare as I may have to expect. Life is short, vain, and transitory; and if I live in comfort and ease, or in comparative poverty, it will matter little when I lie in my coffin! I trust, if I have health and strength given me, I shall not be a burden to my dear mother.

The cause of true Religion has, indeed, spoiled all my temporal prospects, and, doubtless, made the worldly and carnal think me a fool or mad. But, after all, the approbation of God and the testimony of an honest conscience are better than thousands of gold and silver. My resolution was rather suddenly executed. I had thought of giving my incumbent notice that I should resign the curacy at Midsummer. But it seemed to me inconsistent to tell my incumbent that I could not continue in the curacy but a certain time because I was doing evil. It was as though I had said to him, "Will you allow me to do evil for three months to come?" So I resolved to resign it at once, especially as my assistant promised to undertake it, if required, for the ensuing quarter. I told only two people of my intention, and having, on Sunday the 22nd, preached in my usual way, I added at the end—"You have heard my voice within these walls for the last time. I intend to resign the curacy and withdraw from the ministry of the Church of England." It was as if a thunderbolt had dropped in the congregation. I did not wish any excitement or manifestation of feeling, and therefore shut it up as quickly as possible. The people were much moved. And the next day some met, and said they could build me a chapel if I would consent to stay. To this, however, I do not feel inclined, though the people wish it much, and say it should not cost me a farthing.

I think, God willing, at present, of staying at Stadham until some time in June, and then I shall probably go to a place called Allington, near Devises, Wilts, where there is a chapel in which I shall preach. The deacon heard me preach about one year and a half ago, and as soon as he heard I had left the Church of England, he had his horse saddled and rode to Stadham to see me. I happened to be here where he came. So I have consented to go to Allington for a few weeks.

I am now writing a letter, which I mean to publish, to the provost of Worcester College to resign my Fellowship, containing my reasons for seceding from the Established Church. It will be not more than twopence or threepence. If you would like to have some copies, I will ask the London bookseller to send you a hundred or so. It will be rather strong against the University and the Church of England system.

I trust that my dear mother will not be much hurt at this step I have taken, and I sincerely trust I shall prove no burden to her. The disgrace and the financial hardships, I do not think she will mind. The reproach of Christ is greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. At present I can speak nothing as to my future plans. I may spend some little time with you in Devon, and obtain that rest which I find necessary after preaching, and I trust the good Lord will never leave nor forsake me. He has many ways to provide for His servants, and can make the ravens feed them as Elijah of old. If I had health and strength, I might be able to make a living from preaching, or might keep a school. But at present I can say nothing, as I do not see my way clear, as to anything. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

I have been staying here, at my friend Tiptaft's, since Saturday, and I shall stay a day or two longer. So that I do not know whether you may not have already written to me. Direct your letter Stadhampton as usual, and tell me what you have settled about going into Devon.

This life is soon passing away, and an eternal state fast coming on. The grand question is, What do we know of Christ by the inward teachings of the Spirit? What true faith have we in a Savior's blood and righteousness? What do we know of His having died for us?

The time of the post going presses so that I will add no more than that I am, with love to my dear mother and all your circle,

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

June 3, 1835.

My dear friend Joseph Parry,—I am still very weak, and liable to take cold, and indeed have been unwell for three or four months.

I hope and pray that I may not come among you in vain. How far our views and principles may coincide, I know not; but I shall, God enabling me, faithfully declare what I feel and believe to be true, without fearing man. I am on the dark side of things, and more for confusion, guilt, and bondage than liberty, assurance, and freedom. Not that I object to the realities of these latter, but to their *counterfeits*, which are so universally current. Neither do I wish to preach to a people who will not or cannot receive me and my doctrine. I come, therefore, to you, as a friend, for a few days, or a few Sundays, just as I and the church suit one another. If I do not suit them, I will be glad to leave Allington after the first Lord's-day. If they can hear me comfortably and profitably, I would not mind staying three or four. But I wish it to be understood that I come to see you as a personal friend, and only to preach as a friend staying with you—as a wayfaring man who tarries for a night. Expect but little from me, and you will be less disappointed, as I am a very poor creature in body and soul.

With Christian regards to Mrs. Parry, and all that love the truth at
Allington,
Believe me to be,
Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 17, 1835.

My dear sister Fanny,—As I promised to write to you when I was somewhat settled here, I sit down to fulfill my promise.

I came here Friday, June 5, from Newbury, where I had come from Abingdon the day preceding. I was engaged to speak in the room of a Christian lady at Newbury, but as it was feared it would not be sufficient to hold all that were expected, she procured a chapel for me to preach in. This was among the General Baptists, who are Arminians in sentiment. When I, therefore, began to open up that God had a chosen and peculiar people, the whole place seemed in commotion. One man called aloud, "This doctrine won't do for me," and walked out, and was instantly followed by five or six others. I was not, however, daunted by this, but went on to state the truth with such measure of boldness and faithfulness as was given me. Some of my friends in the chapel thought that the people would have molested me, but no one offered to injure me by word or action, and I came safely out from among them. The next day I came by one of the coaches to Marlborough, where my friend Mr. Parry met me, and brought me safely here. I have already preached here five times, *that is*, twice on two Lord's-days, and once during the week besides.

My services have been requested at Reading about the middle of next month for one Lord's-day, but the time is not exactly fixed; on that must depend a good deal when I shall come into Kent. Indeed, for some reasons, I would rather not come to Walmer at all this year. For, first, there is a great desire here that I should stay at Allington as long as I can. This is a neighborhood remarkably favored, and a great 'spirit of hearing' abroad. It was supposed that there were 250 people in the little chapel last Lord's-day in the afternoon, some of whom had come seven miles' distance, and others distances varying from one to five or six miles. There are also many of the children of God in this vicinity, who would gather under the banner of truth, if faithfully displayed. I am very comfortable at Mr. Parry's; he is a very large farmer, and has a wife and four children. He is a very good and gracious man, and is the deacon and, in fact, the sole support of the cause of God in the village. He has a very great desire that I should settle here awhile, as they are quite destitute of a minister. But I am in a strait between two, having, for some reasons, a wish to return to Stadham, and yet finding difficulties in the way. I am praying for the Lord to guide me, as I scarce know what to do, or which way to take.

I can say I do not at all regret leaving the Church of England, and feel quite satisfied and comfortable at having done so. My conscience is now at ease, which it was not while I was entangled in so carnal a system, and at times I

see more of its awful mockery and the dreadful lies which are solemnly told by the professed ministers. I do not fear that the Lord will take care of me and, indeed, have no reason to think otherwise as long as He gives me sufficient health and strength to preach. There are many places which would be glad enough to have me were I willing to go.

My letters to the Provost, &c., have had a great sale, but are now declining. They have, I believe, reached the fourth edition. Though the main sale may be over, yet straggling copies will yet sell for some time.

I heard the other day from Mr. Wise, who will be auctioning off my library of books. The two cases had arrived from London; the sale was to commence on the 15th of this month, and to last three days. I hope they will go off well. Wise said in his letter that a great many people had been to see them, and he thought the sale would excite some interest.

I hope MaryAnn and the little boy are now doing well; if they go to Plymouth in the beginning of July, I fear I shall not see them. I do sincerely hope that I may be able to run down into Kent for a few weeks, as such a change and rest is good for my health; but I feel that I must go on working while it is day. The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few. It is a great thing to be engaged in the work of the Lord Almighty, and the desire for carnal ease and rest must be laid aside by him who would endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. . . .

There is no greater inheritance than to be a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty (2 Cor. 6:18). Gold and silver cannot purchase this; for Jehovah has redeemed His Church and people, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter 1:18, 19). To have a saving interest in the electing love of the Father, the redeeming blood of the Son, and the sanctifying operation of the Holy Spirit, is worth a million of worlds! Without such an interest we must be eternally miserable, and with it eternally happy. This was all David's salvation and all his desire (2 Sam. 23).

Write soon, as I don't know when I shall be leaving this, and tell me your plans, and how you all are. My affectionate love to my dear mother, MaryAnn, and Augustus, and accept the same from,

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

August 29, 1835.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—My present intention is to leave this place on next Wednesday, September 2, for Bath, (God willing), where I mean to sleep, and leave next day for Devises, where I shall hope to meet you. I could not trouble you to come to Bath, as there are coaches through Devises, and the weather is uncertain. You speak of the baptizing. But I have many doubts and fears respecting it. First, I feel my miserable unbelief, sinfulness,

hardness of heart, backslidings, ignorance of Christ, and manifold corruptions as most powerful obstacles in the way. Secondly, my poor, weak, shattered, tottering, cold-catching body fills me with many apprehensions. But I trust if I saw Jesus one side of the water I would venture through. I seem now to have missed the most favorable opportunity during the warm weather we have just had. But I would add that, if I am to go through the ordinance this year, it must not be pushed into the autumn. September 13 is the latest Sunday I could submit to it, and I do assure you I shall be very thankful to escape with a cold. I asked Mr. Warburton to baptize me if I should go through the ordinance, and would not wish any one else to baptize me. If, then, he is able to come to Allington on September 13th, I would, the blessed Lord enabling me, follow the example of the great Head of the Church, in passing through the waters of Jordan. You should, perhaps, write immediately to Mr. Warburton to invite him for that purpose, and to preach as well, as I could not think of preaching that day. I hope, however, the church will understand I would not at all alter the relation in which I proposed to stand to them. I would still be no other than a 'temporary supply', willing to go or stay as we mutually suited each other.

I am daily more and more sensible of the desperate wickedness of my deceitful heart, and my miserable ruined state as a sinner by nature and by practice. I feel utterly unworthy of the name of a Christian, and to be ranked among the followers of the Lamb. And I have no wish to palm myself upon any Church, any minister, or any Christian, as though I were anything special. I am willing to take a low place; and whoever doubts my Christianity, only does what I do myself continually. Now that you are likely to see more of me, you will be sure to find out more infirmities and failings, both as a man and as a minister, than you have as yet, perhaps, discovered. A few weeks is too short a period to know a man. There is in most, and I am sure there is so in myself, much waywardness, selfishness, obstinacy, and evil temper, which is not at first developed. People, from a short and imperfect acquaintance, expect great things, which subsequent communion does not realize. And many are foolishly apt to imagine a minister is more spiritual than anyone else, and in conversation is more profitable. As to myself, I disclaim any such remnant of priestcraft. I am very carnal, very proud, very foolish in imagination, very slothful, very worldly, dark, stupid, blind, unbelieving, and ignorant. I cannot but confess that I have a dreadfully corrupt old man, a strange compound, a sad motley mixture of all the most hateful and abominable vices, that rise up within me, and face me at every turn. So that, instead of expecting a profitable and spiritual companion for your fireside, you must make up your mind for a poor invalid, shrinking from every breeze, and a proud, presumptuous, hardened creature, that can neither be softened by mercies, nor humbled by trials.

But this I say, as I did once before, I wish to saddle myself on nobody. I wish to be independent of the deacons and members of the church, male and female; I mean so as not to flatter or please them. If they don't like me, or are not satisfied with my doctrine, experience, or practice, let them tell me so at once, and I will leave by the first coach. Or if they can't hear me to profit, and wish a more gracious and gifted man, I will give up the pulpit at the first warning. I don't want the 'canting compliments' and 'honeyed looks' of hypocrites and dead professors, whether Calvinists or Arminians. My desire

is to feed the Church of God which He has purchased with His own blood. Remember me affectionately to Mr. T., Mrs. C., your good lady, and all the church. If I lift up 'the sword', recollect it must go through friend and foe who are not on the Lord's side, and may He keep me from sparing any but those whom He loves as the apple of His eye.

Yours affectionately, in the best of causes and the service of the best of Masters,
J. C. P.

September 23, 1835.

My dear James Brookland,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ the Lord.

I have been desirous for some time past to write to you, that those who profess to love and feel the power of experimental truth in Stadham and its neighborhood may not think I have totally forgotten them—though I have been taken from you in presence, I trust not altogether in heart. And I shall rejoice to hear that you, who have separated yourselves from a carnal and corrupt system, are walking in truth, from tasting, feeling, and handling the sweetness and power of it in your own souls.

I find the Lord daily to me far better than I could in any way anticipate. He has raised up for me kind friends, with whom I feel a spiritual union, given me a measure of acceptance among His people, and supplied my dark, foolish, ignorant, barren soul from time to time with thoughts, words, and feelings when I stand up in His name. But my cold, ungrateful, proud, presumptuous, deceitful, and rebellious heart only repays Him with deadness and coldness, worldliness, carelessness, sin, and corruption. Thus, I am driven to salvation by free sovereign grace as my only hope, and see in myself at times so few marks of grace, and so many of unbelief and carnality, that I feel I must be singled out as an especial object of discriminating mercy, if saved at all. Thus, I am taught that profession, knowledge, consistency, creature strivings, fleshly righteousness, and all the other trumpery of nature's forging, are useless and vain. I am brought to contend for the immediate, powerful, and supernatural work of the blessed Spirit on the soul.

I am daily more and more confirmed in my views of the profession of the day, and can find but few in whom I can trace the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit. Broken hearts, contrite spirits, emptied, stripped, and humbled souls, I very rarely meet with; and thus I am led to insist much on the need of the mouth being put into the dust, and of being plunged into the ditch until our own clothes abhor us. But all this stripping and humbling work, I am led to see and feel, is of sovereign grace in the person, in the manner, in the time, in the means, and in the circumstances. I am brought to see and feel that it "is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy;" that His elect family are the "clay, and He the potter;" and that He

works in them to will and to do of His good pleasure; and thus I am brought to see these things, not as dry, dead doctrines, but as truths of inward and feeling experience; and I am convinced that, however painful the lesson is, there is no other way of learning truth but by a feeling sense of our deep need of it, and of its precious suitability to our lost and helpless condition.

This also teaches me the shallowness and emptiness of professors and the religion of the day, and that, for lack of being stripped, emptied, and wounded, they are mistaking husks for bread, and chaff for wheat, dross for gold, and the delusions of Satan for the truth of God. Your eyes and those of my dear friends in the neighborhood are, I trust, open to see these things; and if you have learned this in the 'school of experience', and not in your 'judgment only', you have reason to bless God who has thus kept you from the delusions of the day.

About a week back I was privileged to follow the dear Lord through the waters of baptism, and never more sensibly felt my unworthiness than on that day. He was pleased to keep me from taking the least cold, to give me more confidence to step into His watery grave than I could have expected from my many bodily and spiritual temptations and exercises. Mr. Warburton preached, and baptized me with the greatest solemnity, unction, and affection.

I am glad to hear that Mr. Doe is enabled to come among you, and that there is some prospect of having a place of worship erected where truth may be preached. I am daily more and more convinced that nothing is of the least avail but experimental realities, made known unto the soul by the unction and manifestation of the blessed Spirit. All forms, opinions, rites, ceremonies, and notions to me are nothing, and worse than nothing; they are the husks which the swine eat, not the food of the living soul. To have the heart deeply penetrated and possessed with the fear of Jehovah, to be melted and filled with a sweet sense of dying love and atoning blood, to have the affections warmed, and drawn forth under the anointings of the eternal Comforter, this is the only religion that can suit or satisfy a regenerate soul.

But, alas! how dark, stupid, lifeless, trifling, and unfeeling are our hearts! Every little trifle, every lustful desire, every covetous wish, every rising anger, every emotion of pride, carries the soul away at once, and makes it more like a devil than a saint; and then guilt, doubts, and fears set in like a flood, and hide from the soul all hope or evidence of grace.

By these trials and temptations, these ups and downs, we are experimentally taught to know ourselves and the wondrous riches of electing love, redeeming blood, justifying righteousness, quickening, upholding, and renewing grace; self falls lower and lower, and a triune Jehovah rises higher and higher in our eyes. Self is loathed, and Jesus loved; self is taught its weakness, foolishness, and sinfulness; and the strength, wisdom, and love of Jesus glorified. And thus, the sovereignty of divine grace, the emptiness of professors, the folly of free will, the deceitfulness and wickedness of the heart, the reality of vital godliness, and the blessedness of a free salvation are taught experimentally, and wrought into our souls as eternal realities.

I am daily made more and more sensible of my unfitness for the work of the ministry; but the Lord is pleased sometimes to favor me with some liberty and enlargement of soul in contending for experimental truth; and glad would I be to be assured that I did not spend my strength for nothing and in vain at Stadham, but that the Lord did indeed work by me to quicken and edify the souls of His dear people. May He be pleased to bless the little company who there are willing, from an experimental acquaintance with it, to contend for the power of truth. May He unite them in the bonds of love and affection, and keep far from them all jealousy, division, and disunion. You will have much to contend with from without and from within, from the world and from professors, as well as from yourselves. Many are watching for your halting, and saying, perhaps, of your little Zion (Neh. 4:3), even that which they build, "That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!" May the blessed Lord keep you from disunion and division among yourselves, and may He shut out all jealousy and suspicions of one another, and unite you to contend as one man for the faith once delivered unto the saints.

I have, through mercy, enjoyed of late better health than when I saw you in the summer, and have reason to bless God for the comforts and kindness which He daily bestows upon me in His providence. I am sure He is kind to the unthankful and to the evil, and is never weary with blessing the rebellious and ungrateful. If, indeed, we belong to His blood-bought family, well may we say, "Happy are you, O Israel—who is like unto you, O people saved by the Lord!" It is uncertain when I shall see you all again in the flesh, but trust I shall ever continue to love you with Christian affection. Give my Christian regards to all the Christian friends who meet together to worship in spirit and truth.

I shall be glad to hear from any of the friends who can write, as I wish to know how you are going on.

I am, your and their affectionate friend,
J. C. P.

November 12, 1835.

My dear Brookland,—To all that, under the blessed Spirit's teaching, experimentally and feelingly know the plague of their own heart, and something of the riches of a Savior's blood, grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

An opportunity occurring to answer your letter, I reply to it sooner than I might otherwise have done; and may the eternal Spirit guide my pen to write a few lines on vital godliness and experimental truth to the comfort of any of God's quickened family who may hear or read them.

Instead, then, of finding day by day the number of heaven-taught souls increase in my eyes, I seem to draw the circle narrower and narrower; and the more that I am led to see the nature and reality of true religion, and the

great mystery of godliness, I seem to see more and more how few are experimentally led into it. 'Notional religion' is the grand deceit with which Satan deceives the nations; the husks which the swine eat, he passes off as the bread of life. 'Dry doctrines', which only puff men up with pride and presumption, he palms off as the truth as it is in Jesus. A 'sound creed', a fluent tongue, a well-informed judgment, a ready gift in prayer, a consistent life, attendance on the means, a sanctified appearance, a knowledge of the Scriptures, pass off upon thousands as the religion that can save the soul.

I am quite convinced that very few people have been taught by the blessed Spirit even the very first elements of religion, namely, repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A man that has repented toward God has had his back broken, his mouth has been in the dust, and himself plunged into the ditch until his own clothes abhorred him. The idol of free-will has been broken to pieces, self-righteousness stripped away, presumption plucked up by the roots, and hypocrisy torn off. Not but that these members of the old man will ever continue to trouble and plague the living soul, but they will be hated and disallowed. "God makes my heart soft," says Job (23:16). And thus, when there is true repentance toward God, the heart will be softened down into meekness and contrition. But how few are lepers; how few have got the plague of leprosy in their houses, their garments, or their bodies! They have never had this spreading scab and festering raw flesh (Lev. 13:8-10) to eat away the vitals of their fleshly religion, and to make them filthy and leprous from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. A man must know something of this inward experience before he can be said to repent towards God.

And, again, how few have the other element of true religion—namely, faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). Most people' faith is an assent and consent to the mere letter of truth. They believe because they never disbelieved. They believe because their fathers told them so; because they were taught in the Sunday school; because they have read about Jesus Christ in the Word; because they have heard Mr. So-and-So preach about it; because they have read a tract of Dr. Hawker's which explained the way of salvation; because they have heard others tell their experience; and because it is so wicked and dreadful not to believe in our blessed Savior.

Such are some of the lying delusions of the father of lies whereby souls are juggled into hell. A notional faith never did and never can save a soul. To be thus born of blood, and of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man, leaves the soul where it found it—an enemy to God, and the bond slave of the devil. And all this false notional and fleshly religion will be as stubble when "the day comes that shall burn as an oven." May the blessed Lord keep us from a notional religion, which will only leave our souls exposed and naked to His terrible wrath when He shall rise up to the prey.

The only faith that can satisfy a living soul is that which is the gift of God, and springs out of the inward relation of Jesus Christ. How few have experienced that work of faith with power whereby they have come out of themselves as Lazarus came forth from the tombs. The question is, What has our religion done for us? Has it left us where it found us? Are we, indeed, new creatures; have we been inwardly and experimentally translated from

the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son? We had better throw away our religion on the first ash-heap we come to, to rot there in corruption, if we have nothing better than a name to live. We had better be open sinners than deceived and deceiving hypocrites.

But I believe no living soul can be satisfied with a notional religion; though a miserable backslider, and driven into the fields to feed swine, he cannot feed on their husks, but sighs after the bread of his Father's house. The eyes being enlightened to see the nature of sin, the justice and holiness of God, and the miserable filthiness of self, the quickened soul can find no rest in anything short of a precious discovery of the Lamb of God; and the more that the soul is exercised with trials, difficulties, temptations, doubts and besetments of various kinds, the more does it feel its need of that blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel. What is a Christian worth without inward trials and exercises? How dead and lifeless are our prayers; how cold and formal when the soul is not kept alive by inward exercises!

Where are the sighs, cries, groanings, wrestlings, and breathings of a soul that is at ease in Zion? The world is everything and Christ nothing, when we become settled on our lees, and not emptied from vessel to vessel; but inward exercises, fears, straits, and temptations, stir up the soul to cry, and pray, and beg for mercy. The certainty, the power, the reality of eternal things is then felt, when guilt, and wrath, and fear, and disquietude lay hold of the soul. Mere notions alone of Christ, false hope, a dead faith, a presumptuous confidence, a rotten assurance, are all swept away as so many refuges of lies, when the soul is made to feel its nakedness and nothingness, its guilt and helplessness before God. And thus all their inward exercises pave the way for their discoveries of Christ—those views of His blood and righteousness, that experimental acquaintance with His person, love, grace, and work, which is life and peace.

May this be our religion. It is a religion that we can die by, but it is a religion which the profane and professing world hates and derides. If you and the other friends of truth who meet together at Stadham are enabled to contend for this religion, you will be hated and despised by those professors who never had their backs broken and their mouths in the dust; for you cannot sanction and uphold their religion, and will be constrained, as wine which has no vent (Job 32:19), to tell them faithfully your opinion of their state. You that contend for experimental realities are a city set on a hill—all eyes are upon you; the professor and the profane will alike watch for your halting. They would say of your little cause, "Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof!" May the blessed Lord keep your steps. Oh, how weak and helpless we are! how fond of sin, how averse to God! If He does not keep us, we must fall. Our pride, presumption, hypocrisy, lust, covetousness, carnality, love of ease, and fear of the cross, must overcome us unless He is stronger than we, and prevails.

It is very uncertain when I shall see the friends at Stadham and the neighborhood face to face. I shall most probably winter here, and believe it is of the Lord that my steps were directed to this place, as it affords me a much wider sphere of usefulness, if the Lord bless the word, than I could have had at Stadham. If, indeed, the King of Zion was pleased to bless my weak

ministry at Statham, it will be proved by the people's abiding in the truth, who professed to have been profited by it. By their steadfast perseverance in, and earnestly contending for, the faith once delivered to the saints, they will make it manifest whether they have been spiritually quickened, or have learned their religion from man. And if the blessed Lord has indeed been pleased to raise up your little cause as a witness for Himself against corruption and error, He will keep it, He will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, He will keep it night and day. I hope you may soon see the foundation-stone of a house for His worship laid, and that He will create upon your assemblies a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.

My love to all that have been made honest, who fear God, have a tender conscience, and depart from evil. Greet the friends by name,

Yours and theirs affectionately in Christ Jesus,
J. C. P.

July 18th, 1836.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—It being Monday, and I being, as usual, not fully recovered from yesterday's exertions, I will not promise to write at any great length. I arrived here on Friday evening last from Oakham, a distance of about eleven miles. Mr. de Merveilleux sent a coach for me, so that I arrived here without inconvenience, though the day was cold and rainy. I was very unwell during the first part of my stay at Oakham, having caught cold on my journey. Towards the end of last week, however, I rallied, and am now, through mercy, as well as I usually am. I preached at Oakham twice yesterday week, July 10th, and again on the following Wednesday, July 13th. Yesterday I preached twice in Mr. de Merveilleux's chapel here. The place was very full both times. Many, no doubt, were attracted from curiosity, my "Letter" having been widely circulated in these parts, and my intention to preach having been made known through the newspaper, as well as by printed bills. The Baptist minister left his flock to visit his friends, and, there being no Supply, his congregation came to hear me. Many church-people, too, were present; and doubtless we had a sprinkling of gracious people from out of the country, for many miles round. I never feel at home amid such a motley multitude, and such was the case yesterday. I attempted, with God's help, to cut down natural religion, and to build up spiritual religion; but I fear 'Joseph Charles' had much more hand in the sermon both times than the Spirit of the living God. At least, if they were as much dissatisfied with me as I was with myself, the children of God went grumbling home; and if the word came home to them with no greater power than I felt it myself, they went home as hungry as they came.

I have received invitations to preach from Boston, Peterborough, Leicester, and Cambridge. All these invitations I have declined but the last, which I have accepted for Thursday, July 28th, on my way to Welwyn.

I found myself quite at home at Oakham, Mr. and Mrs. Keal having all the friendliness and hospitality of Tiptaft. I cannot say that I was much favored in the ministry there, being, in my own feelings, shut up, except on the last time that I preached, which was on Wednesday last, when, the spring seeming to flow and the cruse to run, I was enabled, as I freely received, so freely to give. A great multitude, especially if in a strange place, usually shuts me up, and, instead of a sweet entrance into the word of truth, and a living experience, I seem able to bring forth nothing but a noisy stream of 'pulpit prattle' and a tangled skein of unmeaning declamation.

I find Mr. de Merveilleux very kind; and, indeed, so vile and unworthy a wretch as I, who seem at times to be a burden to myself and to everybody else, finds everywhere kindness and attention. They wish me very much to come again to Oakham, and I have thought of the following plan, if it should be agreeable to the friends and yourself. Instead of going down to Plymouth, as I proposed, I would return to Allington from London, so as to preach on Lord's-day, August 14. Thus I would stay with you during August and September, and leave you during the month of October, which, in that case, I would spend at Oakham. The weather in October is not too cold, and the days not too short, to hinder my traveling at that time. I think such an arrangement might suit me, as well as yourselves and the friends at Oakham. August, I know, does not suit you so well, as it is so bustling a time; but it is hard to arrange any plan to which objections may not be raised. There is a great spirit of hearing at Oakham, and I have found myself well received by the people. On Wednesday evening last the congregation was larger than at Allington on the Lord's-day afternoon. Let me hear from you on this subject immediately as I wish to write to Plymouth, which I cannot do until I receive your reply. I shall hope to spend the winter at your friendly and hospitable fireside.

This dry weather, I suppose, stirs up the old man sometimes in your bosom, and you are thinking what will become of the sheep unless the turnips look better than they now do. I observed that the wheat crops in Berkshire, Oxfordshire, and Northamptonshire had a much better appearance than those in Wiltshire. But what will it signify to Joseph Parry, in a few years, whether "the fly" had carried off his turnips or not; and what will it matter to J. C. Philpot whether his chest was sound or unsound? But how much will it matter to each of them whether their religion was natural or spiritual, their faith human or divine, their hope a heavenly gift or a spider's web! But our blind, foolish hearts are so concerned about things which are but the dust of the balance, and so little anxious about our all in all.

I hope that friend Stenchcumb was heard with profit, and brought you some of the good old wine, and that Tiptaft was favored with a door of utterance and a door of entrance into your souls.

I intend to leave Stamford, if the Lord will, on Wednesday, July 27, and proceed by Cambridge to Welwyn, where I hope to arrive the Friday evening following. On the succeeding Tuesday I shall hope to go to London, and it will depend on the arrangement that we may make whether I shall proceed to Plymouth or Allington. I would wish to consult the wishes of the friends, as

well as my own; and though I cannot brook much thwarting or controlling, I feel desirous to walk amicably and comfortably with the people of God.

I hope the friends are well, body and soul, and that the Lord has shone upon your assemblies. Greet them all with my Christian love. The children, I hope, are well. May the Lord stir up our fainting, stumbling souls, and lead us into all experimental truth. My affectionate remembrances to Mrs. P., Mr. and Mrs. T., Mrs. C., and all that have any care for, or any interest in, so poor a creature as

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

July 25, 1836.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I fear I must make my usual excuse for a short letter, that is, that it is Monday, on which day, you know, I am fit for little else than to loll about and do nothing. Mr. Keal was over here from Oakham yesterday, and we talked matters over. The arrangement which I seem to have come to is to be at Allington before August 14th, so as to stay with you during that month and the following, and return, if the Lord will, to Oakham by the first Lord's-day in October. I must thus give up my visit to Plymouth, which will be a disappointment to my mother, as well as to myself, and deprive myself of that rest in which I usually indulge my poor body once a year.

The opening for truth at Oakham and Stamford is very great, and people come from distances which puts your lazy Wiltshire professors to the blush. *Twenty miles* is not thought much of as a distance in this country. Yesterday morning was very wet, and this thinned down the congregation to what the Dissenters call "comfortably full;" but, the weather clearing up, the afternoon congregation was overflowing. It appeared to me larger than on the Lord's-day previous. Through mercy, I was helped with a little help, and the door of utterance was not shut so close as I often feel it, and thus I was enabled to deal out a portion to professor and possessor more than I sometimes can. On Wednesday next I intend, if God wills, to leave Stamford for Cambridge, where I am to preach next evening. On Friday I mean to go to Welwyn, and on August 2nd to London, and hope to reach Allington August 12th, but will write to Mr. Tuckwell or yourself to mention when you are to send to Marlborough for me. Mr. T., it appears, was anxious to view my old haunts at Oxford. Well, they have pretty much forgotten me, and I them. Our tie has been broken through forever, and I am satisfied it should be so.

I am glad that you heard Tiptaft well, and that he found an entrance into your heart. You had, no doubt, much conversation together, and I dare say he asked many questions on many subjects. He will not lack information if inquiry can obtain it. I have found much kindness both here and at Oakham. Mr. Keal is a particularly friendly person, and we soon became able to converse freely. His wife is very much like Tiptaft in manners and

disposition. If I consulted my own wishes I would go to Plymouth and rest, and return to Allington in September, as I originally proposed. But there seems a field of usefulness opened here, and my ministry appears to be received by the people of God. An old professor came about *thirty miles* to hear yesterday, and came to see me this morning for about three hours. I found him a man well and deeply taught in the things of the Lord.

You will, perhaps, think that my coming into these parts may be the first step to my leaving Allington altogether. I do not anticipate any such conclusion. It may lead to my coming here occasionally, but I do not think it will have any other consequence. Both at Oakham and here they seem attached to the ministry of Tiptaft and Smart, and I think the utmost of their wishes is that we three should come as well as we may be able. Mr. Keal does not wish to hear any other ministers, and *reads* when one of us is not at Oakham. Mr. de Mervilleux engaged a minister, who proved to be a duty-faith man, and he was obliged to withdraw from his ministry; so that he usually 'reads printed sermons' in the vestry, and that to not more than twelve people. Nearly all the congregation left with the minister, and have a building very near. Thus, as this is an infant cause, and there is much opposition both from church and chapel, it needs a little fostering.

I do not forget the kindness of yourself and Mrs. Parry amid the kindness of my new friends, and I do not believe that I ever shall. Wherever a union is felt, through grace in the heart, it cannot easily be torn up. Jealousies may rise, and evil tempers may work, but I believe there will be always a revival of affection in the soul where a true union exists.

I have sold nearly two hundred copies of my pamphlet here and at Oakham. Nearly all the influential people of this town are acquainted with my family, my grandfather having resided here many years. What a violent tearing asunder of all natural ties is produced by leaving the Establishment! Those who would have hailed me as a friend, would now turn from me as an enemy. I find more and more that to leave 'Babylon' is to offend all that is respectable and worldly. Mr.— would not be so angry, nor his friend Miss J—, if I would uphold their system. Well, their hatred little troubles me. I fear my own vile heart more than their enmity, and if they knew as much of my vileness as I do, they would find plenty of room to shoot their arrows at. I am quite aware of your kindness from repeated instances of it, as well as that of your wife, and hope that nothing may ever occur to interrupt our friendship. My kind regards to Mrs. Parry, and remember me very kindly to all inquiring friends. I am obliged to Mr. Tuckwell for his kind letter. I am, through mercy, pretty well, and beg to remain,

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

P.S.—Shall I buy any of Huntington's works for you, as there is a cheap edition coming out, and you would find them profitable to read and lend?

August 6th, 1836.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—As the time of my return to Allington is drawing near, you are doubtless expecting a line from me to fix the precise day on which you are to send to Marlborough for me. I intend, then, to leave town on Tuesday morning next, if the Lord wills, and do not think of stopping anywhere on the road before I reach Marlborough. Mrs. Merrewether, probably, and the friends at Newbury would wish me to stop one night there, and speak in her room; but I feel so unfit to preach anywhere, that necessity must be laid upon me before I can engage in the work. I believe, if it were left to me, I would never preach again—so much vileness, unbelief, and dreadful sinfulness do I feel working within.

Those who say they always hate sin must have very different feelings from me, as the chief part of my burden is that I love it so much. I feel something like a man in love, who is prevented by a thousand obstacles from gaining what his heart is set upon. If he did not love the fair lass, his heart and affections would not always be roving after her, and he would little care whether she were dead or alive. But to feel the constant workings of passionate love and eager desire, and then to be prevented, cut off, and intercepted by a thousand difficulties, this will make a man miserable enough. Thus sin, that crafty and cursed Delilah, is loved to distraction by our old man. If we dared woo and win this beautiful Philistine, a match would be made, vows plighted, hands joined, and the marriage celebrated. But when a tender conscience, a godly fear, the wrath of God against sin, His presence in the soul, and a thousand other inward obstacles step forward and forbid the union, what a storm does it raise within! But if to press the hand and touch the lips of this accursed Delilah cause such guilt within, and force out such groans and sighs from a burdened conscience, it is our richest mercy that so many real friends come forward and prevent a complete union. These two things I know, that sin is sweet, and that sin is bitter. The honey and the sting are in the same bee, and, if you plunder the hive, it is a narrow escape if you are not stung to death.

I left Stamford, July 27, and arrived at Cambridge the same evening. On the following evening I preached at a chapel, about a mile out of the town, to a full congregation. If they felt as straitened as I did, they were shut up enough; and if they were as dissatisfied with me as I was with myself, they went grumbling home. On the next day I arrived at Welwyn. I found friend L. and his wife very kind, and was quite at home with the friends at Welwyn on spiritual things. I think them a people of the right stamp. I cannot say I was much at home in the pulpit on the Lord's-day. On the Tuesday evening, however, I spoke again and felt more of the springing well and flowing brook. The place was quite full on Lord's-day both times, and on the Tuesday evening there were not many vacant places. The friends thought the place was fuller on the Lord's-day than they had ever seen it.

Friend Smart's house is roofed in, and, if the God of all comfort now and then visits it with His presence, will be a comfortable abode for him. The plan is simple enough. Two rooms, one on each side the street-door, will form his kitchen and parlour below, and there will be two bedrooms above. I told Friend L. that a third bedroom was wanting for the little handmaid, as he would wish to have a spare bedroom for a friend. On the day before I left, the foundation was laid for the washhouse, etc. The friends of truth are looking

anxiously forward to his coming to settle among them, and the friends of the world are marveling that so much has been done to carry on the cause, the downfall of which they prophesied.

I am pretty well tired of London, though from my former residence of six years in it, and continual visits to it for nearly every year since I was nine years old, it is less strange to me than to most regular inhabitants of the country. It is some degrees warmer than the country, which, in some respects, suits me, though I find more excitement from its noise and bustle than is good for my head and chest.

I hope I shall see Friend Smart before he leaves Wilts. You must do your best to detain him at Allington until I arrive, and as long after as he feels disposed to stay. I sincerely hope that the Lord may be with him tomorrow, and give the word that he shall preach a blessing, and effectual entrance into your hearts. I do not know what you would do in this scene of bustle and confusion, where Mammon seems universally worshiped, and where Satan's seat seems above most places to be. I shall hope, if the Lord will, to find you, your wife, and children, well. Remember me affectionately to all inquiring friends, and

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

October 24, 1836.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I arrived here on Friday last from Oakham, and am, through mercy, pretty well.

The friends at Oakham have much pressed me to stay the winter, to which I would not have any great objection, as the climate is mild, the friends kind, and the door for preaching wide. The last Lord's-day afternoon on which I preached being very fine (October 16), the congregation was overflowing. A person at the door counted fifty who could not get in; and on last Wednesday evening, which was moonlight and a beautiful evening, we had considerably more than at Allington on the Lord's-day afternoon. I do not mention this as though it were anything, for novelty will bring a congregation; and I dislike a crowd, as it usually shuts me up, and seems to draw back anything like a flow of unction and feeling. I seem at such times lost in a flood of unmeaning generalities, and to have no power to dive into the depths of man's heart. Like a raw swimmer, I seem to be splashing in shallow water, knocking the waves about, perhaps, as I spread forth my hands to swim, and every now and then gulping down a draught of salt water or gasping for breath, but unable to dive into those dark silent depths of internal experience or the calm depths of a free-grace salvation, without which to preach is only to beat the air and to run as uncertainly; yet this I would say to the glory of God, that though wretchedly dark and barren out of the pulpit, I have not been altogether left to my foolish and empty self in it since I left Allington, but have at times found life, and light, and a door of utterance opened out of

confusion and ignorance. Yesterday morning I felt myself favored in some degree with an open door; but in the afternoon my old shackles were again put on, and confusion and perplexity seemed to fill my mind. The congregation was very large both times, the day being fine, and in the afternoon uncomfortably crowded. I feel, however, but little drawing towards Stamford, and should fear there is but little life in the place. I am much more at home at Oakham, and have usually more feeling and liberty in that pulpit than in this.

Poor — seems to display his weakness more and more. I can hardly think him sincere in all his admissions to you, but I believe the great key to his words and actions is to know that he has no fixed opinion to give, and no firm principles on which to act. *A man that does not know his own mind must always be a puzzle to others*, and I should expect fixedness as much from a weather-cock as from —. A weather-cock, you know, will sometimes not turn for a week if the wind is still, and rust will make it at times wondrous steady; but a good stiff breeze will turn it round a hundred times a day. Let Master — encounter what the sailors call a north-wester, or let "a tempestuous wind called Euroclydon" beat into him, and I believe he would be in their case of whom we read that, "when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive." If the — friends had gone down to the sea in ships, and done business in great waters, they would have found out that their pilot looked too much to the chart, when he should have sounded, and if he had found it twenty fathoms should have gone a little further and sounded again, and if he found it fifteen fathoms, should have cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for day. But, instead of that, when the wind of Irvingism "blew softly" he must needs loose the rudder-bands and hoist up the mainsail to the wind, and make towards shore; and thus he fell into a place where two seas met—the sea of experimental Calvinism and the sea of Arminian Irvingism; and then need we wonder if he ran the ship aground, and while the forepart, *that is*, his head, stuck fast and remained immovable in the sands of unknown tongues, miraculous cures, and unfulfilled prophecy, the hinder part, *that is*, what the Lord had done in his heart, was broken with the violence of the waves? I can only say that it will be his mercy if he escapes safe to land on boards or broken pieces of the ship.

As Master — is so fond of spiritualizing the word, he could not be offended at my tracing his experience in Acts 27, and I believe that my explanation is every whit as good as his interpretation of "The Wall," which he was so willing to favor you with.

I hope that Friend Smart will furnish you with such savory meals that you will go in the strength of that food many days, and will not need to be fed again for some weeks to come.

I wonder, indeed, that any people are willing to be burdened with my company, as I am often a burden to myself, and am a wretched mass of vileness and corruption.

I seem surprised at the priestcraft of the human mind, which makes people so fond of ministers. If they all thought of them as I do, there would be many sent to the right-about. They would see that they had a deal more of the devil

in them than of the angel, much more of the flesh than the spirit, and more hypocrisy than humility.

I wonder sometimes that people can bear my rough remarks, and crude speeches, and doubts as to the genuineness of their religion; but I suppose they see enough carnality in me to serve as a nice excuse for their own. If the minister is so carnal, says Mr. Worldly-mind, surely I may be so too; and if the Reverend Dr. So-and-so is not always so spiritual, surely I may give my tongue a little licence. Thus worldly people like the ministers to be carnal, that under this shed, as Friend Kay says, they may creep with their carnality, and think they will do exceedingly well if they have half the religion that the parson has. It is to some such feeling as this deeply lodged in the human heart that I am gladly to ascribe the kind reception I meet with wherever I go.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

November 14, 1836.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I hinted in my last letter at the probability of my staying the winter in these parts, and as the friends here, and at Stamford, are very urgent that I should do so, I seem inclined to listen to their wishes. I do not, however, think it right to decide upon a point which affects you as well as them, without first writing to you on the subject. I am encouraged to continue here a while longer, as the people profess to derive profit from my ministry. At Allington, you know, the winter congregation is often very scanty. I find the climate here and at Stamford much more suitable to my weak chest than the cold blasts which blow so chill and strong over your unsheltered downs. I hope you know me too well to think I have forgotten your unvarying kindness, or that I am tired, either of your hospitable fireside, or of the pulpit where, I trust, I have at times felt refreshings from the presence of the King of kings. I would be sorry, too, that you should think I have any intention of forsaking Allington, or that new faces and new friends have had the effect of dividing my regard for old ones. You recollect, when I first came among you, I never promised to tie myself to Allington, and have always considered myself as a temporary Supply, who was at liberty to go away for a shorter or longer time, or even altogether, without its being considered that I violated any engagement, or broke any promise. At the same time I feel a regard for Allington, and for some of the people who attend the chapel there, and, I need not add, for yourself.

After all this preface, you will be saying to yourself, "But how long does he mean to stay away? What does he call staying the winter? How long does he call 'winter'?" Why, if we were to calculate very nicely, it might be winter at Allington, perhaps, when it is spring elsewhere, and the almanacs tell us that winter commences December 21st, and ends March 21st. And if my chest were consulted on the subject, and I do assure you that I am obliged to take its opinion much more than I could wish, it might say winter lasts from September to the beginning of June. I will not then take either Francis

Moore's winter, or my chest-definition of the same season, lest I should weary out your patience altogether. But I think it probable I shall continue in these parts during the months of December and January, and return to Allington about the beginning of February. In this case, I purpose to be at Oakham the three following Lord's-days, November 20th and 27th, and December 4th. I then think of returning to Stamford, to be there three or four Lord's-days more, and to return afterwards to Oakham. There is a great spirit of hearing both here and at Stamford, and people come from considerable distances. I have been favored at times with the Lord's presence in the pulpit, and the people profess to hear me well on different occasions. I feel encouraged to continue a little while longer among them. If you cannot procure such Supplies as you can profitably and comfortably hear, I would recommend you to go on with *reading of sermons*. And I would counsel you to read sometimes Huntington, and at other times Webster, as the people seem to hear with profit.

Tiptaft has been for five Lord's-days in London, and, according to his own account, got on better with the Londoners than he expected. I wrote to him a few days ago, and mentioned my plan of staying here a while longer, as well as suggested that he might pay Allington a visit. I get on but slowly with my pamphlet, and have a new work in hand, a sermon from Isa. 50:10, 11. [Eventually published as *The Heir of Heaven Walking in Darkness and the Heir of Hell Walking in Light*.] This, however, I am getting on but slowly with, and find my quiet room at Allington more favorable to writing than this place, or Stamford, where there are so many things to distract the attention. I was surprised yet glad to hear that Friend Smart preached at Devises, and I hope he shook the boughs with a firm and vigorous hand. I shall be glad to hear that the Lord was with him there as well as at Allington.

For myself I go on in spiritual things much as usual, generally very dark and dead, and at other times favored with desires and breathings after a fuller discovery and enjoyment of eternal things. I feel, however, that the old vile heart will turn up its mire and filth, and that no change of time or place can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. I need not say I meet with every kindness both here and at Stamford, and can only wonder what people can see in me to call forth so much attention and regard. They do not see me as I see myself, and it is my mercy that they do not know all the workings of a vile and depraved heart.

I think, with one exception, besides twice on the Lord's-day, I have preached once in the week regularly since I left Allington. I have received an invitation from Boston, which I have promised to attend to for some future opportunity, besides one from Nottingham, Lynn, Woburn, and other places. But when I return to Allington, I shall hope to remain there quietly for a few months. I have through mercy been stronger, since I left Allington, in my chest and general health, and do not feel the cold weather quite so sensibly. This, I confess, is one reason why I am induced to spend the severe part of the winter here, as I do not forget my last winter at Allington, and how I suffered from the cold.

Let me hear from you soon, and write me a good long letter.

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

December 1, 1836.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I am very sorry that my intention to continue here a little longer has so much hurt your feelings, and that you have found the old man so rebellious on the subject. I find it very difficult so to act as to escape censure from some one or other, and whichever way I turn I find difficulties. Ministers cannot always consult private feelings, nor, indeed, would they act right if they did so. Many motives sway their minds and influence their decisions, of which hearers have little conception. The hearer looks only to himself and his own pleasure in hearing any favorite minister, and never considers how far that ministry, which is profitable to him, may be so to others also. But the minister looks to where he has the widest door set before him—where he is most blessed himself, where the most evident blessing rests on the word, and where he feels most unction and power present with him. And thus he has many motives and leadings, of which the hearers know nothing.

I feel, too, in my own case, as you yourself have so often remarked, that I require some time to make way into the understandings and affections of the people, and that it is not half-a-dozen sermons which will make my drift evident. To this let me add that I require a short time before I am at home in the pulpit, and that a little thing will shut me up, and stop the flow of utterance which I enjoy sometimes. I need not enlarge on this point, as you have often remarked the same, and said I need a little time before people can receive my ministry and enter into my drift. I feel that hitherto I have been laboring at a disadvantage, and that I am only just now obtaining a footing in the understandings and affections of the people. This is one main reason why I have been induced to prolong my stay. I have felt desirous, too, of leading the people to contend for *right* things, for internals more than externals; and I have been anxious to demolish some of those mighty castles of 'letter-religion' which Satan everywhere builds up. I find I cannot accomplish my work in one or two sermons, and that I have to build up, as well as to throw down. These motives have weighed with me to continue some time longer, and I have been further induced by the often-repeated wishes of the people and my kind friends here and at Stamford. To this I must add that I have been so much better in health, and find the climate much more congenial to my weak chest than Allington.

Thus, I can say it is from no diminishing of either Christian affection or esteem that I have protracted my stay from your hospitable fireside; and I trust I need not add that it is no mercenary motive that weighs with me, as I have many expenses here, as traveling, servants at two houses, washing, wear and tear of better clothes, etc., which I have not at Allington. I hope I have said enough to set your mind at rest, and I need not hint that I am bound by no engagement to Allington, and have always considered myself as a Supply from week to week. Indeed, I may add that my strongest tie to Allington is

my private friendship for you, though I admit that there are several in and out of the church to whom I feel a union, and whom I shall be glad to see again. I intend at present (D.V.) to return to Allington some time in February, if health and weather permit, and hope to stay with you for a few months, before I take a second flight.

I am glad that friend Warburton has paid you a visit, and that his word was blessed. John, with all his faults, has the right stuff in him, and will outlive a thousand May-flies, who flutter their hour in the religious world.

I intend (D.V.) to leave Oakham for Stamford about December 8, and shall stay until about January 5, continuing there for four Lord's-days. I do not see that you should be anxious about having preachers. Your cause is small, and in winter the congregation is never very numerous. Let them hear the reading of Huntington or Webster, and I believe they will hear no such preaching as the former, let them go where they will. Stand firm for experimental truth; none but the chaff oppose it. I doubt not that many are glad that the troubler of Israel is many miles away from Allington, and that the Church ministers are not the only people who are secretly rejoicing. I hope, however, if the Lord will, to trouble them again, and not leave them always to rejoice.

My sermon advances slowly. I find that so much letter-writing as I have, cuts up my time for it very much. It is quite uncertain when I shall be able to bring it out. I often find it irksome to write, and a thousand excuses rise up in my mind to defer it to another day, and thus I do not often set to work upon it. A person has offered to advance me £50 if I could put to press a volume of sermons; but I have no intention to do so. My other pamphlet I have laid aside for a long time. [This was never finished.]

I hope the Lord may lead us more and more to contend for *realities*—the things that accompany salvation. All things else are mere soap-bubbles, blown up by the breath of a child, which glitter for a few moments with the rays of the sun, and then burst forever. If the people at Allington do not contend for realities, it shows there is a woeful deficiency somewhere; for I am well satisfied that God will make all His people, great and small, contend for what they have tasted and handled. I look upon it, then, as a fatal mark, when men are contending for externals and doting about theological questions, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law. Contend for the power of eternal things and the mysteries of vital godliness, and you will have the devil and his twin family of 'dead sinners' and 'dead professors' against you; but you will have the family of God, to a man, with you, and above all, you will have God Himself on your side.

Where now are all those who, in their day and generation, worshiped an unknown God, talked of an unknown Christ, and took into their lips the name of an unknown Spirit? "In hell", is the answer; "reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day". And where are all those happy saints who saw, believed in, worshiped and loved a triune God? Safe with Christ; happily landed on the peaceful shore of eternity. A few years will put us among one of these two companies. Let us contend, then, earnestly and unwaveringly, for that truth which is able to

save our souls. "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do engender strife." Let us not have separated from 'ungodly systems' and 'dead professors' on account of doctrines only and outward ordinances, however true and scriptural; neither let these things, especially the latter, break the union between the family of God. I am a decided Baptist, but I can stretch my hand across the 'water' to God's children, whose eyes are not open to see the ordinance, while there are thousands of Baptists to whom I would not willingly hand a chair. Write me a good long letter soon, as I like your letters much, and think you a very good scribe.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

[Extract from a letter to one who denied the Doctrine of Justification by the Imputed Obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ. *Gospel Standard*, 1836, page 196]

To a "Professor"

. . . I consider the doctrine of the believer's justification through the obedience of Christ imputed to him for righteousness, to be one of the greatest importance, and could not unite with anyone who denies it. And I cannot help thinking, that if you had ever been arrested by Moses, and cast into prison, so far from denying the imputed obedience of the Surety, you would be sighing and groaning for a manifested interest in that blessed righteousness. I will not argue the point from the Scriptures, though Romans 5:19 stands as a brazen wall against all that rise up against this glorious doctrine, as it would do you no good to have your judgment enlightened, if you were not led into it from soul experience.

I am constrained to think, from the general tone of your letter, that you know very little of *heart work*. I can trace no groans, nor sighs, no confessions of ignorance and darkness, no humility and self-abasement, nor any symptoms of that unctuous experience which is the secret of the Lord with those who fear Him. You appear rather to rest on the letter of the word, if I may judge from your frequent array of texts, than to know experimentally that "spirit and life" (John 6:63), without which "the letter kills" and "the flesh profits nothing." You seem to fear lest "I lack knowledge," which deficiency you think yourself qualified to supply, rather than whether I lack an experimental work of grace on my heart; and you wish me "to explain my views as to how God justifies the ungodly," instead of asking me to explain how I have myself been brought in as ungodly, and how I have been justified in my own conscience. A little knowledge from the letter of the Scriptures united to an idea of greater personal sanctity than most possess, is very apt to puff up the mind, and make us think we are something when we are nothing. And thus I trace in your letter, though I am personally unacquainted with you, a greater opinion of your own knowledge and attainments than I do of the Spirit's operations, in bruising your soul into nothingness and self-loathing before the holy Jehovah. I should have felt more union with you if there had been in your letter more experience and less doctrine, more

confession of ignorance and less assumption of knowledge, more of the spirit and less of the letter, more of the Creator and less of the creature.

I greatly fear you have got to Mount Zion without ever having been at Mount Sinai, are wise without having become a fool, have been healed before you have been wounded, and know everything before you have been made to know nothing. If this be the case, you have all to learn afresh—to begin again—to take with shame the lowest room—and to come down from being something to be nothing. You may, in your own opinion, have a more scriptural creed, a more consistent walk, and a mode of worship more acceptable to God than others possess. But what is all this? It may be only the whitewash of a sepulcher, the untempered mortar of a wall, the rough garment of a false prophet (Zech. 13:4), the pillow of an empty profession sewed on to your armhole (Ezek. 13:18), the broad phylactery of a pharisee, the spider web of a false hope (Job 8:14), the mire and the water in which the reed of a hypocrite's hope grows up (Job 8:11-13). You are probably, like Job, instructing others (4:3, 4), when you have only heard of God by the hearing of the ear, and have never seen Him, so as to abhor yourself, and repent in dust and ashes.

I wish to see you well humbled, and shaken to pieces (Job 16:12), and plunged into the ditch until your own clothes of sanctity and profession abhor you. If you are only a professor, though your excellency mounts up to the heavens, and your head reaches unto the clouds, you will be chased away as a dream of the night (Job 20:6-8). I would have you examine the root of your religion, whether it stands in the wisdom of men, or in the power of God, and whether you have been born of the flesh, or have been born of God. Is your religion one of groans and sighs, humility, contrition, and self-loathing, or do you despise these things as legal, or slight them as unnecessary? Is your liberty that of Christ's giving or your own taking? Have you learned your religion from the Bible, or through doubts and fears, strong cryings and wrestlings, trials and temptations, pressing needs and manifest deliverances? If you are a vessel of mercy, may the Lord humble and prove you, turn your wisdom into foolishness, your knowledge into ignorance, and your loveliness into corruption; and then nothing will satisfy you but the revelation of Christ to your soul, the sprinkling of His blood on your guilty conscience, and the inward manifestation of that justifying righteousness which you now deny.

J. C. P.

[*Gospel Standard*, 1841, p. 281]

To the Friends of Vital Godliness at Stadhampton and the Neighborhood,
To all that worship the great, glorious, unchanging, and unchangeable
Three-in-One Jehovah in spirit and in truth, and know Him, not by the
teaching of man, nor by a traditional religion, nor by the letter of the word,
but by His own manifestations—be grace, mercy, and peace multiplied!

My dear Friends and Brethren—I see and feel that there is abroad in the world, and among the professing churches, so much false and delusive religion, that it seems as though I was continually compelled to be bearing

witness against it. If, indeed, this natural and creature religion were confined to the unregenerate, I might well leave it alone, and let the dead bury their dead; but it infects the children of God too; it creeps in and insinuates itself even among those who are partakers of a new and spiritual nature, and is closely mixed up, though it can never really unite, with all our acts of spiritual worship. I find so much of this natural and creature religion in my heart, that I think I have nothing else; and when I look round upon the professing churches, even the purest and most experimental, I see a religion received by tradition from their fathers standing too much in the place of, and almost eating up, that vital, heavenly, and supernatural godliness which comes from and rises up to the Father of lights. Ordinances, prayer meetings, preachings, reading the Word, and family prayer, seem prized for their own sake, more than the simple, pure, heavenly and divine communications of God to the soul. These things I do not despise, yes, rather practice and attend to, but to me they are barren husks in themselves; I value them only as the shell that contains the kernel, and if the nut be lacking, or if there be a worm within it, I can trample upon the shell. It is not prayer, but the answer to prayer, that delivers the soul; it is not the ordinance, but He whom the ordinance sets forth, that is food and drink; it is not the preaching, but the Spirit ministered through the preaching (Gal. 3:5), that profits and edifies.

I wish to steer the middle path, not to despise the ordinances of God, and yet not to over-value them; not to make idols of them, and yet not call them Nehushtan (2 Kings 18:4), which means a piece of brass, and a piece of brass only. And my firm conviction is, that God, who is a jealous God, will teach all His people the difference between worshiping an idol and worshiping Him in spirit and in truth. I want God's religion—the Creator's, and not the creature's. I want that pure and heavenly, and yet simple and most blessed religion, which is the gift of God and the work of God. I want that religion which the world hates, the professors cry down, the Ishmaels mock, the Pharisees revile, that illegitimate children ridicule, and the zealots despise. I want that religion which the clean-hearted call licentious, and the workers pronounce idle.

Yes, I want that divine and heavenly religion to stream down into my soul out of the fullness of the God-man which is like rivers of water in a dry and thirsty land—not a religion that will puff up, but abase—not fill the creature full of himself, but empty him into nothingness, and at the same time fill, melt, soften, renew, and warm the soul with the sweet pledges of eternity. Such a religion as this, my dear friends, will not lead *to* sin, but *from* sin, yes, will show sin in its true colors, as that unclean thing which Jehovah hates. This is the universal medicine, the balm of Gilead, which heals the ulcers, cleanses the wounds, and mollifies with ointment the putrefying sore.

But O, my soul! how much of this religion do you possess? You have sometimes the desire after it; you see this land at times a great way off; you now and then break out into a cry after it in the lonely watches of the night, and you cannot be satisfied without it. But what if, instead of enjoying and realizing this heavenly gift, you seem to possess nothing but confusion and emptiness? What if, instead of the good Shepherd pitching fold there, your heart is rather a habitation of dragons and a court for owls? What if the wild beasts of the desert meet there with the wild beasts of the island, and the wild

goats bleat to each other? What if little else but deadness, darkness, vileness, earthliness, filthiness, and uncleanness gush up in your heart? What if blasphemy and infidelity, with all imaginable and unimaginable lustings taint every thought?

Why, put all this together, and add to it the thousand nameless workings and boilings up of your own filthy heart, dear reader, and then you have the picture of the writer's heart. But do not show this dark picture to the holy and the pious; tell it not in the streets of self-righteous Gath, and evangelical Askelon, lest the daughters of the clean-handed triumph. And if you feel and find your heart like mine, keep the doors of your mouth from her that lies in your bosom.

But is this religion? Is not religion to be holy and good, to be free from all sin, and have a heart so pure that a sinful thought never lodges there? Yes, my friends, this is religion—but whose?—man's or God's? This is a religion which nature, reason, and the world approve, but not the way that leads to Zion. I have found that the experience I have of my sinfulness makes me long for and value Christ's atoning blood—that the sense I have of my helplessness leads me to cry for God to help me—that the knowledge which I have of my condemnation teaches me to prize a free grace salvation. But I find I am always expecting to have grace in me, instead of looking for it outside of me. I read of the God of all grace, and I receive it as a most solemn and certain truth that all grace comes from Him; but when I come to experience, I want to find that grace in me which is stored up in the Redeemer; in other words, I want to find some stock of faith, prayer, hope, spirituality and love stored up in my heart, to which I can go as to the money in my purse. But this I cannot find, and because I cannot find it, I feel guilty and condemned. I want a spirit of prayer to dwell in me, and not to be lodged in the hands of the Redeemer. I want to believe when I like, and be spiritual when I like, and mortify sin when I like. But where would grace be then? Would Jesus be its Author and Finisher? Would I pray and cry to Him for it, if I could find it in myself? No! I would act as the rich man does, who, when he wants a supply, goes to his own coffers; and not as the beggar who must go and beg for it.

I saw this very clearly today, as I was taking my solitary walk, and it seemed to encourage me. When I acknowledge Jehovah as the God of all grace, I own that it is in Him, and not in me, and that all I at any time have is His direct and sovereign gift. You know me, I trust, too well to think I am one of those dry and dead Calvinists who abuse this truth to their own destruction, and who, because a man has not a stock of grace, are satisfied without any. No, I only know what grace is by feeling its operations and having it within. He who has it not in his heart will die in his sins.

May the Lord communicate to us, out of His own fullness, abundance of grace. May He work in us cries, sighs, breathings, groanings and wrestlings. May He give us a tender conscience, a contrite spirit, and a filial fear, and fill our souls with real humility, meekness, and godly sorrow, that we may be as a weaned child before Him.

I am glad to hear that the Lord keeps you together as a little band whose hearts He has united. I would be happy to hear that a place was erected for His Name among you, but would counsel attention to be paid to the Lord's parable, Luke 14:28-30; neither would I recommend the modern fashion of running into debt for a chapel as worthy the imitation of a God-fearing people. If all are saved that can crowd into the cottage, it will beat the proportion to be found in many gospel chapels. I am glad to find that Mr. Doe still goes in and out among you. It is a great blessing to have one who does not come with a "Lo, here! and Lo, there;" but can teach us the path from having himself walked in it.

It will not be in my power to accept the invitation of the friends to minister among them during any portion of the summer, as I am already engaged for the time that I shall be absent from Allington; nor do I see any necessity, as you are already provided with a minister, and the places I shall go to are quite destitute. I am much obliged, however, to Mr.— for his kind invitation.

I have heard, since I began this letter, that you are about to commence building a chapel. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon it. May He honor it greatly by His presence, that prayer may be answered there, and abundant supplies of grace communicated to vessels of mercy out of the fullness of the God-man. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. My desire is that it may be a place of sound, savory, and experimental truth, where the illegitimate children will find nothing to bolster them up in their pride and presumption, but where the living family of God will be melted, refreshed, humbled, comforted, strengthened, and revived; yes, that it may be written up when he numbers the people, that this and that man were born there. May we find and feel God stronger than we, and may His rich and abounding grace triumph over all our guilt, sin, and unbelief, yes, above all our continual lustings after those evil and soul-destroying things which God hates.

Greet the friends by name, and present them the Christian affection of a vile sinner, but their sincere well-wisher and affectionate friend,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1837 - 1838)

May 9, 1837

My dear James Brookland,

I am very sorry that it will not be in my power to come to Stadham at the time mentioned in your letter, to open the chapel. A family affliction (the loss of my only brother) requires that I should go to Plymouth before the time

which is fixed to have the chapel opened; and I am afraid that I shall not be able to come to Stadham for that purpose until the last Lord's-day in July. I am quite aware that I said, when I was at Abingdon, that I wished the chapel to be opened before June; but, of course, I could not foresee that affliction which required me to go to Plymouth a month sooner than I intended. I am afraid it will much disappoint the friends to put off the opening of the chapel so long; but as you are not without a place to meet in, I hope they will not object. If they do not like to wait so long, they had better get it opened by some other minister; and I will come, if the Lord wills, to preach in it on the last Lord's-day in July. I wrote to Mr. Tiptaft last week to mention this to the friends, but I have learned that he is not at home.

I know pretty much of the path in which you represent yourself as traveling; a great deal more at times than I like. I have known during these last two years more of trouble, difficulty, perplexity, and confusion than ever I did in my life, and can enter fully into all that you say about yourself. It is to me a very bad sign when a man has no changes, no ups and downs, no heart-sinkings and soul-quakings, no strong cries, at times, for mercy, no sighs, no groans over a body of sin and death, no self-abhorrence, no putting the mouth in the dust and sitting in sackcloth and ashes. Nor do I believe a man will ever be delivered from the power of sin who has not felt what a giant he has to grapple with, nor be delivered from the guilt of it unless he has been first plunged down into the ditch of a polluted nature. A man must hate himself for loving sin, despair of ever being delivered from the dominion of it, and sink away into dreadful fears of being eternally swallowed up by it, before he will find One stronger than he, kinder to himself than he, wiser than he, and more merciful than he, who will intervene in his behalf when his case seems beyond hope and beyond remedy.

And thus a man learns the truth and blessedness of those doctrines of grace which thousands of cuckoos and parrots prate about every day in the week, but which they never can learn aright until they have been down into the low dungeon and had the water flow over their head. When a man has got there, with his prison dress on, and a prison fare, and a treadmill to work upon all day, and a cruel jailer, and solitary confinement, and every now and then a whipping, he cannot boast much about liberty and joy and an assurance never to be damped nor shaken. But, like Joseph of old, he is learning lessons there which will make him a revealer of secrets (Gen. 41:45) when he is sent for, and brought hastily out of the dungeon, and shaves his beard, and changes his clothing, and comes in before the king.

You and I were mighty sticklers for election, and thought how wise we were about it, when we had only learned it as I learned Latin, and as you learned how to plough a straight furrow. It is a great mercy for us if we have been able to vomit up all this head-knowledge, and have been placed at the bottom of the class in Christ's school, to learn of Him who was meek and lowly in heart. For, unless we are so taught, you might as well be as you were when you lay under a haystack, coming from Little Milton; and I might just as well be as proud an orator as when I used to strut up High Street. Divine teaching is the all in all of vital godliness; and where that is lacking, a pick-pocket and a harlot are as good Christians as a chapel-going Calvinist.

I sincerely hope that the little cause at Stadham may be of God, and then who can overthrow it? If it is not, the stones with which it is built might just as well have been used to mend the roads with. Give my Christian love to all the friends.

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend for Truth's sake,
J. C. Philpot.

June 29, 1837

My dear Friend—I received your letter in due course, but, being absent at the time from this place, it was forwarded to me at Devonport, where I was then staying. I am glad that any of my publications should be blessed to your soul, and it causes me no surprise that my Sermon, of which you speak [*The Heir of Heaven*, then in its 4th Edition], should stir up the wrath of empty professors both in and out of the Establishment. What Satan and his children hate is power. Neither he nor they dislike the 'form of godliness', as they have no quarrel with anything which does not disturb his kingdom. Thus dry doctrines, and empty notions, and such husks as the swine eat will go down with thousands who are mortal enemies to vital godliness. Vain confidence, false hopes, groundless assurance, great swelling words about Jesus Christ in the letter, numerous quotations from the Bible, lines of hymns always on the tongue—well varnished over with feigned humility—a pious exterior, fleshly sanctification, and mock spirituality pass current in our day for wonderful attainments in religion. All this whitewash usually covers a filthy sepulcher, abhorred of God, and abhorred by His discerning people.

Those who have had a spiritual discovery of all the hypocrisy, deceitfulness, falsehood, self-righteousness, and natural religion of which our hearts are full can see in professors what professors cannot see in themselves. A Bank of England clerk can detect, in a moment, a forged note, which you or I might take to be genuine. And how does he find it out? By the lack of a certain mark which every genuine note possesses. And thus, let anyone have all the appearance of spiritual religion, if he has not the mark upon his forehead, which the Spirit of God alone can put there, he is not to be received as genuine. He must be a spiritual mourner (Ezek. 9:4) before he will have the mark, and if he has not this stamped upon him the men with the slaughter weapons in their hands will destroy him utterly. All the sheep of Christ, when they have their old dirty torn wool of self-righteousness sheared off, are marked by the Good Shepherd, and there is no fear of His afterwards mistaking them for goats.

I have desired my publisher to procure and send me your edition of "Bunyan on Prayer." I know the little book itself very well, and never read anything which suits my views and feelings about prayer more than what is there set forth. I am deeply convinced that all saving religion is of a supernatural character, that it is the alone gift of Jehovah, who will be gracious to whom He will be gracious; that it cannot be bought, deserved, nor earned; that, whatever it is, it makes a man a new creature; that it is got out of the fire and out of the water; that it is the preparation for a *similar* eternity. Such a

religion as comes down from God Himself into the soul few are acquainted with. Their religion is all, "I this, and I that—something I have done, obtained, or acquired—something I have obtained and procured by my exertions."

It seems to me that the great employment of professors is to keep turning the winch and working at the crane, and that the occupation of the parsons is to stand over them with a heavy whip to keep them up to the work. There is the Sunday School, and the prayer meeting, and the three services, and the week-night preaching, and the exhortation, and the invitation, and the scolding, and the legalization, and the moralization. And then there is the duty of faith, and the duty of love, and the duty of obedience, and the duty of church membership, and the duty of aiding Missionary and Bible societies, and, above all, the duty of paying for a seat and contributing handsomely to the quarterly collections.

This is the crane which the people have to keep working at, and if they do their duty, and keep turning away to the end of their lives, they will, no doubt, crane up their souls to heaven. This is a modern chapel religion, and those who will not work at the crane, but love and contend for a free grace religion, and love to be at God's feet that they may be the clay and He their potter—Oh! these are your lazy, stinking Antinomians; these are the vilest characters, and the most awful, dreadful persons, to be shunned as a plague and abhorred as a pestilence! Even universal charity is inflamed with wrath against these; and if ever the meek, mild, gentle, soft, holy man in the pulpit flares out into righteous zeal and pious indignation, it is against the doctrines and principles of such as make God everything and man nothing. But all these bursts of holy zeal will not trouble nor terrify one with whom the secret is, and who has an eternal, divine, supernatural religion.

I hope to be in London, at Great Alie Street Chapel, if the Lord wills, the first two Lord's-days in August next; but I would advise any who have thought I was much of a preacher to moderate their expectations, as my own feelings tell me I can write better than I can preach.

One of your church ministers, Mr. Powell, was an old friend of mine at Oxford. I fear that his dry doctrines are more suited to feed dead Calvinists than living souls.

Wishing you much of the good old wine of the kingdom in your soul, which is for him that is ready to perish and of a heavy heart (Prov. 31:6), and much of that oil which makes the face to shine, and of the bread which strengthens man's heart (Psalm 104:15), I am, with love to all true pilgrims and contrite souls,

Yours faithfully, for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

July, 1837

My dear Friend—I received your letter in due course, and was able, with some pains, to read its contents. I believe you are an honest man, though

sometimes, like myself, rather a rough one; and this feeling has induced me to answer your letter. I have various correspondents whose letters I never answer, or, if I do, treat them as Joseph did his brethren, and speak roughly to them. Some are too canting, others too abusive; some plaster me over too much, and others hardly treat me with civility. I like honesty, and think half a grain of godly sincerity worth all the empty profession without it, which could be raked together out of all the churches and chapels in London; and I believe that, where a work of grace has passed upon the soul, it has made the heart honest, and, though sin and Satan may damp it for a time, that this divine honesty will break forth.

True religion is a personal thing. The grand question which the soul wants to have settled is this, "Damned or saved?" A man must go down to the root of the matter to have this question answered. A shilly-shally, dilly-dally, half-and-half, milk-and-water religion will not suit a man who feels that he has a soul to be damned or saved. But a sanctified countenance, a feigned humility, a soft manner, a smooth tongue, a retentive memory, and a seat in a Calvinistic chapel make up the religion of hundreds, who know no more of vital godliness than one of your horses. Among his other tricks, Satan has in our day well-near changed the names of things. Honesty he calls rudeness, decision he terms impertinence, faithfulness he names a bitter spirit, freedom from the law he calls Antinomianism, the doctrines of grace he terms doctrines of devils, love to Christ he calls "enthusiasm," and love to the children of God he names party spirit. And so, in a similar way, he calls flattery and cant a gospel spirit, endorsing everybody's religion a candid and sweet disposition, formality and self-righteousness he terms decided piety, and enmity against the truth a holy zeal.

This is a turning of things upside down, and I believe God will one day esteem it as potter's clay, fit only to be trodden under foot. There are two ways of learning religion—one out of the Bible; the other in the soul, under divine teachings.

The first way is 'the religion of the day', but I find that I can't learn my religion in that way. How pleasant it would be if I could take down my Bible and learn a little humility, or get a little faith, or a little love, or a little abiding consolation, from this and that passage, or out of this or that chapter! But I find that I have to learn my religion in a far more painful way than this. I have to learn humility by daily and hourly feeling the plague of my heart and seeing all its abominations exposed to my view. I have to learn repentance by feeling the weight of guilt and the heavy burden of sin. I learn faith by diving deep into, and being well-near drowned by, unbelief and infidelity; and I learn love by a sense of the undeserved goodness of God to the vilest of the vile.

A 'letter religion' is the religion of thousands. Some are Arminians in the letter, and others are Calvinists in the letter. And what is the difference between the two? Hell is the portion of both, if they live and die in a letter religion; and they will one day or other find that 'a few doctrines' will no more quench the flames of hell than a pailful of water will put out a blazing conflagration. But those who never knew anything of the terrible guilt of sin, love a religion as easy as an old glove and as smooth as a bowling green; and,

until God takes them in hand and lets down eternal realities into their soul, they will go on deceiving and being deceived.

Believe me to be, yours sincerely for the truth's sake,
J. C. Philpot

March, 1838

My dear Friend—You will think me, I fear, very negligent in not taking earlier notice of your kind letter; but what with busy occupation at some times and sluggish indolence at others; what with deadness of soul, hardness of heart, and great unwillingness to write at all, having nothing to communicate worth postage. I hope, if you are acquainted with similar exercises, that you will excuse my long silence.

You find, I doubt not, the road to heaven still more difficult, strait and narrow. A corrupt nature, a deceitful heart, an ensnaring world, a lustful flesh, a law in the members, and a body of sin and death will always fight against the life of God in the soul; for as long as the clay tabernacle exists they are enemies within the garrison and are continually plotting to deliver it over to the king of the infernal pit, whose allies they are. Some people seem to have a religious "old man"; but of mine I most freely confess that it is as dead as Lazarus in the tomb, as earthly as the clods of the valley, as sensual as the beasts that perish, as untamable as the wild donkey, as undisciplined as the unicorn (Job 39:5-12), as hard as Pharaoh, and as unbelieving as the lord on whose hand the King of Israel leaned (2 Kings 7:2), nor do I expect him ever to get any better. He hates vital religion, abhors wisdom, loathes instruction, cannot endure chastisement, rebels against discipline, and cannot bear check, head-piece, bit, rein, or martingale.

I don't know whether you have found out all his tricks, wiles, deceit, hypocrisy, fretfulness, blasphemy, infidelity, and devilism. Alas, alas! he is so painted, gilded, adorned, beautified, decorated, trimmed up, varnished, and polished nowadays in churches and chapels, that very few seem to know that he is the same man that murdered Abel, intoxicated Noah, drowned the world, set Sodom on fire, slew six hundred thousand in the wilderness, seduced David unto adultery, led Solomon into idolatry, made Peter swear and curse, and crucified the Lord of glory. But this murderer and liar has become 'pious', and it has been reserved for the enlightened age in which we live to turn enmity into love—flesh into spirit, sin into holiness—a rebel into a friend—and the image of the devil into the mind of Christ.

The thick veil of spiritual blindness and ignorance that is spread over the minds of men sometimes strikes me with astonishment. How few know God or themselves—sin or salvation—the malady or the remedy! All their stock-in-trade religion consists of a few borrowed notions picked up under a pulpit or out of a book. Oh! in what refuges of lies do thousands hide themselves, and then make a covenant with death and an agreement with hell. The work of thousands of ministers is to build up these lying refuges for deluded souls to shelter themselves in. Men unstripped, unhumbled, and unemptied

themselves will never strip or sift others. Judgment must be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet in their own souls first before they will lay them to others; and they may prate with great swelling words about Christ, grace, and the full assurance of faith, when they know no more what grace is than Satan does, and, instead of full assurance, are wrapped up in the most daring presumption.

Christ is only a rock for the shelterless, a refuge for the distressed, a harbor for the shipwrecked, a physician for the leper, a Redeemer for the captive, and a Savior for the lost. A 'letter Christ' is a false Christ, and such empty preaching stocks the land with professors and fills it with hypocrites. But these are said to be "dear men of God, blessed preachers, men of a gospel spirit, ministers sweetly led into the truth," while honest, sincere, God-fearing, and upright laborers are called bigoted, narrow-minded, bitter-spirited; men without any tenderness, meekness, or love; and thus they put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter, and call evil good and good evil.

Your sincere Friend for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

March 3, 1837.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—The first edition of my sermon, [*The Heir of Heaven*] consisting of 1,500 copies, is already exhausted, and a new edition, with a short preface, will appear in a few days. Fowler has had some orders for this also, so that it appears at present likely to sell. More than 500 copies have been disposed of in these parts, and many have read it who never heard me preach. It has made quite a stir at Stamford, and it is thought many more would come to hear me who have hitherto not done so. P— refuses to sell it, as being "contrary to the religion which it professes to illustrate," and has returned all the copies. I have a notion the edge is too keen for his self-righteousness. A—, I have reason to think, is equally afraid of them. But all this will not stop their sale, and Tiptaft says he will sell them at his chapel. I think you gave too great an order when you wished to have 300. I felt my mouth opened the morning that I preached it, and some have preferred my oral to my written discourse, which is, of course, only a resemblance of it.

I am glad you think it sounds like my own thoughts, as R. H. might think I have been dipping into the ample stores of Goodwin and others. I think I am too proud and independent to borrow of others—if I had no other motives to restrain me, and would not readily send abroad into the light of day 'stolen goods'. This I leave to those who have no mind, no original ideas, no real experience, no open door, no decided views for themselves. And I believe stolen goods are sure to be detected, sooner or later, though the construction of them are altered. Nothing but realities will ever stand the brunt of time and trouble. The plated goods wear, the mock luster fades, the potsherd, covered with silver dross, betrays its base original. But gold may be beaten, bruised, worn down, melted, shivered into dust, and each little grain will still say, "I am gold, do what you will to me and grind me down to powder."

**"True faith's the life of God,
Deep in the heart it lies;
It lives and labors under load,
Tho' damped it never dies."**

Realities! realities! What is all the windy blustering noise of preachers worth who will not contend for realities from a real experience of them? Guilt, condemnation, dismal forebodings of judgment, fears of hell, a sight of one's own self—that hideous monster self—cuts out the way for realities. Real guilt needs real pardon, real weakness requires real strength, real wounds need a real cure, real trouble demands real consolation. A sense of one's own dreadful malady cuts to pieces all that empty, formal, superstitious, traditional religion, in which well-near all the churches and chapels of the land seem buried. And when a faithful warner comes, the cry is, "Have you found me out, O my enemy?"

Oh, to be kept from myself! my vile, proud, lustful, hypocritical, worldly, covetous, presumptuous, obscene self. O self! self! Your desperate wickedness, your depravity, your love of sin, your abominable pollutions, your monstrous heart-wickedness, your wretched deadness, hardness, blindness, and indifference; you vile wretch, how you do make my sword droop and palsy all my strength! You are a treacherous villain, and, I fear, always will be such! Do these exclamations find an echo in J. P.'s bosom? Is my heart a copy of his? Is it a looking-glass in which he sees his face reflected? What! no further yet in sanctification? Tell it not! publish it not!

Such feelings, however, my friend, pave the way for sovereign grace to heal all, cure all, cover all, swallow up all. No half measures, no creature contributions, no a little bit here and a little bit there will do for those who feel so weak, so helpless, and so vile. A dose of evening prayer, or a regular chapter of the bible read, or a three-times-a-day attendance at chapel, will not reach such a malady as those groan under, who know themselves and toil in the deep slough of corruption and heart-wickedness. Something deep, powerful, and effectual; something fully commensurate with the disease; something that goes to the very bottom of the case is required, and where that is not obtained all seems lacking. Few know the up-stroke of the great A in religion, who are thought wonderful Christians, and most professors can no more read the mysteries of vital godliness than Belshazzar could read the letters written by the hand upon the wall.

**Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.**

June 3, 1837.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I presume you are, by this time, expecting a letter from me and watching the movements of the postman more than usual. I am happy to say that, through much mercy, I arrived here safely, on the evening of the day on which we parted, about ten o'clock. I was a little fatigued with my journey, which, however, a night's sound sleep dissipated, and I awoke in the morning quite uninjured by my long day's work.

I found my dear mother quite as well as I expected. She seems much reconciled to her loss [the death of her elder surviving son, Augustus Robert], and feels that there are many alleviating circumstances connected with it. I find I have already derived benefit from the change of air, combined with the rest of body which I am able to indulge myself with. I do not think it at all likely that I shall preach here, as I am quite unknown, and mean to continue so if I can.

The religion of the place seems to me to be chiefly 'Bible religion', of which there is a vast abundance of every kind and in every direction. I heard, last Lord's-day evening, John Hawker, a son of the Doctor. If his father were like the son, I would not give a shilling a year for a seat under him. Abundance of Scripture, a copious supply of dry doctrine, a tolerable quantity of pride, and enough presumption to stock half-a-dozen pulpits, seemed to me to make up the sermon. Among other things, he said, "Sin! what is sin? I can't define what sin is! Sin is a principle. The Scriptures say it is a transgression of the Law, and that is all I know about it." I thought if he had tasted the wormwood and the gall, though he might not be able to define the nature of wormwood or explain what gall was composed of, he could have told us what a bitter taste it had, and how many wry faces it causes in those whose mouths are filled with it. Like most ministers whom I hear, he and sin never seem to have fought with drawn swords. As usual, he was "established in Christ;" far too established for a poor creature like me, driven up and down by every vile lust and abomination.

I find hearers and preachers must be like mortise and tenon. Unless there be a fitting in of feelings there can be no union, and they are barbarians one to the other. I could see, plainer than ever, that dead Calvinism is the best weapon that Satan has to harden the hearts and sear the consciences of unhumiliated professors. I find almost everywhere the same great mistake—'Bible religion' substituted for 'soul religion'. Believe me, it is here and there only a pilgrim who knows anything of the latter, while thousands on thousands have an acquaintance with the former. As to myself, I often feel that hitherto I know nothing as I ought to know, and at present am only groping for the wall like the blind, and groping as if I had no eyes. I am full of confusion, and often full of condemnation, and still more often think, act, and talk as one without God in the world.

I find I can do very little to my intended publication, partly from indolence, partly from disinclination, and partly from weakness of my eyes. Of all places that I know, this is the worst for the eyes, from the dazzling glare produced by the limestone with which the streets are paved and the houses built. All people, but especially strangers, complain of it. The beauty of the scenery here, the many lovely prospects afforded by a large harbor, enclosed by wooded heights and occupied by noble ships, and the many pretty walks in a rich country, have all tempted me to more exercise than at Allington, and I have already derived benefit from the change. The weather, too, has been fine and warm, and thus I have been able to walk out every day. I have not yet arrived to that degree of perfect sanctification to be dead to all the charms of nature and wonders of art, and can gaze with pleasure on a lovely expanse of blue sea, or on a noble three-decker lying at anchor, as the masterpiece of human skill and ingenuity. Though all things are deadening

where God is not, yet I would feel happy to have no worse thoughts than those which arise in my mind as I view the beautiful arm of the sea in which my brother-in-law's noble ship stands out of the clear blue water as a moving fortress, weighing more, probably, than 2,000 tons, and yet moved by every wave, and swinging to and fro at every tide.

I called on a friend at Exeter on my journey. I found they had had there a minister, but he was obliged to leave. He was one of your 'dead Calvinists', and had a great knowledge of the word, and a great aptitude at quoting it. But texts and chapters are a poor bulwark against sin. That giant easily runs his spear through such a wooden shield as a memory well stored with passages, and a prating tongue that can repeat them by dozens. A small portion of godly fear will do more against sin than a Concordance, or even Bagster's Family Bible with a million of marginal references. A 'paper religion' is a poor affair. The ten commandments, written by God Himself, could not stand a fall from the hand of Moses, and how can a paper creed stand when a stone decalogue was broken to shivers? The Law, written on fleshy tables of the heart, can alone endure both fire and water, and a living epistle, will outlast a dead letter, as a living hedge will outlast a dead hedge that is rotten. But whereas two of your laborers could put up the one in a day, while the other requires months and years to make it a hedge at all, so a dead religion can be put up under a sermon, while a living one needs many revolving seasons to make it grow. It must be cut and pruned, and hoed and weeded, and beaten and well-near cut through, and laid flat, before it will become a fence to keep out intruders. A dead hedge needs none of this. A few dry doctrines for stakes, and an ample supply of cant and worldly policy for willow-poles to interweave the stakes with, and a hole dug in natural conscience, by the bar of Moses, are all that is needed for a dead hedge to be made up. It will last a few years, and is sometimes useful to protect the young ones from being nibbled off by goats, but its end is to be burned, and, sooner or later, it finds its way to the oven. I dare say you often think your religion, if it has life at all, is something like the hedge round the orchard, which you have spent so much money and pains upon. O, for a little real, genuine, Divine, God-given, supernatural, eternal life! Nothing else will preserve soul and body from stinking with putrefaction in the nostrils of a holy God!

I hope you find the "coal-heaver" [William Huntington, S.S.] improves as you dig deeper into him. I believe he will be known and valued, just as we know little or much of experimental religion. The world, profane and professing, knows not true Christians, because it knew not Christ. It can understand everybody but a gracious soul, and love every one but a child of God. And let me whisper this in your ear, that a sound creed, and a mere profession of experimental religion, too, cannot open a man's eyes to see, nor his heart to love, the secret track of a living soul. Therefore, friend Parry, marvel not if Particular Baptists' churches and ministers hate you as bad as Wesleyans and Independents.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

September 13, 1837.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I presume the harvest has found so much occupation for your hands, that it has left none for your fingers. The driving-whip and the pony-bridle have been in such requisition that the ink has become moldy in the stand, and the penknife covered with rust. As, however, you are at no time fond of writing, and as this uncertain weather must have given you more than your usual harvest occupation, I can readily excuse you. I believe, however, a letter from me finds a welcome at Allington, and therefore, without further delay, I send you a few lines.

I have now fulfilled half of my engagement at Manchester, and have no reason to regret coming into these parts. I cannot, indeed, well say how I have been received by Gadsby's people, but I have reason to believe with some measure of acceptance. I judge more from the size and attentiveness of the congregation, and scattered hints, than from any positive direct testimony. North country people usually are not flatterers, and you know that I am not much of a vestry man, or a gadder about from house to house. A good many ministers, methinks, who run about to pick up tit-bits of flattery, would not like to hear all the remarks made upon them even by their professed friends, and did every stick and stone which were hurled at them behind their backs fall upon their skin, they would be too sore to preach the Sunday following. As, however, the deacons have waited upon me to ask me to stay over another Lord's-day, it seems as though they were not fully tired of me. I declined their invitation, as I had previously promised to be at Stamford on October 1, and could not disappoint the friends there.

I have some thoughts of publishing a sermon which I preached at Oakham on Lord's-day morning, August 20, from Isaiah 18:5, 6. [The well-known sermon, *Winter afore Harvest; or, The Soul's Growth in Grace.*] It is the same text that I preached from at Trowbridge, but I could not get into my subject as I did at Oakham, and most probably the printed sermon will differ from both. The text was opened to me one morning at Devonport as I was reading the chapter, and I saw in it a path traced out of which I knew something experimentally. I therefore took it at Trowbridge, but could not get into it, and as I felt a great desire to open up that line of experience at Oakham, I preached from it there, and was more favored with an entrance into it and an utterance out of it than at Trowbridge. The people, I believe, heard it well, and as it seemed to me a path in which many of God's children walk, when I came here and found more than my usual leisure for writing, I felt inclined to put it upon paper. After I had written some pages, I mentioned my intention in a letter to Oakham, and have since heard from Tiptaft that the friends there had a wish to have the sermon in print before I mentioned the subject. Thus there seems a 'coincidence of inclinations' unknown to each, and this has given me encouragement to persevere in my undertaking.

I was pleased with my visit to Liverpool, and heard a minister there—a Mr. Kent with great satisfaction. His congregation on the week night did not exceed twelve people. He is building a new chapel at the expense of £1,600, and wishes me to come and assist Gadsby in opening it; it will not be ready until November. I made myself known to him, and was very cordially received, and sat an hour with him the day following. We conversed very pleasantly upon experimental religion, and did not at all jar. He invited me to

preach for him, but as I have declined all invitations, I was compelled to refuse. Many invitations have come to me from the neighboring towns, in most of which some place in connection with Gadsby's is to be found. But I find preaching in this large chapel, twice on the Lord's-day and once in the week (Tuesday evening), quite as much as I can get through. Last Lord's-day I had a cold upon me, and found it hard work before I concluded the day, as I exceeded the hour both times. The congregation was very large, exceeding probably 1,200 people, and I believe I exerted myself more than was needful, as a lower pitch of voice might have been heard all over the chapel. I have, in other respects, through mercy, been pretty well, though I think the Oakham air suits me better than the Manchester. I intend (D.V.) to preach at Leicester, September 28, on my way to Stamford, and mean to be at Stamford the three first Lord's-days in October, and at Oakham the two last in October and the first in November.

I hope the Lord was with Smart, and that you and the friends heard him profitably. You are doubtless reckoning now upon Tiptaft's visit, and getting your appetites well sharpened up to the feeding point. He is an honest, sincere man, and such God will bless.

My religion at times seems altogether gone, and at the bottom of the Kennet and Avon Canal. I have had some heavy steps along its banks, and sighs enough to ruffle its waters.

I have not found many 'sinners' at Manchester. They talk about trials and deliverances, but so few seem to have had a battle with sin, or know what a giant he is. All seem to have buried him and preached his funeral sermon, and, like Giant Pope and Giant Pagan, he seems only able to grin at the pilgrims, and abide in his cave; but he and I cannot keep so far asunder. I know he has cost me a good many groans and sighs, and yet, to this day, he cleaves to me as the collar of my coat; yes, he is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, and is not a neighbor but an in-dweller.

I find Warburton's manuscript [the well-known *Mercies of a Covenant God*.] will cost me a great deal of labor. Mr. J. Gadsby put it into the hands of a schoolmaster to copy and correct the bad grammar, but he has sewed so much gold fringe upon John's plain cloth, that my present employment is to rip it all off. He has altered John's plain, straightforward language, and made him talk like a schoolmaster, so that my present tedious task is to compare the two copies line by line, and word by word, and restore the original language. This, with numerous letters, and my sermon from Isaiah 18:5, 6, leaves me scarcely any leisure time for anything else. Give my Christian love to all the friends of Jesus, and believe me,
Your sincere and affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

October 21, 1837.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I can readily imagine you and our mutual friend Tiptaft walking over the farm together, conversing, sometimes on things temporal, and sometimes on things spiritual, and on each and all

finding your opinions not very far asunder. It will give me great satisfaction to hear that our valued friend has been blessed to your soul and to the souls of the people of God, and that your drooping hearts have been revived under him.

I arrived here on Friday, and am, through mercy, well and strong in bodily health. I have recovered the fatigue of my Manchester labors, and feel better than I have done for some time. The spirit of hearing at Stamford increases rather than diminishes, and I have never yet seen the chapel so crowded as during this last visit. The beautiful weather and dry walking have, no doubt, lent their powerful aid. As there is such a desire after the word, I have felt induced to half promise that I will come again in the spring, for March and April, previous to my going to London in May, being the first of those months at Stamford, and the second at Oakham. I scarcely expect that this will please my Allington friends, but when I see the great thirst after the word in these parts it makes me feel willing to come among them. That I should come in March was Mr. de Merveilleux's proposal, and did not come from Oakham; and it was chiefly seeing the large congregations, and the great desire for preaching at Stamford, that induced me to think seriously of his proposal. How far the work may be of God I will not undertake to decide, and I am sure, so much do I feel of my own vileness and dreadful wickedness, that it astonishes me either to be ever blessed myself or to be blessed to others. I hope Tiptaft will go to Stamford when he comes into these parts, as there is a great desire to hear the truth. Mr. de Merveilleux proposes to build a gallery in his chapel, but I don't much encourage him to do so, as there is so little probability of constant preaching. He is somewhat better in health, but his chest is still very tender.

I like one of the friends here, but it is young days with him, and he and Giant Sin have not fought many battles. He has never been dashed down by the giant seizing him by the collar of his coat, nor rolled over and over in the stinking ditch of loathsome nature. I wish that giant did not lay hold of me so often and so dreadfully bruise my bones. I could wish at times never to sin more, and not receive such cruel wounds; and at other times I think my conscience is altogether seared and I shall live and die a reprobate. I often see myself an outcast from God and man, and think I shall either be cut down by some sudden judgment or short disease, or die in sullen despair. I am sure I have no reason to love sin, as I have tasted the wormwood and the gall, but if I loved it not my conflict would cease. I am sure we pay very dear for the transient pleasures of sin, and they leave little else but ashes in the mouth after we have sucked the first fruit. Divine things leave no sting, nor cutting remorse behind them, but are like the money we give to any of the Lord's needy family, which, though it may cost a momentary struggle, leaves no guilt and sorrow behind.

They are looking forward here to Tiptaft's visit in January. Reading does here better than at Stamford, but it is very hard to carry a cause on, especially in its infancy, by reading sermons every Sunday. People are so accustomed to preaching from infancy that reading seems hardly worship at all, and this is much the case at Stamford, where there are many people who would give up their seats at other places of worship, if there were constant preaching at North Street. Their cry is, "What are we to do?" To which my

answer is, that it is better to hear truth read than error preached. I may seem, perhaps, more drawn to Stamford than I was. If so, it is for two reasons—(1) Because I have felt at home in the pulpit there; and (2) because I feel there is a desire after experimental preaching. Tiptaft was heard very well there the last time, and I sincerely hope he will go again.

The Leicester friends wish me to preach there on my way, and I think I shall most likely comply. I wish to see Tiptaft before he leaves for London, and fully intend (D.V.) preaching for him on November 19, and at Allington, November 26. You will then have me for three months before I again start on my travels. I cannot expect you to enter into my feelings as a minister, nor can I enter into yours. Where I am well heard, and feel myself at home in the pulpit, there I like to go, and where I am shut up, there I feel unwilling to set my feet in the stocks. At Allington, however, I have felt at home often, and feel a union with some who worship there, never to be dissolved. Go wherever I may, I shall meet with no kinder or dearer friends than some there. I said at Leicester, speaking of my exercises in leaving the Church, that I had found kinder, better, dearer friends since I left it, and had had every need more liberally supplied, than when I was dependent. I am sure I have had more money to give away, as what comes in liberally opens the heart to go out liberally, while a certain small income pinches you up into dross. You know your income and dare not exceed it. Mine was one I could not sink if I would.

October 22.—We have had two large congregations today, and this afternoon quite overflowing. I never saw the chapel fuller. I was not at home in the morning, but more so this afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. de M. and Miss L. came from Stamford. He seems quite decided on enlarging the chapel and building a gallery, and calculates on an accommodation for 150 being thus afforded. They think at Nottingham that ministers should leave it to God to sift tares from wheat. S— has been preaching against baptism, and sprinkled openly six children. They wish me to go again to Nottingham, but I think I shall decline on account of S—'s errors and speaking against baptism. I might as well unite with free-will as infant sprinkling. Though not always prating about it, I cannot bear to have baptism spoken against, as a part of the faith delivered to the saints. I never saw an argument against it worth a straw. S— thought the eunuch was sprinkled because he would not like to ride in his wet clothes! So Queen Candace's treasurer had not a change of clothing, nor even a portmanteau.

I shall hope to hear from Tiptaft while with you, and that when he has left, you will favor me with a long letter. Give him my sincere and affectionate love. I earnestly desire that the Lord may bless him, and believe that He will. I have seen him taken and myself left; him a vessel of mercy and me of wrath. I hope when I have finished Warburton's MS. to go on with my sermon, which is at a complete standstill.

My love to Dredge and all Christian friends.

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

November 8, 1837.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—If you measure me by yourself you will not conceive writing letters so pleasant a task as to expect two of me before I return to Allington. One, I believe, must satisfy you this time. I intend, God willing, to leave Oakham on the 15th, and hope to arrive at Abingdon that evening. I have been wanted to preach at Newbury, but I cannot fully settle when until I have seen Tiptaft. I am glad he was so well heard at Allington. You, I doubt not, had much pleasant conversation with him, and found in him a listening ear as well as a ready tongue.

The spirit of hearing at Oakham, and the anxiety of the people, greatly induced me to remain so long here. As I was sitting in the pulpit the last Sunday I was there, and viewing the congregation and their eagerness to hear, I felt I was about to return to a comparatively thin chapel, and the desire to preach to a people so willing to hear arose in my mind. And this it was which led me to lend a more willing ear to Mr. de Merveilleux, when he asked me to return in the spring. The general impression here was that I meant to stay the winter, which I never thought of doing since last July. Our congregations here continue unabated, and as we have been favored with fine Sundays, it enables the distant hearers to come. I don't think any hearers can be fair judges of ministers. They, of course, think of themselves, and if they hear well, and love a minister, they want to keep him all to themselves. He, on the other hand, where he feels life and a blessing to attend his ministry, is drawn to that place, and where he meets a hungry people, is willing to give them such food as he has. And I dare say we wanderers contract a roving disposition and like change.

Popularity, too, has its dangerous charms, and large congregations please the carnal mind. But I think I am so well weighted and ballasted by temptations and sins, that popularity has less charms for me than many. A man full of evil, and that continually, has not much to be proud of, and his fear is lest God should stop his mouth or cut him down for his presumption. As a farmer you are not very proud of your diseased lambs, and as a preacher I cannot be very proud of my diseased prayers and sin-stained sermons. Neither can I boast much of my daily backslidings, hardness of heart, discontent, vileness, and abominable filthiness. I at times know not what will become of me, and fear I shall live and die a reprobate. I find sin has such power over me, and, though I call on the Lord again and again for deliverance, seem to be as weak as ever when temptation comes.

"O you hideous monster, sin,
What a curse have you brought in!"

I love it, I hate it; I want to be delivered from the power of it, and yet am not satisfied without drinking down its poisoned sweets. It is my hourly companion and my daily curse, the breath of my mouth and the cause of my groans, my incentive to prayer and my hinderer of it, that which made a Savior suffer and makes a Savior precious, that which spoils every pleasure and adds a sting to every pain, that which fits a soul for heaven and that which ripens a soul for hell. Friend Joseph, can you make out my riddle?

"Is your heart as my heart?" said one of old. "Then come up into my chariot." We shall quarrel by the way unless "as in water face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man." Black men will not form a good regiment with white ones, and clean hands will not do to show dirty hands with. I believe I shall never live and die a Pharisee. I must come in among the sinners, the ragged regiments of adulterous Davids, idolatrous Manassehs, swearing Peters, persecuting Sauls, fornicating Corinthians, railing thieves, and self-abhorring publicans. Pardon, to the innocent, is a word of six letters—and that is all. Redemption, to the self-saved, is a Bible term—no more; and some of them say it is a universal term, and others a particular term; and the one quotes an Arminian, and the other a Calvinistic text, and with these sticks they belabor one another's heads. While a lost, sin-bitten, bulrush-bowing, (Isaiah 58:5) half-desperate, ditch-plunged, black-hearted wretch, up to the neck in guilt, cries for its individual application as his only remedy and only hope.

I at times quite despair of salvation, and then again am as careless as if hell had no wrath, and heaven no love; as if sin had no wormwood, and pardon no sweet; as if there were no God to mark evil, and no devil to tempt to it. So my friend you must not expect to find your winter fireside companion much grown in progressive sanctification and creature holiness.

You say very little about my leaving you again in March; I suppose, from thinking me too obstinate and self-willed to listen to anybody's will and advice but my own. I shall hope, however, to have some pleasant conversations with you during the dreary months so rapidly coming on. I am glad to hear all your family are well, and desire my kind love to all the children. My kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. T., Mrs. C., and your kind lady, and believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

April 30, 1838.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I was sorry to learn, through a most kind and affectionate letter from our dear friend Dredge, that you were so much troubled at the mention which I made in my last letter of my intention to settle here. Believe me, my dear friend, that had it not been for my being under the necessity of fixing on some settled place of abode, I would have paused very long before I relinquished my post at Allington; and had I continued, as might, perhaps, have been best for me, unmarried, I should have felt very unwilling to leave that abode, which not only your kindness and hospitality, but also our union in divine things, rendered always so comfortable. I shall never forget that for nearly three years our friendship, instead of diminishing, has only kept continually increasing, and that during all that time no unkind word, or, I believe, even look, has passed between us. Whatever unkind thoughts or feelings Satan or our vile hearts have coined, they have mercifully been confined within our own bosoms. As you never thwarted or opposed me, and, indeed, were only anxious to anticipate my wishes, I cannot take much credit to myself for evenness of temper, as I know not how sullen and growling I might have been had you often trampled on

my toes; and you are well aware that I have two or three corns which will not bear much treading upon. And as to my reception by yourself and a few others, as a minister, all I can say is, that I most fully believe that both you and a few others thought by far too well of me, and were blind to great defects which I daily see and feel in myself. Nor do I ever expect to find, wherever I go, hearers, on the whole, comparable to a few at Allington, who understood, received, and felt my drift and line of things, so as in most things that we could see eye to eye, and feel heart to heart, with each other. I feel a real soul union to a few there, who, as our friend Dredge once truly expressed it, met together to worship God aright. And it was the desire of my soul not to read for reading's sake, nor pray for praying's sake, nor preach for preaching's sake, but to be so favored with the presence and power of the blessed Spirit in each and all, that our souls might be refreshed thereby. And though, through weakness of the flesh, hardness of heart, deadness of soul, temptations of Satan, and withdrawings of God's presence, I was often bound, fettered, and shut up in heart and tongue; yet this I can say, to the honor and glory of God, if ever I felt my heart solemnized in prayer, or my soul enlarged and mouth opened in preaching—if all was not delusion and a subtle refinement of nature counterfeiting the operation of grace—I have felt both in Allington pulpit. I have felt something like what Bunyan mentions ("Grace Abounding," section 282) with respect to the things I have there contended for, "methought I was more than sure that those things which I asserted were true."

I was much pleased with friend Dredge's kind letter, and felt a real soul union to him. A few real, gracious, heaven-taught souls, how preferable a thousand times is their friendship to all the canting, whining, "brother this" and "sister that" of empty professors!

When a man begins to doubt, and fear, and question for himself, he will find similar exercises respecting others, and universal charity will wither away from the root. You and I, my friend, cannot say that sin has no dominion over us. Alas! Alas! We feel its power daily and hourly; and we sigh and groan at times to be delivered from the giant strength of those corruptions, which seem to carry us away captive at their will. Though sin is a sweet morsel to our carnal mind, it grieves our soul, cuts up our evidences, removes our landmarks, and often seems to make our salvation impossible. Oh, what snares and temptations does the cunning devil lay for our feet, and seldom do we see the snare before we feel the smart! And a preacher, too! Oh, I think if I were seen in my right colors, and if that window, of which the Wesleyans talk, were placed in my bosom, what filth and vileness would be seen! I am sure I must be a monument of grace and mercy if saved from the guilt, curse, and power of sin.

Few know what sin is. Who would think one spark of fire, on which your little boy could tread and extinguish, could burn down your ricks, barns, house, and everything where it could reach, or on which it could feed? Such is sin. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindles." We feel we have no strength against sin, and we are sure that the blood of Christ alone can cleanse from sin's guilt and filth, and His grace alone from its power and dominion.

I arrived here on Friday last, and preached yesterday to two large congregations. I felt shut up in the morning, but more at home in the afternoon.

As a convenient house does not offer at Stamford, we think of lodgings for the first year or so. I think most probably we shall be married in July. Give my love to friend Dredge, Mrs. Wild, etc. etc.

Your affectionate fiend,

J. C. P.

June 4, 1838.

To Joseph Parry,—Here at length, then, my dear friend, am I in this busy metropolis, where, as far as the eye sees, well-near all are seeking their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's; and yet here, doubtless, there is a remnant, according to the election of grace.

I was sorry to hear of your heavy loss of ewes. I dare say these trials in Providence, which you have lately so much suffered, have been both embers and bellows to the carnal mind, which is enmity against God; but sure I am that the letter of the word, as well as the universal experience of the living family, testify that providential losses and crosses are marks for, and not against, those who fear God.

I preached twice yesterday to two large congregations; the evening one might be called overflowing, as the forms were filled up all the aisles, and many sat and stood upon the stairs of the galleries and the windows. I cannot say that I felt much at home in the morning, but had more of a door of utterance in the evening. But, indeed, I feel myself very unfit to preach either in London or anywhere, and would much sooner tarry at Jericho until my beard be grown. I hope, however, the Zoar friends did not think my sword had been lying unused ever since I saw them, and was covered, blade and handle, with a thick coating of rust. I felt, towards the close of my sermon, that I cared for nothing and nobody so long as I cleared my own conscience, and I desired that every arrow should pierce through the joints of the armor into the heart. That, however, I must leave in the hands of Him who has twice said that power belongs unto God.

I was not so fatigued with my exertions as I expected, and feel today, notwithstanding my broken rest, pretty comfortable and strong. I have walked about a good deal today, and am just returned from hearing the Jew, who said some good things; but not exactly in our line. I intend (D.V.) hearing him again, as he preaches near here every Monday evening, and is very sound in the letter of truth, as well as preaches more experience than most of the London ministers. I see, from his preaching, how defective I am in bringing forward Scripture. He quotes it very much, and often much to the point. I intend taking the opportunity of hearing various ministers while in town, that I may feel more what it is to be a hearer, and what food and what preaching feeling souls need.

I was pleased to hear, from Dredge's letter to S—, that he hears Kay so well. It will be quite a providence if you can have him occasionally, as you are likely to be so destitute. I believe him to contend for right things, and to bear many marks of Divine teaching. I do not, however, conceive that he will be permanently attended with crowded congregations.

I find this busy city very distracting at times to my mind, and am too much carried away by its noise and glare. Yet I walk about its streets as one who has no communion with its busy crowds. I heard this morning old Mr. Wilkinson, near the Bank, preach. He appears to be a good old man, but is very smooth, and would by his preaching take in hundreds. He was speaking about the sin against the Holy Spirit, and almost intimated his belief that it could not now be committed. He is the last left of Romaine's school, and is sound in the letter of truth. The aisle was quite full, and I stood during the whole time. I find there are very few preachers that can really hit the right nail on the head. I saw in the old gentleman's sermon, this morning, abundant places for discrimination and separation from the vile, which he never alluded to. No one that I hear ever insinuates a doubt whether there be such a thing as a counterfeit religion and a false experience. The old gentleman would make the stockbrokers look about them if he talked about forged notes and dishonored bills. The walls of his church form a part of Capel Court, where the Stock Exchange is situated, and many of his hearers are brokers there. I receive most days invitations to preach, but am compelled to decline them all, as having to speak two evenings at Zoar besides my labors on the Lord's-day. You are looking, no doubt, to Tiptaft's coming among you, and expecting much pleasure and profit, both from his preaching and conversation. I shall be very glad to hear that the Lord has blessed him both in the pulpit, and the parlour. As I have to speak this evening, allow me to wind up thus hastily by signing myself,
Your sincere and affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

My Christian love to the friends.

June 12, 1838.

My dear Friend Joseph Parry,—I received your kind letter safely; and as the wetness of the afternoon allows me a leisure hour, I answer it thus early.

I have now fulfilled half my engagement at Zoar, and have reason to be thankful for having been helped thus far. I have never, I think, more sensibly felt my unfitness and unworthiness for the pulpit than during my visit to town this time; and this not because I have been altogether left to my own miserable barrenness and nothingness, or because I have been more than usually shut up and restrained. No! I have reason to be thankful that I have been enabled to contend for the things of salvation with such a measure of utterance as is commonly given to me. The morning congregation yesterday (Sunday) was very large, and besides the seats and galleries, the aisles were fully occupied, benches being placed up the middle one. I cannot say that I felt much at home. After service, I received five different invitations to preach, that is—at Dunmow, Essex; at Winchmore Hill; at a place on the road to Brighton; at Mr. Fowler's, Gower Street; and for the Aged Pilgrims'

Friend Society. Of these I could only accept one, that is, the last, as I find that preaching twice at Zoar on the Lord's-day, giving an exhortation, as they call it—though I make a short sermon of it—on Tuesday evening, and preaching again on Thursday evening, is ample work for my weak chest. On yesterday evening the congregation was very large, there being a row of standers as well as sitters up the middle aisle, and all the lobby and porch quite full too.

Well, you will say, did not old nature swell up and puff at such a sight? Ah, my friend, I had ample valves to let out all this stinking gas. First, I felt that novelty and excitement would draw a congregation, where there was no power from on High; and that a man who would preach a sermon standing on his head, would draw ten times as large a congregation as I. Grimaldi turned preacher would fill St. Paul's Cathedral to suffocation. Secondly, I felt my ignorance and lack of experience, my deep pollution and sinfulness, and utter unfitness and unworthiness to be a teacher and leader of the people.

I was enabled, however, to contend for the power of vital godliness, and the attending deficiencies and obstacles of the way, and endeavored to show that it was no easy or common thing to be a Christian. I particularly aimed my shafts against those who, according to their preaching, were in the third heaven, and yet never spoke of trials proportionate to their faith.

Mr. Triggs, of Plymouth, was my immediate predecessor, and I am told fills the chapel very much. They say there are but four or five ministers who fill the place, among whom they reckon Kershaw. Tiptaft, and my unworthy self. I had almost resolved that I would not break the bread at Zoar this time, but Justins pressed me so warmly, and saying that the friends wished me so much to do it, that I felt I could not decline. I think you know my aversion to putting myself thus prominently forward, and I can say I scarcely ever felt more sensibly unfit and unworthy. But my frame was solemnized, and I was enabled to pray and speak with some simplicity. The galleries were nearly full of spectators, and I dare say some remarks which I dropped upon 'closed communion' did not suit many. One woman came into the vestry afterwards to set me right, which she failed in doing, though I received her experience, which she told me, as a striking one.

A lady at Kensington, a widow, who has an establishment for twenty-four young ladies, came to me in the vestry last Tuesday, and had an interview with me yesterday. I cannot narrate all her history, but it appears she has been under spiritual exercises for some years. About two years ago a friend put into her hand my pamphlet about the Church of England, which, according to her account, opened her eyes and drove her out of the Establishment. Not able to find food among the Dissenters, she joined a party who met to read and expound the Scriptures. On discovering that some of the party lived in known and justified sin, she left them, and meditated returning to the Church; but a singular coincidence threw "Winter afore Harvest" into her hands, which decided her never to go back; and learning from the *Gospel Standard* that I was to be at Zoar, she determined to come and see me, and take my advice what to do. Seeing me so young, and, as I suppose, ruddy as youthful David, she thought she could not open her mind to me, until I took a text which had been applied to her mind with power some years ago, and then she determined to come forward and ask my advice how to act. She said

she did not mind losing all her scholars if she could but know where to go to hear and what to do. I liked some things she said; but she has been badly nursed. She is quite a lady in her manners and appearance, but says she cares not how mean and poor her companions are, if she could but hear truth. I could give her no advice but to seek counsel of the Lord.

Poor Fowler broke a blood-vessel again on Saturday, and of course could not preach yesterday. The deacons wished me to preach for him tomorrow, but being published here I could not. I thank you for your kind invitation for myself and fair companion, which I hope to accept in due time. I cannot fix exactly the time, as it will depend on our visit to Plymouth. I think of staying in town a week, and then of going to see my mother, but you may depend upon it I will endeavor to give you what time I can. I hope you will write often, as, believe me, I would sooner hear from you than most of my correspondents. I have written a short P.S. to Tiptaft. And now, my dear friend, with my Christian love to friend Dredge and all the friends, from
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

June 22nd, 1838.

My dear Miss Richmond,—I am sorry that it will not be in my power to accept your kind invitation, and that of the friends, to come to Stadham, as my engagements have been made for some time, and I have already refused several invitations since I came to town. It would, indeed, give me pleasure to see my old friends at Stadham and the neighborhood, and converse with them on the things that belong to our everlasting peace, and the many and various ups and downs that we meet by the way.

I find myself in the old track still, nor can I get into a smoother road. But in my right mind, and that is a rare mind to be in, I feel it is a better and safer path than the vain confidence of puffed-up professors. It is easy for a dead, unfeeling soul to presume, but it is hard for a living God-fearing soul to believe. Servants ride upon horses, a vain thing to save a man, while princes walk as servants upon the earth. Surely, there are many whose excellency (in their own estimation) mounts up to the heavens, and whose head (not their hearts) reaches unto the clouds, and yet they shall never see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter, but the heaven shall reveal their iniquity, and the earth (God's children) shall rise up against them (Job 20). The whole testimony and spirit of the word of everlasting truth is to put down the mighty from their seats, and exalt them of low degree; to fill the hungry with good things, and to send the rich empty away. Thus the lame take the prey, the blind see out of obscurity and out of darkness, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor in spirit have the gospel preached to them. But if we are never feelingly and experimentally lame, blind, leprous, deaf, dead, and poor, surely we can have no fitness for, nor interest in gospel blessings.

I trust I learned lessons in your little village, which have been, and are now, profitable to me since I have been brought out more into the public ministry of the word; and the experience I there had, often in sickness and sorrow, of

the deceitfulness, hypocrisy, pride, presumption, vileness, and desperate wickedness of my heart, as well as of God's mercy and goodness, have, I trust, in some faint and feeble measure qualified me to testify of the inward evils of the heart in others, and to contend for a free-grace salvation, experimentally made known.

I am now in this large metropolis, where I believe amid all its wickedness and abominations God has a living family, and the chapel where I preach, though large, is very fully attended. Amid the many scores of ministers, there seem to be few indeed who are privileged to undo heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free. Most are groveling in the dregs of Arminianism, or soaring aloft in the regions of 'letter Calvinism'. Few, it appears to me, feed the flock of slaughter.

I have heard very recently from Oakham, and am glad to say that Mr. Tiptaft is better. Preaching, however, so much injures his health, that he has been compelled to give up for a time. Both he and the people feel much his being thus laid aside. As to my own health, it has been, through mercy, considerably better than when I was at Stadham, the damp situation of which never agreed with me. I have enjoyed, too, better health since I left Allington, and suffer now less from preaching twice than once when at Stadham.

I am glad to hear that Brookland has been promoted from the barn to overlook his fellow-workmen, and sincerely hope the Lord will make him faithful to his earthly master. He will have many temptations to be otherwise, and Satan will lie hard upon him to cast him into a snare, and thus thrust him down; and then the ungodly would shout. I understand Mr. Kay was lately at Stadham. I hope the Lord was with him to bless the word.

Remember me affectionately to the friends who worship in your little place. Greet them by name. Were I to mention some and omit others, the latter might think I had forgotten them or neglected them, when I had not. I remember most with Christian affection, and would be glad to see them once more in the flesh.

Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

August 8, 1838

My dear Friend, Mr. Parry— We arrived here safely, through mercy, on Thursday evening, after a rough passage. . . . I was not sorry to go ashore and leave the steam-vessel and all its disagreeable accompaniments behind. I was thankful, however, at the protection granted by an unseen Hand, when there were so many provocations of the great majesty of Heaven.

I propose (D.V.) to continue here until about the 23rd, when I think of leaving, in order to be at Allington for the last Lord's-day in this month. This will enable me to be with you seven or eight Lord's-days before I take my flight to Oakham and Stamford. I have not heard from Tiptaft since he reached Oakham. I much fear he will not be better unless he consents to lie

by for a time and give himself rest. I believe he will give up his Manchester engagement. . . .

I am well and deeply convinced that a man can neither distress nor comfort himself, bring his soul into bondage nor deliver it into liberty. The Lord kills and makes alive. I often feel as if I were utterly dead in sin and had never received a spark of divine life out of the fullness of the Godhead. I seem as dark, as blind, as earthly, and as sensual as any worldling. I know well that nothing can rouse me out of this state but trials and afflictions, yet my flesh cries out for a smooth and easy path. If I had not at times some breathings after the living God, I must conclude I had not a spark of vital godliness. I am glad to learn that you heard Tiptaft profitably, and hope that you found Smart's testimony blessed to your soul.

I received a letter the other day from a gentleman, a hearer of mine, in London, in which he said that he had met a gentleman, a hearer of Mr. Huntington's, who expressed himself willing to take a chapel on his own responsibility, with the full conviction that I should raise and keep a congregation in the metropolis. I felt, however, little disposed to attend to any such intimation, knowing my ignorance and weakness, and lack of sufficient grace and gifts, experience and power, for the great metropolis. I need to be taught much more deeply and powerfully before I can stand up as a leader of God's people. I am only fit for lispers and stammerers, and inquirers of the way to Zion. I know well what I need, but to get it is out of my power, and I would probably kick and rebel were it even now given me in the Lord's own way.

I was glad to find that the Lord had opened your heart to sell your corn at a cheaper rate to your workmen than the market price. Nature and reason would sadly cry out against this, but the word of the everlasting God is on your side, and let God be true and every man a liar. Now don't expect any gratitude from those whom you have thus benefited; and if you want to know the reason, call into court a witness named Joseph Parry, and make him an evidence for the prisoners at the bar. He will tell judge and jury what an unthankful wretch he has been, and is, and will declare from his own experience that gratitude is an exotic plant that grows only in the courts of heaven, and that if ever he smelt the fragrance of that heavenly plant, a sprig of it was put into his bosom by the Holy Spirit.

I hope and trust that friend Dredge and you are walking in sweet union and communion. It is good for brethren to dwell together in unity, though it is only the oil that was poured on the head of Aaron that can reach to the skirt of his clothing and glue together the hems of the garment. And I think and believe that you both would be well content with a place at the Redeemer's feet, however higher others might aim and soar. I feel more united to him than ever. Give him my Christian love, also to Mrs. Wild and all the friends of truth from an experimental acquaintance with it in their hearts.

Believe me to be,

Your sincere and affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

December 24, 1838

My dear Friend, Mr. Parry— I had been for some time daily expecting to receive a letter from you, and I think, had not your last arrived when it did, I would have written either to you or to friend Dredge to express my wish to learn how matters were going on among my friends in Wilts. You had no need to reproach yourself for having displayed coldness when we parted, as I perceived no such manner; and if I had, I would have known that our friendship rested on too firm a basis to be shaken by such a trifle. I am usually much averse to displays of sentimentalism, and would rather meet and part with friendship in the heart than friendship in the hand, tongue, or face. So I hope your conscience will be at ease on this score.

We may now, I suppose, consider ourselves pretty well settled, though our constant journeys backwards and forwards to Oakham have a great tendency to unsettle us. We go there every alternate Friday, and return the following Wednesday, thus spending five days in every fortnight there, and the remaining nine here. I preach here every Thursday evening, and at Oakham on every alternate Tuesday, making it more laborious than I have been accustomed to for some years. I find, however, through mercy, my strength equal to my day, and have not enjoyed better health for some years. I am glad to find from your letter that you seem to see your signs more than you often have done, and feel the flowings-out of love and affection to the Friend of Sinners. I believe, previous to such a clear and full revelation of Christ to the soul as sets it at full liberty, there usually is such a view of Him through the lattice as causes the affections to flow forth. The Beloved puts in His hand by the hole of the door, and then the affections are moved for Him. This makes us rise up to open the door, but the Beloved withdraws Himself, and though we call, He gives no answer. I believe there is much of this preparatory work before deliverance comes; and though the stall-fed oxen and fat bulls of Bashan must always have oil-cake, and turn away from a nip of wiry grass under the hedge, the famishing calves can eat it with a very good appetite.

The preaching is usually well attended at both Stamford and Oakham, and I have found it at times good to preach. I will say, however, that I have usually found myself more at home in Allington pulpit than in any other, and think that perhaps, I felt myself more unfettered there, as being more accustomed to the people, and able to run on as the thoughts and words came. The people here being less accustomed to my manner and drift, I think cannot follow me so well, and this sometimes checks me in my career. I think I have been heard best on the week evenings, when there is usually a good congregation, as many, perhaps, as there used to be at Allington in the afternoon. I am glad to hear good tidings of Dorcas. I received her experience as a divine one as soon as I heard it, and believe it will stand forever and ever.

We had a collection yesterday at our chapel here for the poor, and though the day was wet, and the chapel thin, we collected £23 odd. We are to have a collection at Oakham for the same purpose next Lord's-day, and I hope we shall raise as much there. They call me a good beggar, but I do not consider myself one, and hate to stand pleading for money out of the pockets of skinflints. If I can say a few words in season to God's princely family, it is all well; but I cannot bear to flog the blood from the back of misers. Let their

money perish with them; for if they have not a heart beyond their money, they have no treasure in heaven. A covetous Christian is as great a contradiction as a drunken Christian or a Christian adulterer, and the one is as far from heaven as the other. But the old leaven sticks close, and needs the sword of the Spirit to be thrust under the plaster to tear it off.

I find religion very up-hill work, and am more and more dissatisfied with myself. I seek sometimes to commence at the very beginning, and come to God as if I never came to Him before. I feel like a person who has been badly educated, and who, conscious of the defects of his education, goes back to the very first elements, and seeks to learn them perfectly and understand them thoroughly. And as to my preaching, I am often sick and ashamed of it, so little do I know aright, and so little calculated to point out the way to Zion. It is, however, through ignorance we learn knowledge, and through foolishness wisdom, according to those heavenly paradoxes which you like to hear set forth. If you have not read Huntington's "Destruction of Death by the Fountain of Life," you will find it a profitable piece to read in the chapel. The observations about Adam in the beginning might be omitted. There is such a fullness and depth in Huntington's writings that two or three close readings are hardly sufficient, even to inform our understanding, and for spiritual profit and edification they will bear being read again and again.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1839)

January 7, 1839

My dear Friend—As my time is in various ways a good deal occupied, I trust you will excuse my not replying to your kind letter before.

I believe that we see eye to eye, and, I trust, feel heart to heart, in most points; and this is what I rarely find in this great day of widespread, but powerless profession. It seems to me that the grand foundation of what I call '*dead experimental* profession' is this—natural conscience healed by sound doctrines. As to the professions of Arminians, Independents, General Baptists, and the like, I conceive that conscience has had nothing to do in the matter, and that they, for the most part, have never had any convictions, natural or spiritual.

But the class which has puzzled me most are what I call "doctrinal experimentalists"; that is, men who have a correct 'doctrine of experience'. To make my meaning clear, I will just state that I believe, as all truth may be divided into doctrine, experience, and practice, so each of these three branches may be held doctrinally; that is, in the letter and form, without the

Spirit and power. Thus some hold doctrines doctrinally, others hold experience doctrinally, and others hold practice doctrinally. The first are dead Calvinists; the second, dead Experimentalists; and the third, dead Pharisees. But you may say, "how can men hold experience doctrinally?" I will tell you. They have felt convictions of natural conscience, like Cain, Esau, Saul, Judas, and others of whom we read in the Word of God. These convictions drove them into seriousness, and from chapel to chapel, until at last the doctrines of grace met their ear, laid hold of their understanding, and brought a relief to their natural convictions. And now behold them "established in the full assurance of faith." Their bark has found refuge in a harbor of the Dead Sea, and knows no storms nor waves. Their tacklings are never loosed, nor are they ever driven up and down in the Adriatic (Acts 27:27), but lie at their moorings, until they are rotten from stem to stern, and from gangway to keel. This crew of landsmen in blue jackets make a captain over them like unto themselves, a fireside traveler and a chimney-corner voyager, who keeps telling them of the security of their harbor, and of the stoutness of the vessel; and sometimes, perhaps, amuses them with tales of waves, rocks, winds, and storms, which they listen to as a very interesting piece of information, and then all turn in, and sleep very comfortably below. No wonder such as these are free from doubts and fears. You and I last night had not many doubts and fears about the storm that blew over our heads, when we were cradled safely in our beds. But if we had been on the sea, and near a rocky shore, we would have had terror enough. I believe that in the absence of divine testimonies, and the cheering smiles of the blessed Redeemer, we shall always have doubts and fears in proportion to the sense and feelings of eternal things. There are two seasons when I am pretty free from doubts and fears. The one when I feel the anointings of the blessed Spirit leading my heart and affections upwards where Jesus sits at the right hand of God; and the other when I am carnal and careless, and as destitute (experimentally) of religion as a dead branch of sap and verdure.

But on other occasions, when eternal things lie on my conscience, I am filled with fears just in proportion to the weight that accompanies Divine realities to my soul. It seems to me that a man's religion needs continual motion to keep it alive. Like the air or the sea, which breed corruption when stagnant, but are purified by winds and waves, so true religion needs continual exercise and change, to preserve it in its purity, life, health, and vigor. Our body without exercise becomes flabby, diseased, unhealthy, and weak; and so our soul without continual exercises becomes listless, stagnant, sickly, and pining. I have often thought of Paul's words to Timothy, "Exercise yourself unto godliness," and have seen and felt the blessing and the benefit of continual soul exercise.

When God cursed the ground for Adam's sake, He imposed on him labor in the sweat of his brow; but this very original curse has become a blessing, in rendering the body thereby vigorous and healthy; and thus exercises of soul through strong corruptions, powerful lusts, violent temptations, tormenting doubts, and harassing anxieties, are made a means of keeping the soul healthy and strong. The Word of God becomes opened up to us, promises are made sweet and suitable, salvation by sovereign grace unctuous and savory, a compassionate Redeemer highly prized, and a throne of grace sought and cleaved to.

But take any professor that is unexercised, or any child of mercy even, when settled on his lees, his conversation is powerless, his prayers wearisome, his company a burden, and his visits unacceptable. He may say a few words about religion, just as he would ask after the mistress and the children, for form and compliment's sake; but, as Solomon says, "his heart is not with you."

As John Kay quotes in the *Gospel Standard*, "It takes twenty years to learn that we are fools," an expression I fully agree with; and I believe the more we know and feel of divine teaching, the deeper we shall sink into nothingness, helplessness, and insufficiency. The High and Holy One who inhabits eternity dwells with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, while He beholds the proud afar off. And sure am I that He must prepare His own habitation, and bring down the heart with labor; for "we are the clay, and He is the Potter," and we (if we know or feel anything aright) are the work of His hands. I have read many books, but I have never found spiritual profit in anything but Divine teachings, and am deeply sensible of my own blindness, ignorance, and helplessness, perhaps more so than many who despise what they never had, and are after all puffed up with the little they know. Wishing you much of the Spirit's anointings, and of the Redeemer's gracious presence, I am, yours in the bonds of the gospel,
J. C. P.

June 7, 1839

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—I have felt desirous for several reasons to write to you before the time arrives when I hope to see you again in person at Allington. I cannot, however, precisely fix the time when I intend (D.V.) to visit my Wiltshire friends, owing to a cause which I doubt not you will be sorry to hear. Coming up outside the coach from Welwyn has been the cause, under God's designing wisdom, of giving me a severe attack on my chest, such as you have witnessed at Allington in times past, and from which I have been for some time mercifully free. I was able to preach twice last Lord's-day at Zoar; but in the evening with great inconvenience, through hoarseness, which, indeed, I sensibly felt in the morning. I have been confined to the house ever since, and, indeed, for most of the time to bed, but am, through mercy, slowly mending. I have been obliged to write to the deacons at Zoar to decline preaching in this week and on Lord's-day next. It gives me pain thus to disappoint them as well as the congregation, which is so usually large and crowded; but I have no alternative, as I am utterly unfit at present to preach. My wife's uncle [Mr. John Keal, of Upper Woburn Place, W.C.] is attending me, and says I am better today.

I spent a few days at Welwyn very pleasantly with friend Smart. We walked, and talked, and confessed, and got on without one jarring note. He is truly a gracious man, and, in my judgment, much improved. Without losing any faithfulness, boldness, or decision, he has become more softened in manner and expression. He preached a very sound, blessed, and experimental sermon. The collection was £27 18s. 6d., which I consider very handsome for so poor a people. The chapel, I believe, never was seen so full as it was all three times.

I trust our friend Tiptaft was better when I left Stamford. He finds that most beneficial which his hearers would willingly not have so—cessation from preaching. Those only who are engaged know what a trying thing it is to the health and constitution, and how it acts on mind and body. I have felt sometimes most desperate rebellion against it on this score. But our nature is so desperately crooked and rebellious that it will quarrel with God Himself if He comes across our path or thwarts our carnal wishes. Surely those who speak of growing sanctification know nothing of that leprosy within which is always breaking out in thought if not in actual word or deed. I am well convinced that we are incurables, and that even the great remedy unapplied is like untasted medicine at the bedside of the patient. I am baser and blacker than ever. I seem, at times, the very prince of hypocrites and impostors, as I feel so unlike everything a minister and a Christian should be. I am like a watch wound down, and need a heavenly hand to put in the key, and I find that there is no such thing as 'winding one's self up' by prayers, reading, meditation, etc.; and I find also that the Heavenly Engineer does not just wind up in twenty-four hours, and then leave the machine to go; He puts in the key by littles and littles, and no sooner does He take out the key than I stop. Neither do I find that illness sanctifies the mind or creates religion. I am stupid and carnal, ill or well, unless the blessed Lord makes me to feel otherwise.

Friend Justins has just been here, and expressed the disappointment of the friends last evening. This being the case, I cannot refuse to speak next Lord's-day, and therefore have promised to do my best. I don't know that I would do it for any other place or people, but they were quite crowded last evening, and will probably be more so on Sunday. A man must pay dearly for being followed, both in his soul and body.

Believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

September 5, 1839

My dear Friend Joseph Parry—You will no doubt wish to hear how we are, and how we arrived safely, through mercy, at our destination. We arrived in London on the same day we left your hospitable abode. I went on the following day to see my friend Justins, whom I found in great perplexity, from not being able to procure a minister for the Thursday evening; their supply having left them the day preceding. The old man said he had been praying the Lord to send him a minister, and laid hold of me as an answer to his prayer. I fought off as much as I well could, until I could resist no longer, and consented to preach for them, upon which he said he would do his best to make it known, and would publish a few handbills. Well, to my surprise, and, I believe, to that of the deacons, when Thursday night came there was quite a large congregation, the body of the chapel and galleries being comfortably full. I trust the Lord was with me, and, I hope, enabled me to tell them a little of what true religion was, and how the soul came at it. I felt gratified to see such a congregation, as the notice was so short, and there was no other means of giving it publicity than what friend Justins adopted.

There were two very good congregations, morning and afternoon, on last Lord's-day, and the friends seemed glad to welcome me home.

I presume that J. Kay arrived safely on Friday. It is my sincere desire that the Lord may come with him and bless him, and make him a blessing. He may talk about golden and wooden trumpets, but "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the dumb or deaf, or the seeing or the blind?" (Exod. 4:11.) One word spoken by God Himself to the soul will wound or heal, kill or make alive, when all the words of human wisdom and power will fall useless to the ground. If God chooses to speak by and through a man, who or what shall hinder? And if He will not speak by him, who or what shall make Him? No one contends more for this than J. Kay, and those who honor God He will honor.

Preaching is a mysterious thing, and God's mode of blessing souls through such weak, ignorant, defiled, worthless creatures, as some of us feel ourselves to be, is a mystery of mysteries. I have not been able often to receive a testimony of being blessed in preaching, from a feeling of my ignorance and vileness. If I knew more, felt more, prayed and read more, believed more, and were more diligent, fervent, jealous, watchful, humble, separate from the world, and so on—I think I could believe in the blessing more. But when I feel so dark, stupid, blind, worldly, foolish, sinful, and guilty—I find it hard work to receive any testimony of being made a blessing to any of God's elect. Yet, if I were all I wished to be, I might soon burn incense to my own drag, and, instead of wondering how God could bless me, might fall to wondering how He could not bless me for being so diligent, prayerful, watchful, and so forth. Thus, God will take care to secure to Himself all the glory, and in our right minds we are willing to give it Him.

My dear wife is busy getting the house in order. We have a servant whom we much like, being very steady and quiet. So we have everything, as far as this world goes, to make us comfortable. But what is all this in the absence of Divine consolations? I feel still tried about my religion, and spend most of my days in Doubting Castle. I seem to want the right marks, and more decisive and continual testimonies to my adoption into the family of God. I do not at all regret my journey into Wilts, as I never felt, I think, more union to the friends than during my last visit. Though my heart is not a very capacious one, I think some of my Wiltshire friends have a place in it. I have only to find fault with their kindness and esteem, both of which are indeed undeserved. But those who have warm friends, have generally bitter enemies, and so I have proved it. The friends here, I understand, find fault with me for being absent so long, and hope I shall not be away next year for so long a period.

Give my affectionate remembrance to John Kay, friend Dredge, Mrs. Wild, and all friends. We beg our united kind regards to Mrs. Parry, Mrs. Cannings, Mr. and Mrs. Tuckwell, and all those friends for whose kind attentions we desire to be grateful.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

September 17, 1839

My dear Friend, George Isbell—I feel I have need to apologize for neglecting to answer your last friendly and experimental letter. I have had, however, many hindrances, some of an external, and others of an internal nature. What with traveling, preaching, and moving from place to place, I have had my time much occupied. These external hindrances, however, have not operated so powerfully as internal ones. Sometimes unconquerable sloth and lassitude, arising, perhaps, much from over pulpit exertion—at other times, deadness and coldness of heart—at others, the feeling I could write nothing worth sending—and at others, fears of writing hypocritically and deceitfully. I must throw myself, therefore, on your kindness to excuse my apparent, but not real, neglect and forgetfulness.

What a mass of filth and folly, blindness and ignorance, deceit and hypocrisy, carnality, sensuality, and devilism are we! Prone to all that is bad, utterly averse to all that is good—bent upon sin, hating holiness, heavenly-mindedness, and spirituality—what earthly wretches, guilty monsters, abominable creature are we! And if our minds are sometimes drawn upwards in faith and affection, and we pant after the living God, how soon, how almost instantly, do we drop down again into our earthly self, whence we are utterly unable to rise until the Blessed Spirit lifts us out again! What fits of unbelief, shakings of infidelity, fevers of lust, agues of carelessness, consumptions of faith, hope, love and zeal; yes, what a host of diseases dwell in our poor soul.

"Who heals," says David, "all your diseases." Well, then, the soul must have many, and I am inclined to think there is some analogy between the body and soul in their diseases, and that a scriptural and spiritual parallel might be drawn between them. Some I have hinted at above, and blindness, deafness, dumbness, paralysis, leprosy, etc., are scriptural analogies. But they all admit of a twofold cure, that wonderful medicine which John saw run from the wounded side of the Redeemer, blood and water, the one to heal, the other to wash; the one to atone, the other to cleanse—justification by blood, Rom. 5:9, and sanctification by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.

I feel I have but little religion, but I feel, also, that many who think they have a great deal, have none at all. I have been cut off from what they worship and idolize. "Tekel" and "Ichabod" have been written on my conscience on scores of things set up by hundreds for religion. I cannot build up the things I have destroyed, lest I make myself a transgressor; and thus naked, empty, and bare of creature religion, human faith, fleshly righteousness, and external sanctification, I stand often in my feelings, devoid of religion altogether. If I am only to believe when faith is given; hope, when the Spirit casts forth the anchor; love, when divine affection is shed abroad; pray, when a spirit of grace and supplication is poured out; be holy and spiritual when heavenly-mindedness is communicated—what am I, and where am I, when divine communications are withheld? A desolate being, without religion. Oh! tell it not in Plymouth, publish it not in the streets of Devonport, that there can be such a wretch as to have no religion but what, when, and how God gives! Why, Methodist, Ranter, Baptist, Independent, Calvinist, and Hawkerite will all hold up their hands in pious dismay, and cry, "Lives there

such a man who only sees when he has light; hears when words are spoken; runs when he is drawn; feels when divinely wrought upon, and speaks when he has something to say? Where, then, is all our religion, our family prayers, and personal piety, progressive holiness, preaching, reading, prayer-meetings, love-feasts, Calvinism, religious privileges, and morning and evening portions? Breathes there a wretch whose grand aim, prayer, and desire it is to be the clay and have God for his Potter?"

Aye, more than one, or a dozen, or a score, I trust, of such wretches still cumber the ground, and spread dung upon the pious faces (Mal. 2:3) of creature religionists. It is, indeed, an unpardonable offence to be nothing; and a spiritual beggar and bankrupt is as much despised and hated by the rich Laodicean church of our day as a shiftless, tattered and torn ragamuffin by a purse-proud, richly fed alderman. As to the religion of thousands, I have been scraping it off for about nine years, and it sticks to me like pitch still. Oh, when tarred and feathered, I was a delightful young man, so sweet, and holy, and spiritual! But when sickness, and temptation, and doubts and fears, and gusts of infidelity, and boiling corruptions, and a deep-growing conviction of the worthlessness of all but divine teaching, and heaven-sent religion, began to scrape away the feathers and show the naked skin—and as I was scraped myself I began to scrape others—oh! then I was of a bad spirit, and in the eyes of some, a very devil. And what is my trespass, and what is my sin, that they so hotly pursue after me? That I make the creature nothing, and Christ all in all. May I be more vile than thus, and drop daily into nothingness, and rise up in Christ as my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

I understand you have been at that great ice-house, Exeter—that abode of deadness, ignorance, and heresy. I should be glad to hear your message was blessed in that city of churches, where the power of vital godliness is so little felt and known. It gives me pleasure to hear that my relations sit under your ministry, and that you call occasionally upon them. May the Lord bless the word to their souls. My chest has been suffering pain from over-preaching, but is, through mercy, better. You, perhaps, have not yet found the bodily as well as mental fatigue and labor of preaching, It will surely come if you labor hard and often. I would say, do not anticipate it unnecessarily; my friend Tiptaft is nearly laid aside from this cause.

May the Lord guide and lead you, plant His fear deep in your heart, give you many sweet testimonies of His favor, and bless you, and make you a blessing.
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

October 16, 1839

My dear sister, Fanny—I was indeed deeply surprised, as well as gratified with your letter, and cannot but receive your testimony to the reality and power of the blessing you have received. It is indeed wonderful that any guilty wretch of Adam's fallen race should receive such a blessing as a revelation of the mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus, and to us a wonder of all wonders that any of us so alienated from the life of God should find any

blessing at His hands. I have no doubt you have often perceived how slow and backward I have been to speak or write to you about religion. And what chiefly kept me back was that I could not receive your religion at that time as divine. I always thought you far removed from insincerity and hypocrisy, but still there was in my mind something lacking which prevented me from receiving it as a divine work, and arising out of heavenly teaching. But I cannot but fully receive your present testimony, as the spirit and savor of it has much rested on my mind since I received your letter. May you enjoy the sweetness of it for a long time, and may the chilling blast of winter and the nipping frosts of temptation be held back by the hand of the Saviour from your soul for some time to come. You must expect persecution from a world lying in wickedness and a world lying dead in profession, and your own corrupt, deceitful, treacherous heart will cause you many a pang. Hart says—"When the pardon is signed, and the peace is procured, tis then that the conflict *begins*,"—not "ends," as most think. And this great change of heart and spirit will effect a corresponding change in your life, and this will draw down persecution; as Paul says, "Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" because your life and conversation will bear witness against the evil of theirs, and this will stir up their carnal enmity against you.

I hope the Lord, who has dealt so graciously and mercifully towards you, will keep you separate and peculiar, lead you up into much and sweet communion with Himself, deaden your heart and affections to the things of time and sense, and make you a pattern of faith, love, and good works. I would not have you battle and argue with Mrs. R., it will only make you barren, lean, and dry. Let her see by your spirituality of mind, devotedness of life, tenderness of conscience, simplicity, and godly sincerity, that you possess a treasure obtained not in the congregation of the dead, but where God is worshiped in spirit and truth. If she be a heaven-taught character she cannot resist heavenly evidences, and I would not marvel if, after a time, she too had her eyes opened to see the corruptions and formality of the Establishment.

People often fight for a while against convictions, especially if they oppose strong prejudices or the worldliness and pride of our heart, but are obliged after a time to bend to the force of truth. I resisted convictions about the Church of England as long and as much as I could, and could not bear to hear her spoken against, but I was obliged after a time to feel those convictions were right, and that I must obey them.

I can hardly gather from your letter whether Mrs. R. is staying at your house, or living near so as often to come in. We breathe out no curses against the Establishment, but simply proclaim her corruptions. As for myself, it is very rare that I mention her name, or say anything about her, having far more important work to do than batter her walls. Nor would I lift up a finger to pull her down, nor do I covet any of her possessions. If we act conscientiously we must prepare ourselves for persecution.

It must have been a trial to you to have refused standing proxy for Mrs. Watts. You acted quite right, however, in refusing to go if your conscience witnessed against it. And, indeed, how could you promise for yourself or

another, that the child should keep all the commandments, and such vows as are made at the font by the sponsors. It would have been awful mockery in you, having an enlightened conscience, to make such promises as you knew no flesh, especially in an unregenerated person, could perform. May the Lord make and keep your conscience increasingly tender, may He bring you again to His blessed feet, and preserve you from backsliding in heart and life from Him. The children of Israel, after they had passed through the Red Sea, soon forgot His works, and their next step was to make an idol and bow down before it.

I heard from Mr. Isbell this morning, and felt a sympathy with his letter. He speaks of sending me some hymns to read. If so, you might send them in your parcel to L. When the penny post comes into operation I shall hope to correspond with you more frequently. You will be increasingly anxious for our dear mother's and sister's spiritual welfare. Oh, what a mercy it is to escape the wrath to come! What a terrible weight of wrath will consume all that know not Jesus and the power of His resurrection! May we have our evidences again and again renewed. Pray for me that I may be blessed indeed. My chest is rather better. I have now less pain in it. I was afraid at one time I must for a time give up preaching.

You will find Huntington's works profitable to read. Some of them are published cheap, as *The Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer*, and *Contemplations on the God of Israel*. The last is a very sweet production of his pen. Hart's Hymns, too, are a choice treasure for a child of God, who knows his own grief and his own sore. But, after all, the Word of God, under the teachings of the Blessed Spirit, is the most profitable companion for a living soul. It is said of Jesus, "Then opened He their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures." Blessed instruction is it when He who has the key of David opens His own Word, and opens our heart to receive it with heavenly unction and divine authority! When He puts His hand in by the hole of the lock, and moves our hearts to hear His voice speaking in the Word!

You will, no doubt, attend as much as you can on Mr. Isbell's ministry which the Lord has blessed to your soul. Under the word you will find many secrets opened up, many mysteries of godliness as well as of corruption discovered, and will be sometimes wounded and sometimes healed, sometimes rebuked and sometimes comforted, sometimes cast down, and sometimes lifted up. The life of faith is a strange, mysterious life to lead, and contains many lessons of a painful, and some of a very pleasing nature. Well may it be said, "Who teaches like God? "

I will add no more for the present than our united love to our dear mother, Mary Ann, and yourself.
Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

October 17, 1839

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—We were expecting a letter from you for

several days, I had almost said weeks, before it came, and were disappointed at seeing the postman so continually pass our door without entering our gate. I was anxious to know how friend Kay was heard, and perhaps a little jealous feeling intruded itself lest his larger foot should have obliterated my footmark. I am glad you have heard him profitably, and that his testimony has found an entrance into your conscience. Comfortable hearing is not always profitable hearing, and often that which condemns us does us more real and lasting good than that which encourages us. To hear others on whom can we depend speak of their manifestations and enjoyments, while we ourselves are dark and dead, writing bitter things against ourselves, and cutting ourselves off from eternal life, often stirs up much jealousy as well as self-pity and rebellion. But sometimes it gives us encouragement to feel that they too had to grope for the wall before they got in at the gate, and this stirs us up to cry, seek, and pray, and say, "Have You but one blessing? Bless me, even me also."

If you read or hear the experience of gracious men, such as enters with power and conviction into your heart, you will always find that they wrestled much and long before they won the prize. And this encourages us to wrestle too, and so run that we may obtain. I could wish that our dear friend Mrs. Wild had obtained a blessing as well as E. Pope and some others, whom I may call choice feeders. It is most desirable to relieve friend Tiptaft of the burden he has borne so long and so cheerfully, yet those who would push John Kay out should be well persuaded he is called to the ministry, lest in their anxiety to befriend one party they really injure the other, and act against God's Word. I know it is W. Tiptaft's opinion that he will never hold a body of people together, and, I presume, he speaks from what he had seen at Abingdon. I gather from your letter that the chapel at Allington is not crowded.

I am convinced that a door of utterance, and some measure of what is popularly called "a gift," is absolutely needful for a preacher who is to be useful or generally acceptable to God's family. And, indeed, it might be asked, why should a man mount a pulpit at all unless he can teach the church of God; and how shall he teach, if not abundantly supplied with spiritual feelings, thoughts, and words? The scriptural qualification of a minister is, that he should be "apt to teach." A certain measure of divine utterance is therefore absolutely needful for a minister of truth, and I will defy anyone to point me out a minister widely or abundantly blessed who is destitute of such a gift as renders him acceptable to God's family. I am speaking all along of a divine gift, for all that falls short of this is wind and vanity. I am glad to hear W. Tiptaft means to come for a short time to Allington at the end of next month, and could wish for your sake that he had accepted a longer invitation. He writes word to Oakham that he is stronger and better.

I received a remarkable letter on Monday from my elder sister; I say remarkable, for I was as much surprised at its contents as if she had written it in Greek. It was written under the powerful influence of a divine manifestation, and carried with it to my mind all the savor, reality, and power of a heavenly blessing. In fact, she could scarcely write from her feelings of joy and praise, which she was afraid would be too much for her weak body. She has been under soul concern for some years, but there was

always to my mind something lacking, and I could not receive it as a divine work. It appears she has been more tried lately, and sought much of the Lord to manifest to her if she were a child of His. She especially implored Him to make it plain under Mr. Isbell's ministry one evening, but she could get nothing until towards the end of his sermon, when he suddenly changed his subject, and began to read Isaiah 57. She says, when he came to verse 10 the veil suddenly dropped from her eyes, she had a view by faith of the Saviour and entered into the strait gate after so long groping for the wall. She hurried home, fell upon her knees, and could say without a doubt, "My Lord and my Saviour." She has been full of praise and blessing ever since. I never saw such an alteration in my life. Her letter to me is full of power, and I can scarcely believe she wrote it, so different is it from anything I ever heard her write or speak of. She is a very sincere person naturally, and has always been afraid to profess anything, and has never been among experimental people to pick up canting whine. I know her so well that it must be either a strong delusion or a divine work, and I dare not say it is the former, lest I do despite to the Spirit of grace. It is fully received by Isbell, from whom I have since heard, as a divine work, and he appears to have been much led out in private prayer for her previously. The savor has been on my mind nearly ever since, and has continually occupied my thoughts. I trust it has stirred my spirit up, and led me to offer up many fervent supplications by night and by day, that I too may enjoy a blessing. She writes at present in the full assurance of faith, calls Jesus brother, and says, whatever comes she is sure she is safe. I am astonished at her language, and the way in which she expresses herself, which puts me in mind of some of Huntington's correspondents.

Mr. Isbell is the person who writes in the *Gospel Standard* as G. I., Stoke. I think him a well taught, and much tried and exercised young man, who is, I have felt, encouraged to believe in God as one who hears and answers prayer. Oh, it is a good thing to wait upon the Lord, and, like Paul, to serve the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations! What a dread sovereign is He! How fearful in justice, and yet to His own how abundant in mercy!

My chest is, through mercy, better. It has been very unwell, so much so that I thought I must diminish for a time my pulpit labors.

I have been expecting a letter from friend Dredge; but I know that he cannot sit down like many and write, whether he feels or not. He must have something like a springing well before he can lay hold of the pump-handle. I am glad he gets on well with Kay, and goes about with him to the various villages and towns, where there is a door opened for him to preach. Your Wiltshire professors will have a good opportunity to put John Kay into the balance; but, perhaps, like the man who laid hold of a warrior in the wilderness, you may find he has caught you instead of your taking him.

I am sorry the bookseller's delay prevents your accumulating a store of agricultural knowledge. You will find some useful hints in the book, I doubt not; but, like other precepts, they must be obeyed to know their value. At the same time, I should be sorry if Loudon took you away from Huntington, or that you preferred reading his Cyclopaedia to the Word of God. I wish I had more appetite for the blessed truths of God, and could search and read the

Scriptures more. How sweet, how suitable, how wise, how heaven-tending, how world-deadening is the Word of God! What rich treasures of truth are there stored up, and when we read them in God's light, and feel them in God's life, what a penetrating power is there in the truths there revealed! "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." Blessed opening, when He who has the key of David puts in His hand by the hole of the door, and opens our heart to receive His own Word. Then when we go to the Word of Truth, after it has come to us, our fingers drop with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock.

It is said that "the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear shall live." Oh, to hear the voice of the Son of God in our hearts! Surely it shall make our dead hearts, cold frames, withering hopes, drooping love, dying faith, languishing prayers, and fainting minds live; yes, revive as the corn, and grow as the vine. What is all religion without a Divine beginning, middle, and end, commencing, carried on, and accomplished with a heavenly power, supernatural life, and spiritual unction? Well may we be ashamed, sick, and sorry of all our thoughts, words, and works, all our knowledge and profession that have not stood, or do not stand, in the power, teaching, and wisdom of God. All our talk has been but vain babbling, our prayers lip service, our preaching wind and vanity, our profession hypocrisy, our knowledge the worst kind of ignorance, and all our religion carnality or delusion, if they have not been divinely communicated.

Sir Isaac Newton, the wisest philosopher, is said to have remarked to one who congratulated him on his knowledge, "I have been like a little child on the sea-shore taking up a little water in a shell when the vast ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me." Much more may a spiritual man feel how little, how nothing, he knows of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the boundless stores of wisdom hidden in them. As John Kay somewhere quotes, "It takes a man twenty years to become a fool." Look back, and see how, with Hart, you can say, "His light and airy dreams I took for solid food." What has become of the tons of instruction you have heard in your chapel from the old Supplies? Surely they have all vanished, like the gas from a torn balloon; and all the "preliminary remarks," as well as the "concluding observations," have been to you as the morning cloud and early dew.

I believe we must learn to be ashamed of our religion as well as of our sins. I see such hypocrisy, presumption, deceit, and falsehood in my profession, that I am obliged to confess it continually, and seek pardon for and deliverance from it. Anything does us good which racks us off from our lees, stirs us up to cry and pray, leads us to search the Word of God, and makes us earnest and sincere. I am so rarely sincere, so seldom in downright earnest, and am so lukewarm, and cold, and careless, and carnal, and sensual, that I have reason to take a low place. Some professors are always, as they think, sincere; but those who think so are the most remote from spiritual sincerity, and know it not as God's gift and work. If they knew their own hypocrisy it would make them cry for sincerity, and they would learn that to be sincere brings with it a daily cross, and very often a furnace.

My love to John Kay and the friends.

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

November 18, 1839

My dear sister Fanny—I was glad to hear that the good Lord was still dealing graciously with you. I also received a letter and package of hymns, etc., from Mr. Isbell, which I hope shortly to acknowledge. I have read the hymns, and think they have many beauties; but there are roughnesses which need polishing, and in some instances false rhymes, which, if possible, should be altered. I think I prefer the first, entitled, "The Bloodhound," to any. There are, I think, too few for publication, unless through the medium of some periodical, as the *Gospel Standard*. His hymns would appear diminutive indeed in print, and the expense would be nearly as great as a larger volume. Purchasers like some quantity as well as quality, and so few would hardly find a sale beyond his own congregation and immediate friends. If he would go on composing more, and polish what he has already written, I think it would be a preferable step to a hasty, perhaps premature, publication. A certain amount of poetry is absolutely requisite in hymns, the lack of which, as in the case of Herbert's (of Sudbury), is a positive impediment to their wide diffusion, in spite of choice experience and sound doctrine; while Cowper's and Kent's owe much of their circulation to the sweetness of the poetry. It may be said these are carnal embellishments, but it may be replied that we may as well write in prose if we set aside the main essence of poetry, and by choosing that mode of conveying our feelings and ideas we tacitly assume that we take with poetry that which belongs to its essence. Hart, the chief of hymn-writers, had an especial gift for that work, but next to the experience and blessed unction that rests upon them, I admire the beautiful fullness of every line where every word conveys an idea. If I did not like much of Mr. Isbell's hymns I would not advise him to go on writing more. I hope to write to him more at length on this and other subjects, but don't know whether it will be just at present.

I felt your letters profitable to my soul, and this induced the desire of sending some extracts to the *Gospel Standard*—only initials—and I have erased or altered anything of a family nature. May the promise spoken to your soul be fulfilled. My faith cannot rise so far. But continue in prayer and supplications, my dear sister, for all whom you believe that promise to encircle, and for me also, that I may have the love of God shed abroad in my heart, and the atoning blood of Jesus sprinkled on my conscience. It is not always those who manifest enmity are farthest from the kingdom of God. Pliables are sometimes worse than opposers. Rachel envied Leah's fruitfulness, which, if it stirred up her enmity, also awakened her desire, and she in time had a similar blessing, though she paid for it with her life.

Nothing is impossible with the Lord, and nothing can frustrate His designs; no, not our dreadful corruptions and wretched unworthiness. You were not allowed to fall into those outward sins which many of God's elect have been betrayed into before called by grace, but if sin could have defeated God's purposes of mercy towards you, you would never have had the blessing. You will have to learn many painful lessons of inward corruption, and will have to wade through depths of which you have little present experience. When the flame of indwelling sin is stirred up, and Satan blows the coals, and the blessed Lord hides His face, you will find that a Christian soldier has to

"fight with hell by faith," as Hart says. But whatever trials and difficulties you may be called upon to pass through, faithful is He who has called you, who also will do it.

Like yourself, I have been often much exercised upon family prayer. I cannot think written prayers acceptable to God, who as a Spirit must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. And if prayer be the cry of a child to his father, it should come freely from the heart, and not according to a written form. If a child were to ask for bread from its parent according to a paper put into its hand, it would seem more to be at play than really in need of food. I certainly would not advise you to act contrary to conscience, or any way seem to mock God. But could you not offer up a few words yourself, *extempore*, as it is called? There is nothing to forbid a female praying among females, for we read (1 Cor. 11:5) of a woman praying, *that is*, publicly, though not before males, for then she is to keep silence (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:34). A few simple words might be more blessed to the rest and would relieve your conscience, for then you need only utter what you feel. What is called "a gift of prayer" is not needful so long as a person does not break down, and can express his needs in simple language. But I desire to leave the matter entirely to yourself, and may you seek counsel and direction from the Wonderful Counselor.

You will find that many who have heard of your having received a blessing will very narrowly watch your conduct to detect some inconsistency. Those especially who go to the same chapel will minutely examine your dress, looks, and very gestures to find some flaw inconsistent with Christian perfection, for many believers, as well as unbelievers, form an idea that such is the state of one who has received a blessing. And marvel not if some of that mire and mud which is so liberally bespattered on Mr. Isbell should be thrown at you, for similar doctrines and experience will call forth similar enmity. Satan, too, has his baits skillfully prepared and set. You will not find yourself dead to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life. And Satan has temptations, too, as the angel of light, and can instill presumption, hypocrisy, spiritual pride, Pharisaism, and a host of other evils. But He who has called you to be a soldier, will teach your hands to war and your fingers to fight, and greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world.

What a wonderful revolution is effected by divine teaching and heavenly visitations! The soul is brought to live in a new world and breathe a new element. Old things pass away, and behold, all things become new. New desires, feelings, hopes, fears, and exercises arise, and the soul becomes a new creature. The world appears in its true colors, as a painted bauble, and as its pleasures are valued at their due worth, so its good opinion is little cared for or desired.

But what complete dependents are we on the bounty and love of God, and on the divine operation of the Blessed Spirit, to feel or realize one grain or atom of heavenly things! And how unable to believe, feel, taste, handle, or enjoy the smallest particle of eternal realities, except from spiritual manifestation of them!

Of reading as well as of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. It is not advisable for children of God to read

much of the writings of fallible men. Their writings often confuse the mind, and lead to controversies and vain jangling, or, at any rate, tend more to impart that knowledge which puffs up, than that love which edifies. Not but that a sound, savory, experimental author is sometimes profitable, especially at those seasons when we cannot read the sacred Scriptures from distracting thoughts. But when there is an appetite for God's Word, far more weighty, powerful, heavenly instruction is to be derived thence than from any writings penned by man. And why need we go to cisterns when we have the fountain? All that is good in human writings has been gotten from the Bible, and why need we obtain that at secondhand which we can have immediately from the same source? And the pen of man has been far more frequently wielded to propagate or support error than the cause of God and truth.

We return to Stamford tomorrow, yesterday being my Lord's-day here. We like our new house much, and have a very steady, confidential servant, whom we like much. My love to our dear mother, Mary Ann, and her little ones. My very kind regards to R. and Mrs. R., whom I so well remember from almost her infancy.

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

November 29, 1839

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—Knowing you are one of those who do not grudge postage when a letter comes from a friend, I answer your letter earlier than I otherwise should have done, especially as it contains some questions which require an immediate reply. . .

I can well sympathize with you in your various doubts and fears. I often feel as if I had not one grain of religion nor spark of divine life. I am often groanless and sighless, and as reckless as if there were no heaven or hell; and then wake, as it were, out of my sleep and sigh out a desire. But I cannot swim in —'s vessel, nor any such smooth-sailing craft—I, like a shipwrecked mariner, must be picked up out of the deep unfathomable sea—or perish. My sister's deliverance for a while much stirred up my mind, but, alas! I am got pretty much into my old spot again. An extract from two of her letters will appear in the *Gospel Standard* for next month. Some may quarrel with it, and others doubt it, but let those who quarrel and those who doubt bring forward a better one of their own. I should myself be well satisfied with such a one, and if similarly favored would fight for it against flesh, devil, conscience, law, the world, the Pharisee, and the Antinomian, professor or profane, God's children and the devil's. And I find we need hold fast what we have, however little, for doves will pick at it as well as ravens, and sheep will nibble as well as goats. But he who has God's testimony in his soul will stand by that, and that, too, will stand by him when all other witnesses fail or bear testimony against him.

When we first start, we are like a child learning to run alone. We lean on a chair, or get hold of somebody's hand, but by-and-by, when we have had some tumbles, and fallen sometimes over a friend's foot, and sometimes through an enemy's push, and sometimes slipped down through our own

corruptions, we learn to walk alone, hanging only on free grace and divine teaching.

People are looking to me to teach them, and what can I teach them but this, that we are fools and God only wise—and that, therefore, none teaches but He and like Him? And this makes people angry who have not yet learned their folly. People are building up religion all over the country, but there is not one of a thousand who has yet learned the first lesson— to be nothing. Some extol faith and some works; some are preaching free-grace and others free-will; but of all this noisy crowd, how few lie at Jesus' feet, helpless and hopeless, and find help and hope in Him! I wish we lived nearer, that we might sometimes compare notes, and talk over some of these hidden mysteries.

The review of Hawker and Huntington has stirred up the wrath of many, but I believe experimental Christians will not very much quarrel with it. I wrote it out of my own heart and described my own feelings. Many, I believe, have given up the *Standard* in consequence. William Tiptaft's letter is much liked at Oakham. I think "a Traveler" (J. H., I believe) has written well, and touched some strings that will vibrate in feeling hearts.

Mr. R. is discontented at my drawing away his hearers, and says he has lost his very best. Mrs. —, once a lost one, but now reformed if not regenerated, begins to find, I believe, that all he could do was to build her up in presumption, and the trowel having got into a chink which he did not sufficiently plaster up has made the whole coating tremble. When it has all come down she will begin to learn a little of what religion is. I can't help picking away at every piece of untempered mortar, whether Pharisaism or Antinomianism, presumptuous confidence or feigned humility— but as soon as it is all down, I foolishly try to build it up again with better materials. But I am a sad and bungling workman, and sometimes, perhaps, stick the pick into sound mortar while aiming at the rotten, and at other times put up a plaster of road mud instead of well-tempered cement. But my way is to keep picking at what I find in myself rotten and unsound, and not to put on any cement that does not satisfy or heal my own soul.

Sometimes guilt makes one's hand shake, and, anon, recollection of inconsistencies makes the uplifted blow come down more softly, and then doubts and fears of presumption make all the cement fall out of one's hand. I find this to both pull down aright as well as to build up aright. Hart, in his "Preface," that invaluable piece, has hit the right nail on the head, where he advises "no one to trust the directions of his own heart, or of any other man; therefore let the Christian ask direction of his God." I find myself more and more brought off from looking to or leaning upon man, as I see and feel all are liable to err, and that none can teach but God.

Mr. Isbell has written to me some very nice letters lately. He speaks very highly of William Tiptaft's letter in this month's *Gospel Standard*. Remember me affectionately to him, your wife, and children. My kind love to Dredge, Mrs. Wild, E. Pope, the Cannings' women, etc., etc. I have few friends, after all, better than my Allington ones.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

December 24, 1839

My dear sister, Fanny—I received safely your packet yesterday, and was much interested in J. G.'s letter to George Isbell, and think with a little revising it will do very well for the *Gospel Standard*. Surely every quickened and regenerated vessel of mercy is a fresh proof of that sweet passage, "Where sin has abounded, there did grace much more abound." And those who owe all they are, and all they have, to sovereign, distinguishing, superabounding grace must sing to the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He has made them accepted in the Beloved. Well may we hang solely and wholly on grace, for the past, the present, and the future, and while others spin their spider-woven garments out of their own works, may the grace of the Three-One Jehovah be all our hope here and all our song hereafter.

I am not surprised that you feel your ignorance. This is far better than boasting of your knowledge. You will see one day, if not now, that it was your mercy your head was not stored with knowledge, as it makes the change more striking and evident. By feeling your ignorance, too, you are made more dependent on divine teaching, and will be kept from sacrificing to your own drag, and the cry of your soul will be, "What I know not, You teach me." "Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your law." I have long been deeply convinced of the necessity of divine teaching, and have at different times, and do still from day to day, put up many earnest petitions for the blessed teachings of the Holy Spirit. The promise stands fast for evermore—"All your children shall be taught of the Lord." And Jesus Himself has put His own blessed seal upon it where He says, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore who has heard, and has learned of the Father, comes unto Me" (John 6:45). This is the "unction from the Holy One, whereby the children of God know all things;" "the anointing which teaches of all things, and is truth, and is no lie" (1 John 2:20, 27).

You will find it good to read much of the blessed Word of truth. It is, when applied by the eternal Comforter, "spirit and life" (John 6:63); and the leaves of this tree are for medicine, and the fruit thereof for food (Ezek. 47:12; Rev. 22:2). "For all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." By continually reading the Word you will make up for a defective memory, and let none despise having the Word of truth stored up in the mind, as the Blessed Spirit will sooner or later apply to the heart many passages which at present may be only in the memory. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16). "This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth; but then shall meditate herein day and night" (Josh. 1:8). See also the following scriptures—Deut. 6:6-9; 17:18, 19; 30:11-14. Compare with Rom. 10:6-10, Psalm 1:2, 3; 119:97, 99, 103, 115, 130, 148.

You have received such encouragement to pray that I doubt not you still persevere in making your requests known unto God. I have not been blessed with that spirit of prayer nor assurance of an answer that you have been favored with. My earnest desires and breathings have been more for a blessing on my own soul. I feel my daily need of visitations and manifestations from the Lord. Jabez offered a sweet prayer (1 Chron. 4:10)—"Oh that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Your hand might be with me," etc. To be blessed indeed is the soul's desire of one taught of God, and the application of His love and blood to the conscience is a blessing indeed. And to have His guiding, directing, supporting, upholding hand with us, what more can we desire? And to be kept from evil that it may not grieve us—what tender conscience does not desire such a blessing too?

I am not surprised Mrs. — is cold. Expect many such chilling looks from former friends. There can be no real union with, nor cordial approbation of people who condemn us. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" To be brought out of Egypt condemns those that are yet in the house of bondage, well pleased with the leeks, onions, and garlic. Such coarse fare pleases well an earthly appetite, however little suitable to those that have tasted the hidden manna. You will find your motives misrepresented, your words misinterpreted, your actions narrowly observed, your gestures, dress, and general appearance strictly scrutinized.

I am sorry to hear your health continues weak, but it may be a blessing to keep you more at home, and thus in some measure preserve you from the keen eye of saint and sinner, professor and profane. May the Lord in His own time and way bless the word to our dear mother. Encourage her to seek for mercy from Him who is merciful, yes, rich in mercy. And as the Lord enables you, continue in prayer and supplication for her, and may I add, for me also, that the Lord would bless me indeed, by the manifestations of His love to my soul.

**I seem to think that in hearing Mr. Isbell you are somewhat under the influence of 'excitement', at least it struck me so in your last, from the feeling you express of expecting to hear a scream or a shout under his preaching. The Lord does not usually work in that way—witness yourself when He speaks with power. He was neither in the storm, the earthquake, nor the fire, but in the still, small voice. The waiting prophet did not wrap his face in his mantle, nor go out of the cave during the raging war of elements, but when he heard the still small voice of love and power, he went forth and stood in the entrance of the cave. Excitement is frequently substituted for religion, as among the Wesleyans and Ranters.
*[The remainder of this letter is lost.]***

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1840)

January 9, 1840

My dear Friend, George Isbell—I have been expecting to hear from you every day, to obtain permission to send J. G.'s letter to the *Standard*. But as you do not write, I presume you are waiting a reply to your kind letter. Indeed, I am at times fit to write to nobody, because of my darkness of mind and carnality of heart. It is mostly ebb-tide with me, and when the tide turns and begins to flow, I am too much engaged with opening all the gates and sluices to sit down and write. I have often been most able and willing to preach and write when opportunity did not serve. And when the season has come, the thoughts are gone, the feelings flown, the dew evaporated, the warmth extinguished, and the food got cold and tasteless. Sometimes when walking or when dressing I have felt zeal, life, power, ideas, words, so that I could have with boldness set forth the word of life, or penned down truth with what seemed at the time vigor and decision. But when I have afterwards been in the pulpit, or taken my pen, not only has the power and feeling flown, but the very train of thought, the texts of Scripture, the light thrown upon them, and all clearness of idea, have fled, too, and left me shut up, embarrassed, confused and almost worthless. I have spoken on a text sometimes in a way that has been a wonder to myself, and then, perhaps, in another place from the same words have been so shut up that I could scarcely muster an idea, or utter a sentence that to me seemed to the point; and have wondered that the people should ever come to hear me again.

Many of the Calvinist ministers could preach the same sermon from the same words to any congregation. But it is not so with me. I am dependent on the Lord for every sermon and every occasion; and find a different vein of thought, or different mode of expressing myself, which varies with the congregation. Nor can I write when I please, nor express my thoughts and feelings when I wish. Some of my correspondents shut me up, and the ink freezes, as it were, in my pen; while to others I feel handling the pen of the ready writer, and can freely turn out the thoughts of my heart as my hand moves along the page. "Can two walk together except they be agreed?" enquires the Holy Spirit; and the experience of all honest men answers, "No!" Dissemblers and hypocrites can walk together; and so can enemies of truth, like Herod and Pontius Pilate, run in couples like bloodhounds to hunt down the precious life.

My experience for these last seven or eight years has been to keep much to myself, and to have nothing to say to men with whom I do not feel a cordial union. Some call this pride, others bitterness of spirit, but I have never reaped anything from false unity without vexation and trouble. Illegitimate children and servants can never be anything but spies (Gal. 2:4) and enemies. Ishmael will mock Isaac, though born in the same house, nor can any wisdom of man reconcile the two seeds between whom God has put enmity. And however distasteful and wearisome the company of worldly men is to me, I honestly confess that the presence and conversation of a moral man, who does not absolutely pain me by his worldliness, is more tolerable than the smooth cant of a hard-hearted professor. I hope always to

avoid the company of either, but I would sooner ride 100 miles inside a coach with one than the other.

Nor have I ever found it wise to tell to such the feelings of my heart. If one dances, like Michal they despise, and if one is cast down, we are as a lamp despised in the mind of him that is at ease. With them the prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad, and though they smooth their tongues, and their words are softer than butter, they only do it that they may the better bend their bow and shoot in secret at him who is perfect. I was once for 'loving everybody that talked about Jesus Christ', but I have learned a different lesson, and find my affections now flow in a narrower channel, and, I believe, all the deeper from its contracted width. "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." And what rule is that? "A new creature in Christ Jesus." So says the Spirit by Paul, and so answer I, "Amen."

But not new creeds, you letter men; nor "new lives," you reformed, but unregenerated sinners; nor "new tongues," you glib talkers. To all who come short of the new creature we must answer to their question, "Is it peace, Jehu?" "What peace so long as the whoredoms of your mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" But in this warfare we shall have no better treatment than those who have gone before us. If they hated the Saviour, they must hate the saved; and if they called Him Beelzebub, how much more those of His household?

I have heard from friend — on his brother's marriage. He seems much pleased and gratified with all he heard and saw. You would perceive he is not a man of strong mind, nor deep experience; yet, I trust, a sincere lover of truth and the possessor of it. But he is not what a friend of mine calls "a front-rank man." He will support another, and follow, better than lead. Such, however, are useful when they know themselves and their own weakness, which I trust he does; and are content to boil the camp kettle, or help the wounded, rather than head the forlorn hope. He had been set up, before I knew him, by those who sought to build, but who knew neither how to dig the foundation nor handle a trowel; and, I believe, was much cut down before cut to his right dimensions.

Alas! alas! how many in a church would squeeze down to nothing if grasped by the hand of the Spirit! And many others, were they put into the hydraulic press, as the Americans do their bales of cotton, would shrink into woefully small dimensions. You may depend upon it, that with all the light in our day, there is very little grace. Most are boasting themselves on a false gift, and are potsherds covered with silver dross. The best taught are crying, "My leanness! my leanness! woe unto me!" and mourning over their barrenness and death. The professing church is in the Laodicean state of affairs, saying that she is rich, and increased in goods, and in need of nothing. She feeds on 'mere doctrines' without knowing or caring to know their power, and rests on the general security of the elect without feeling or desiring to feel her own personal security.

'Antinomian presumption' is the error of our professing day—the damning sin of Calvinists; just as 'self-righteousness' is the damning sin of Arminians.

The millstones are not wider apart than in the days of Hart, and the path between them is still what the vulture's eye has not seen. If temptations, doubts, fears, crosses, and afflictions keep us from crying, "Peace, where there is no peace," it is far better for us than being at ease in Zion.

Our flesh loves ease and carnal security, and absence of trials produces and brings that which the flesh loves. But in such seasons, when all is dead within, how soon does all the power of religion evaporate, how cold are our prayers, how dark and hidden is the word of truth, how pointless and worldly is our conversation, how vain and flesh-pleasing are our thoughts, and how feeble are our pulpit ministrations! Religion becomes a burden, and everything connected with it a task; while all the time we are sensible we are not what we were before, and yet, like a dreaming man, can tell neither what we are nor where we are.

But when the entrance of the word of reproof or of promise gives light, a ray is cast over the path we are in, our backslidings reprove us, our leanness rising up in us bears witness to our face, and we cry, "Bring my soul out of prison; deliver me for Your mercy's sake; visit me with Your salvation, and lift up the light of Your glorious countenance upon me." But we soon veer aside like a broken bow, and go a whoring after our idols under every green tree. Like the wild donkey of the wilderness we snuff up the wind at our pleasure, and in our occasions, who can turn us away?

You ask how I was convinced of believer's baptism? I don't know that I can add any more to what I mentioned in my note. When the subject first arrested my mind I turned from it with enmity, as I saw it was like a man with a saw coming to cut down my apple-tree which bore the golden apples. This was evident, that if believer's baptism was the only scriptural one, I must relinquish my connection with a system that was based upon infant sprinkling. But this I had neither inclination nor faith to do, especially as my health was poor, and all my income derived from the Established Church. Still, however, as I read the Scriptures, I could see neither precept nor example of any other than believer's baptism, and together worked with this the awful mockery of the Church of England's service for sprinkling infants, which, however, I escaped, as having an assistant who did that as well as all the other formal work. Some friends of mine, too, at this time seceded from the Establishment, and were baptized, and as I still maintained equally friendly relations with them, we sometimes conversed upon it, and my convictions were still more strengthened until they outgrew and outweighed all bonds and shackles, and forced me out of Babylon. I was baptized by Mr. Warburton about six months after I left the Church of England, and have never swerved from believing it to be a gospel ordinance, though I feel little disposed to make a Shibboleth of it, or make it a prominent topic of my ministry.

The way in which many Baptists bring it forward I much object to, as though it were 'the all in all', and the grand turning point, whereas I rather regard it as an ordinance to be obeyed from divine teaching and love. "If you love Me, keep My commandments." But some of my dearest friends and best hearers are not Baptists, nor has this come in as a bar or a stumbling-block between our friendship and love. I cannot, however, agree with Mr. Triggs, or the late

Mr. Fowler, to make it an indifferent thing, and in our zeal for spiritual substances to set aside the Lord's clear command, and His apostles' undoubted practice, as though they were mere nullities and shadows. Jesus is a law-giver to His chosen, and they honor Him little, who despise His precepts. That is a dreadful word (Matt. 5:19), and you are well aware of the difference between 'transgressing through weakness', and 'neglecting through contempt', or 'despising through hardness of heart'. And I dare say you have felt the keen edge of the verse I have quoted, in the expression, "And shall teach men so."

I have sometimes derived comfort from this thought, that wherever I have transgressed I have not taught men to do so, and have neither justified to myself nor to others, any deviation from the strait and narrow path. And here I draw a distinction between the 'opponents' of baptism and the 'neglectors' of it. S— has preached against, and, I believe, ridiculed believer's baptism. I would not, therefore, pass by an opportunity of correspondence without telling him of his error. This produced some warm defensive language, and when I stated in my reply that I did not, perhaps, bring forward baptism once a year in the pulpit, he could not understand how I could be faithful in so doing, when I opposed him for denying it. He could not see the difference between a man's not seeing a truth and opposing it. Had you, for instance, been silent on the subject, I would not have brought it forward; but had you opposed it, I would soon have defended it, and I think this is a very intelligible distinction.

If your church is not a Baptist church, you will find that to bring baptism forward will set it all on fire and prove a bone of contention. But I would not have you the less bring it forward, if the Lord has laid it upon your soul, and the most powerful sermon you could preach upon it would be to submit to it yourself. The very storm, however, might winnow out some of the old chaff, of which, I doubt not, you have more than you wish. You have probably found before this, that old members of churches are not usually the most spiritual or teachable, and that your chief hopes rest upon those whom the Lord has given you as fresh seals of ministry. And you may find baptism to give the old members more offence than your other preaching, as being a more tangible point, and as affording them a rallying spot of ground whence they may discharge their artillery against what they call your bitter spirit, etc. It may therefore be a turning-point with you, and yet should not be so brought forward, but simply as a truth taught you by the Lord.

It is good for us to have little to do with men. I have had, I think, sufficient reason to be shy of most ministers, nor are there above half a dozen to whom I feel any union. The review of Hawker and Huntington in the *Gospel Standard*, generally ascribed to me, has made many very angry, who never knew the experience therein spoken of, and therefore their language is, "Master, in speaking thus, you condemn us also!" Truth, however, will stand when the world is in a blaze.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

January 16, 1840

My dear Friend, Carby Tuckwell—I felt much interested in your account of your trip to Plymouth. You need not have felt such trepidation at calling on my mother and sister, as they are plain people, and would be glad to see any friend of mine. I am glad you liked my sister's conversation. Whatever others may think I care not. I myself fully receive it as a divine work, and those who doubt or disbelieve it, let them produce a better. I mean as to the feelings produced by a visit from Jesus; and if any cavil, and say there was not this preparatory work, and that preliminary hell and damnation terrors, all I can say, "Who shall limit the Holy One of Israel?" As Hart says in his golden "Preface"—in my opinion the most weighty piece of writing ever penned by man after the blessed Scriptures—"The dealings of God with His people, though similar in the general, are nevertheless so various that there is no chalking out the paths of one child of God by those of another; no laying down regular plans of Christian conversion, Christian experience, Christian usefulness, or Christian conversation." I heartily assent to what I have thus quoted, and though I believe there is no revelation of Christ without previous condemnation by the Law, who shall define the necessary degree of depth, or the indispensable period of length? Who shall take the compasses and scale, and mark out a circle for the Almighty to move in, or a line to walk by?

Let the measurer first cut and clip all the trees of the forest into a certain prescribed figure and uniform symmetry. Let him examine an unknown leaf from some Indian forest, and say, "This is not a leaf at all; it is not jagged, nor scalloped like the only leaf I admit as my standard that of the oak; and therefore I cast it from me as a base counterfeit, a vile imitation, the work of some ingenious artist." You would say to such a critic in vain, "Why, look, sir, is it not green? Does it not spring from a branch? Does it not fulfill all the functions of a leaf? Does it not, by its minute pores and vessels, give out all the surplus moisture of the sap, and at the same time inhale the oxygen of the air, which, by combining with the sap, becomes nutriment to the tree?" Still he would answer, "I don't care what it does. I say it is not jagged or scalloped, nor like an oak leaf, and therefore away with it."

Apply this to the case in hand. I believe my sister has not felt the terrors of the Law, as many have; but if she felt lost, guilty, condemned, without hope or help, she had a work of the Law in her conscience. But I look more to the deliverance, and the effects produced by it. Who shall say, in reading her simple statement, that her leaf is not green? Does it not give out, and take in, as the leaf does—give out the flowings of love and contrition, and take in out of the fullness of the Saviour? Deliverances, my friend, are the grand evidences to look to. No other evidences will satisfy a needy, naked soul, and deliverances are what a wise man will chiefly look to in estimating others. He will not, indeed, pass by, or think lightly of the sighing of the prisoner, but he will consider the knocking off the fettered captive's chains a better evidence than lying in the dungeon. And whatever some may think about the most searching ministry being that which deals chiefly with dark evidences, I have not the least doubt that that ministry will be the most cutting, and at the same time the most establishing, which deals most in deliverances.

This is a very different thing from the flighty, dry, letter ministry of preaching assurance and comfort. Deliverances imply trials, sorrows and

temptations. Troubles and their corresponding deliverances are the scales of a balance; when one is up the other is down. But they who are all for darkness and unbelief have no balance, but a scale-pan detached from the beam; and they who are all for assurance, have the other scale unhooked from the beam also. They are thieves and deceitful weighers, who have stolen the scale, and left the beam behind them; and, being partners in the robbery, one rogue has taken away one scale, and his accomplice the other. The honest man holds the beam with the scales attached to it, and he puts the light-hearted and untempted into the scale of trials. They cannot make it move a peg; they are found lacking. He then puts the mourners into the scale of deliverances. The beam trembles, but does not move. It is worldly sorrow that works death. They are light weight too. But a living soul tempted will at one time weigh down one scale, and a living soul delivered will at another time weigh down the other scale, and thus be full weight in each. When I get into figures and comparisons I am like a trained horse getting upon the turf. Away he goes, and there is no stopping him until out of breath. The first horse I bought had run a race a week or two before I purchased him, and when I got him upon a down I had hard matter to hold him.

I am glad you get on pretty well with the 'reading of sermons' at chapel. An exercised soul in prayer, who is enabled in simple language to pour out his feelings and desires, is worth all the prating, starched-up, letter parsons in the world. My soul has been softened with a single sentence of living prayer out of an exercised child of God, when a long sermon, well dovetailed and jointed, from a letter preacher would have filled it with barrenness and death.

I am, through mercy, pretty well. My chest still at times continues to give me pain, and is, I think, weaker this winter than it was last. I still, however, continue to preach twice on the Lord's-day and once in the week, and usually to good and listening congregations, which increase rather than diminish. My ministry is too cutting to please the generality, and, I think, many are wounded who have the root of the matter in them. I trust I am not become mealy-mouthed, or a man-pleaser, though my flesh would gladly lean that way. I think, however, they give me credit for seeking their spiritual good, and that I do not speak in bitterness and enmity to wound their feelings. But it is hard for those to relish faithfulness, who have been used to flattery. I hope my valued friends who attend Allington chapel are well. Remember me to them in Christian affection, such as E. Pope, the Cannings' women (including Dorcas and her sister Sally) Mrs. Wild, Mr. and Mrs. Parry, Mrs. Cannings, and all my other sincere and steadfast friends.

Yours affectionately, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

January 29, 1840

My dear Friend—I feel desirous to hear how you are going on in that spiritual warfare in which you are now engaged on the side of 'faith and feeling' against 'presumption and dry notions. I gather from a piece or two in the *Gospel Standard* that you are still seeking, in the strength of the Holy Spirit, to pull down strongholds, and to cast down imaginations and every

high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. But no one can effectually pull down the lofty imaginations of delusion, the towering castles of presumption, the strong bulwarks of letter-faith, and the high walls of carnal security, unless these self-same refuges of lies have been laid low in his own soul. The strongholds of false religion must have been undermined by doubts and fears, sapped by spiritual troubles, blown up by powerful temptations, cast down by guilt and wrath, and pulled to pieces by daily and hourly strugglings with misery, darkness, helplessness, beggary, bankruptcy, and thorough insolvency, before we can firmly handle pickaxe and spade, and plant the battering-ram boldly against the high towers of notional religion.

Some years ago, before I knew much of this leveling work within, I used to feel there was something wrong in many professors, something that repelled me from them instead of drawing me to them; but I could not tell where the disease lay. The apple was so round and well colored, that I had not discernment to see the little round hole which the maggot had bored through the peel, and that it was eating up the core. I did not know where to strike them; and as I saw they held truth in the letter, and my conscience was tender, I could neither take them into my heart, nor throw them over the wall. But when, in the winter of 1830, the Lord, as I hope and trust, began to pull down in my soul 'letter-faith' and false religion, and has gone on more or less teaching me the same humbling lessons, line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little, I have felt emboldened to stand as the captive and blind Samson between the pillars, and try with all my strength to pull down the banqueting-house of notional religion.

Thus we can say to all letter-men and their letter-hearers—"I have been where you are. I once thought the ground firm and good, but I found it a deep morass, which was near swallowing me up. I, like you, was once dreaming, and behold I ate; but I awaked, and my soul was empty; and I, too, as a thirsty man dreamed, and behold I drank; but I awaked, and behold I was faint and my soul had appetite." (Isaiah 29:8) When a minister can from soul experience trace out a notional religion, and show how this opiumed draught stupefies the senses, bewilders the heart, hardens the conscience, blinds the judgment, inflames the pride, and intoxicates the whole soul; and then can experimentally work out the feelings of this opium-eater, when some of the leaves of the tree of life, as heavenly medicine, made him vomit up the inebriating poison—I say, when a man can feelingly describe both malady and remedy, he is, in my judgment, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. And what will be the lot of such a workman? Opposition, hatred, and contempt from the professors whom he unmasks, convictions in the spiritual consciences of the poor and needy to whom he is a faithful steward, and a satisfaction in his own soul that he is not doing the work of the Lord deceitfully.

The high faith letter-hearers will say he is in bondage, that he does not preach the gospel, that he does not set forth the glories of Christ. The beggars and bankrupts will find his chains their liberty, his darkness their light, and his death their life; as Paul speaks—"We which live are always delivered unto death," etc.; "So then death works in us, but life in you." The same blessed apostle tells us that many of the brethren waxed confident by his

bonds (Phil. 1:14), alluding probably to his temporal chains; but the same thing is true spiritually. I am at a point here that all faith which does not act, move, stir, live, and breathe in a man's soul, is nominal and notional—not the faith of God's elect.

I believe there are but two healthy states of soul; one hungering, and the other feeding; one mourning, and the other rejoicing; one sighing, groaning, and panting after testimonies, love favors, sprinkled blood, revealed righteousness, and eternal mercy, and the other banqueting on the same. But you find many towering professors who are neither in one state nor the other. They neither spiritually mourn, nor spiritually rejoice; they neither grieve for Christ's absence, nor are cheered by His presence. They are always the same; always confident, but never confiding; always cheerful, but never cheered; always at rest, but never experimentally resting on the bosom of Jesus. Now, I do not say that a child of God cannot be entangled in this snare. I believe he may and often is. But you will find he can never go all lengths with the 'all-head and no-heart' man. It appears to me that Job was at one time somewhat entrapped here. "Then I said, I shall die in my nest." He was settling down in dead assurance; but there was always something which kept him from quite falling asleep. "I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came." He had his fears whether this warm downy nest might not be pulled away, and therefore says, "The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me."

The living work of God in the soul will never unite with dead faith and presumptuous confidence. There is in many living souls, especially if they fall into the hands of presumptuous men, a hastening to be rich; but such in the end will be convicted of not being innocent. They want to exchange their hobbling gait for eagles' wings. They are so eager for a living child, that they will adopt the son of the bond-woman, sooner than be barren and wait God's time. "He who believes shall not make haste." "Though it tarries, wait for it." But they are tired of waiting, and therefore offer up the burnt-offering before Samuel comes down. They out-run their heavenly Teacher, who is too slow with His line upon line, for their nimble fancies. They take the highest place unbidden, instead of seating themselves at the bottom of the table. Thus presumption, under the name of faith, carries them along. But by and by, running so fast, they slip and fall, or darkness overtakes them, or temptation assails them, or doubts and fears seize them, or eternity on a sick bed stares them in the face. Then they find their faith all vanished, like the chaff that is driven with the whirlwind out of the floor, and the smoke out of the chimney. They must now retrace their steps with bitter lamentations, and take with shame the lowest room.

I believe I can say from experience, that few sins cut into a living conscience deeper than presumption. "Keep back Your servant from presumptuous sins; . . . so shall I be innocent from the *great* transgression." Surely this verse shows that a child of God has a proneness to presumption, and it is the great transgression from which he needs to be kept back. In my opinion very few are free from it. I feel its workings pretty well every day, and have to confess it again and again. But having this tender part, I know where to hit others, and I can at times drive my sword fearlessly up to the hilt into this abscess, and let out the gory matter.

Write to me, and tell me how you are going on. Are you satisfied that you have acted rightly in staying where you are? I hope you are. A soldier that leaves his post because the bullets are whistling about him, runs a risk of being tried for cowardice. And the bullet has never yet been molded at Rochford that is to kill you. I was glad to see M. G.'s testimony in the *Standard*. I like your remark that there was reason to question a work where there had been no conflicts for some years. As I quote from memory, excuse if I quote incorrectly; I have, I believe, the substance of the remark. But I could by no means cut off the first work in her soul. "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and, as I have endeavored to trace it out, presumption may have come in under the name of faith. It will be a part of your wisdom to remember this, and to spare the children while you flog the illegitimate children. And remember that the sword which glances off the seared conscience of a professor will often pierce a living child, as one of our ancient kings was shot by an arrow that glanced from a tree. May you fight the good fight of faith, and be blessed to the building up of the elect on their most holy faith.

Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

To a Dying Youth

[The recipient of this letter lived at Bourn, Lincolnshire. He had been blessed under the ministry of William Tiptaft, and of the writer of the letter, who visited him and found him a living soul, though under a dark cloud of heaviness and gloom. He died, however, in the full enjoyment of that peace which passes all understanding.]

February 1, 1840

My dear Friend—I promised your mother that I would write to you, and this promise I now endeavor to fulfill. May the Lord the Spirit guide my pen, without whose heavenly teaching I shall write, and you will read, in vain.

I said in my interview with you, that I was always desirous to trace out the workings and actings of faith in the soul. Faith we know is the good and perfect gift of the Father of lights, "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," and therefore the sure herald of salvation. But this faith, however good and perfect, is lodged in a vile body, and is daily and hourly thwarted and opposed by an evil heart of unbelief. Thus it lies often so smothered, buried, and oppressed under the dead carnal load of unbelief, infidelity, worldliness, filth, hardness, darkness and sensuality, that it seems utterly extinct and perished. Like the embers under the ashes, the wheat under the chaff, the tender blade under the snow, the pure gold under the scum of the melting pot, the goodly pearl under the sand of the sea shore, and the lost piece of money under the dust and rubbish of the room, precious faith is at times lost and buried under the weight and mass of our most vile unbelieving nature. And yet, under all this heavy weight and pressure, it lies not as a dead, inert, motionless thing. As Hart sweetly says, "It lives and labors under load."

There are times when it heaves, and gasps, and pants, and breathes, and cries out from beneath its oppressive burden. Thus Jonah cried out of the belly of hell; Jeremiah out of the low dungeon (Lam. 3:55); Hezekiah out of the sentence of death, when he turned his face to the wall. The first said, "I am cast out of Your sight;" the second, "I am cut off;" the third, "I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living." But there were the blessed actings of a living faith in their cries, their fears, their sorrows, their self-condemnation, their desperate hopeless, helpless condition. And were they left to perish? Ah, no! Their cry came up into the presence, and entered into the ears of the Lord Almighty. Each and all were delivered, and praised their God and Savior with joyful lips.

But the office and province of faith is to look out of self for help and deliverance. Unbelief and despair look wholly and solely to self, and when the utter ruin and bankruptcy of the creature are discovered, they sink with the creature into an unfathomable gulf. But faith, coming *from* the Lamb of God, looks up and out of self *unto* the Lamb of God. As Jonah looked out of the very belly of hell unto God's holy temple, the type and figure of the Temple made without hands, that is, the holy human nature of Jesus in which the Godhead dwelt, so does faith look out of guilt, and filth, and misery, and ruin, and helplessness, and hopelessness, unto the Son of God, once crucified, and now risen and glorified, and thus casts anchor within the veil. And though the eyes of faith be often dim, and its ears heavy and well-near closed, yet will the one anxiously look out of obscurity, and the other listen earnestly, to see the face, and hear the voice of the Son of God.

As a fond wife, anxiously expecting her husband's return, will open the cottage door, and strain her eyes through the dark night to observe his form, or listen with suppressed breath if she can hear his footsteps, and the longer he delays his coming, the higher will her anxiety rise; so will a believing, longing soul, in the exercise of living faith, look up until its eyes fail (Isa. 38:14), to see Jesus, and listen with intense anxiety to hear His still small voice. And are not both these spiritual senses needful to living faith? Jesus says to His disciples, "Yet a little while, and the world sees Me no more; but you see Me—because I live, you shall live also" (John 14). Again—"My sheep hear My voice," etc. The command is—"Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears" (Isa. 43:8). "Look unto Me, and be you saved." "Hear, and your soul shall live."

You have seen an end of the creature, that it is vanity; of your own righteousness, that it is filthy rags; of your strength, that it is utter weakness; of your natural religion, that it is a broken reed and a cobweb garment. You now need power, life, feeling, heavenly manifestations, precious promises applied with sweetness, visits from Jesus, tokens of distinguishing favor, a conscience sprinkled with atoning blood, and a glorious robe of spotless righteousness cast round your naked soul.

May the Lord speedily grant your desires, and visit your soul with looks of love, rays of mercy, and beams of tender kindness, so as to smile you into humility, resignation, patience, gratitude, contrition, love, and godly sorrow. A languishing body is a heavy cross. Sickness often depresses our spirits, shatters our nerves, and casts a gloom over our minds. But it is good thus to

be weaned and detached, and gradually loosened from the strong ties that bind us to earth. I was ill once for many months, and many thought I would never recover. I found it a heavy trial, but I believe it was profitable to my soul. May the Lord make all your bed in your sickness, give you many testimonies of His special favor, and when He sees fit to take down your earthly tabernacle, remove you to that happy country where "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick," where tears are wiped away from all faces, and sorrow and sighing flee away.

Yours affectionately in the bonds of the gospel,
J. C. P.

February 6, 1840

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—The cheapness of postage increases my incoming correspondence, so my time scarcely admits of my writing so often or so long to my friends. In this, however, as in other cases, I feel a certain degree of self-denial and exertion necessary to prevent my friends thinking me guilty of neglect. We would all like the miserly plan of receiving letters without answering them. I call it miserly, for the essence of a *miser* is to receive as much and pay as little as he possibly can. In all friendship, forbearance, self-denial, and exertion are needful to keep it alive. He who will make no sacrifices, use no self-denial, and employ no effort in behalf of his friends, will soon find himself without them, and thus reap the just reward of his indolence and self-indulgence. A certain degree of communication and friendly communion is absolutely necessary to keep spiritual friendship and affection alive. Communication by bodily presence, or by letter, is the oil poured from time to time into the lamp which keeps it alive. I have generally found that, as I ceased to see or write to my friends, coolness arose, which increased with neglect, until at last I seemed to care as little about them as if I had never known them. These remarks, the truth of which you will, I believe, acknowledge, I trust will stir you up to put them into practice and use that small quantity of self-denial which is needful to pay, as well as to receive.

Afflictions and trials are the appointed lot of all, elect and non-elect. Solomon observed this in his day (Eccles. 9:2), and Job before him (5:7; 14:1). So that crosses and losses are no distinguishing mark of divine favor, nor yet of divine wrath, though the elect and non-elect draw just opposite conclusions from them. The elect often fear they are tokens of wrath, and the non-elect hope they will be a payment for their sins. The great question is, what do they for a man's soul? Is any humbling of heart, breaking down of pride, deadness to the world, earnest fleeing to a throne of grace produced these trials? It is good to have a deep and feeling acquaintance with the malady, to groan and sigh under a body of sin and death, to be cut down, cut up, and cut off—but why good? Is it good in itself? No, not at all. It is only good so far as the soul is led thereby to the cross of Jesus, to taste and feel His blood and love. Everything that brings us there in faith and feeling is good; everything that keeps us away is bad.

Since I began this letter I have received one from our friend Dredge, in which he mentions the trial you had at Allington with S. Poor fellow! he must have

been miserably shut up, not to be able to fulfill his engagements, and come all that way for nothing. I don't understand it; when God raises up a man to preach His word, I cannot understand his being totally shut up. Warburton speaks of it twice having happened to him, but one of those times was in early days when there was a special need of his being humbled. Such a thing has, I would imagine, never happened to him for these last twenty years. I never heard of such a thing occurring to Huntington, nor do we find it happening to Smart, Tiptaft, or others. Most complain of great deadness at times and shutting up in feeling, as though they could never preach again, but when the time has come they have been mercifully helped through. Friend Dredge, however, gives a right account of him, and speaks of many sweet marks of grace and godliness in him. I don't see that the Allington hearers and friends have any reason from this circumstance to write bitter things against themselves, as though they had shut him up, and that it is a mark of the Lord's displeasure and absence from them. Warburton and others have found liberty there, though he felt bondage; and we know not what secret need there was for him to be humbled thereby, or what spiritual profit to him or them is to spring out of it. "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense," etc.

Poor C. seemed to have had a roughish journey to Wincanton, and his fellow-traveler came in a storm and went away in one. Oh what trials the poor fellow must have had when he got home, and how the devil would set upon him that he was no minister, and only a deceiver and deceived! If it were bad for you, it was a great deal worse for him, and yet I most fully believe good will come out of it. Storms and roaring waves sometimes cast upon the shore valuable treasures hid in the sands—and thus, spiritually, tempests and roaring seas often bring to light secret treasure. I have a strong suspicion that my Allington friends must tread the old track of 'reading sermons' and praying among themselves, as there is little prospect of their having a man to go in and out before them, and like many a laborer in these hard times they must satisfy themselves with long fasts and short meals.

I am sorry to find Mr.— is still such a trial to you in every respect. I expect for you nothing but sorrow and trouble until he is no more seen. Yet if spiritual profit arises from it to your soul; if it weans you from the world, gives you an errand to a throne of grace, makes you helpless and hopeless, and through all this, a heavenly smile breaks through the cloud to ravish your heart, you will not think you have one trial too many. We are poor judges of our own conduct and, even if in the wrong, are ready to justify ourselves.

I was much pleased with friend Dredge's letter, and see him a very altered man from when I first knew him. I have seen him more softened and brought down, and less harsh in his speeches. Faithfulness is one thing; harshness is another. A man can't be too faithful, but he must speak the truth 'in love' if he speaks aright. Paul, even of the enemies of the cross, speaks with weeping. But it is, indeed, a most narrow line, and most of us err through softness and compliance rather than severity and harshness, and, I believe, 'severe faithfulness' is far better than 'compliant softness'. Our friend's faithfulness makes him so hated, and I would be sorry to see him softened down to put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. But his enemies treasure up his hard speeches and turn them against him, and say, "Here is Dredge's religion." I

like the way in which he talked to —, and it was more likely to find an entrance into his mind, than if he had harshly cut him off.

I heard from Smart this morning. He wishes me to pass through Welwyn for their anniversary, but I scarcely think I shall be able. I would stretch a point, however, to please a friend.

I am more and more satisfied with my sister's religion, and believe it will swim when thousands will sink. She has been brought more into darkness and conflict lately, and says what pleasure she found in reading my "Heir of Heaven." A lady who has been staying with them some time—a great professor—has been an incredible trial to her. To save my hand, which is rather fatigued, I got my dear wife to copy a part of her last letter, which, I think, shows life and feeling—

"Mrs. — has been a terrible trial to me, and I believe if I had been a worm, and she could have put her foot upon me and crushed me, she would. She has goaded and worried my soul, as a bull-dog would do a sheep. Even now I dread her coming into the house, and my whole frame is in agitation when she speaks upon the precious Word, and what she takes to herself. She has no doubt of her salvation, and all Mr. Isbell preaches upon to the comfort of the Lord's dear ones she says she participates in. She has none of the doubtings and fears, no inward corruptions, no hidings of the Lord's face, no lack of communion with Him, no lack of prayer does she feel. And I am sure Mr. Isbell does cut down root and branch; so much so, that unless quite dead to the word, no one could hear him without being brought down into the dust. There could be no towering of the head, no watching or 'being constantly on the watch to detect errors in *others*' (as she unwittingly told me she did), were she brought to see her own nakedness before the Lord. Still her visit has been in love; it has taken me much from man's knowledge, made me look more entirely to the Lord for teaching and strength. Some of the Sabbaths have been, indeed, days of rest and peace to my soul, softened down quietness, a resting in the Lord, a peace and sweetness I would not part with for worlds (but without any rejoicing).

"I read, last week, your 'Heir of Heaven,' and it was a blessed sermon to me. My mind had been very wretched; no prayer, no understanding of the word; all was dark and miserable. I could not go up to the chapel on Sunday. Mr. Isbell came in in the afternoon. I had been poring over some chapter in Isaiah; all was a blank, and I said so to him. Very soon after Mrs. — came in and began to talk to him on various portions of Scripture, and he partly expounded two of the chapters in Isaiah I had longed to ask him. I think this is very singular—here is one with a vast deal of scriptural knowledge running from one part of the Bible to another, grasping at the meaning, and here am I, a very fool, hardly knowing one text from another, sitting by without a word to say. Blessed Lord, how have You dealt with me, a cobweb in Your sight, and left Your creature without a certain assurance of Your love to her? Then Mr. Isbell spoke upon the chapter above named; in an instant a ray of light darted into my soul. I was sure I felt the rain of heavenly light was coming upon me, and as she rose, courteously thanking him for the pleasure she had had, and saying she would go home and *consult* her *Bible*—I think to myself—you know not the instrument you have been in

the Lord's hand of sweetness to my soul, and I never did enjoy a more blessed evening, quite alone in the house, if I can call it being alone. The 40th Psalm was deeply entered into, and I was again directed to the 14th of John; all entered into my inmost soul, and I did love the dear Redeemer and thank Him for His visible mercy to me. The same peace lasted several days, during which I read your sermon; but, alas! there was to be an end, and for several days I have been without a word to say to the Lord. Very miserable, no reading reached me, and I dare not kneel down lest I should mock the Lord. Today I have had a little comfort, and been able to feel that the Lord is still my rock and my strength."

I need not apologize for the length of this quotation, as I think you will consider it the best part of my letter.

Give my Christian love to all the friends, and believe me to be,
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

February 18, 1840

My dear sister Fanny—I am always pleased to hear of your spiritual state, and to find that He who has begun a good work in you is still fulfilling it until the day of Jesus Christ. A life of faith in the Redeemer is not one of continued, nor indeed frequent enjoyment. There is an enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ; and soldiers, you know, have often to fight and receive painful wounds. Our carnal nature is not sanctified by grace, but remains in all its unmitigated venom, and in all that mass of depravity, filth and corruption, into which the fall of our first parents precipitated it. Satan is a powerful, as well as a most wily enemy, and is continually prowling about either to wound or ensnare. We are told "to fight the good fight of faith," and that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood (*that is*, not against flesh and blood *only*), but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness (or 'wicked spirits,' *margin*) in high places."

The strength of Christ is made perfect in our weakness, His victory in our defeat, His grace in subduing our sin, His free payment in our bankruptcy and insolvency. Here, then, is the life of faith, and a struggling, battling, wrestling, and sometimes despairing fight it is. We would gladly have it otherwise, and be wise, and strong, and holy, and full of joy and triumph; and, could we gain our wish, we would take the crown from the Redeemer's head, and put it on our own.

Surely 'free grace' is a sweet theme to all the ransomed family of God. But what makes it sweet—but sheer necessity? If there were no sins to pardon, no backslidings to heal, no wounds to cleanse, no broken bones to restore, no aggravated iniquities freely to blot out, free grace would be but a name, a sound in the ears, a Bible word, the article of a sound creed—but not a felt, tasted, and enjoyed possession, sweeter than honey or the honeycomb in the soul. You had long heard the doctrines of grace, but they only reached your outward ear as, perhaps, a pleasing sound, but without making heavenly

melody in your heart, altering the current of your desires, thoughts and affections, making you a new creature, and setting up the kingdom of God in your soul.

Many hate and revile me for speaking and writing against "dry doctrines." By "dry doctrines" I mean the intellectual, speculative, notional, dead and dry knowledge of certain truths as they stand in the letter of God's Word. They are not dry in themselves, but rich, unctuous, savory, and full of marrow; but as merely lodged in the speculative brains of natural men, they are dry to them as destitute of heavenly application.

I always suspected you overrated —'s religion; but, not knowing her since her profession, I felt unwilling to hint anything to her disparagement, and wished to leave it more to your own discernment. You need not envy her her clear head, strong memory, inquisitive mind, and good understanding. One grain of divine teaching is a million times more valuable than the highest doctrinal knowledge. One smile from the God of all grace is a pledge of an eternal inheritance--incorruptible, undefiled, and which will never fade away. And what are the best and brightest of human attainments? Alas! they are linked to life's short span, and the stroke that snaps the thread of life crumbles all natural attainments into the dust. . .

[The remainder of this letter is torn off.]

February 19, 1840

My dear William Brown—Hearing a good account of your experience and ministry, I feel desirous to invite you for three Lord's-days in August next, to preach among my people at Stamford and Oakham, where I stately labor. . . I sincerely hope you may be induced to comply with our wishes. It is not every minister whom I would admit into my pulpit, nor the friends willingly hear. We look more to experience, feeling, unction, and power, than eloquence or abilities. An honest, sincere, God-fearing man, who knows divine things by divine teaching, and who will neither stretch himself above his measure nor crouch beneath it, but simply stand up as he is, will suit them better than a pasteboard giant or a lord mayor's show champion. . . . I shall say no more; you know the man and his communication.

I hope you may be induced to accept the invitation in the same spirit that it is given.

Wishing you every New Covenant blessing,
I am yours sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

March 4, 1840

My dear William Brown—I hope the Lord may incline your heart to accept my invitation to come and supply for me at Stamford and Oakham, and that He may come with you to bless you.

My people, especially at Stamford, are very young, and for the most part weak and feeble. They love, I believe, however, savory food, winnowed with the shovel and the fan. Experimental preaching alone suits them, and, indeed, I would not knowingly introduce any other than an experimental preacher into my pulpit. I am deeply conscious of my own baseness, ignorance, blindness, and folly; but my malady is too deeply rooted to be healed by dry doctrines and speculative opinions. The blood of the Lamb, spiritually and supernaturally sprinkled and applied, is, I am sure, the only healing balm for a sin-sick soul. "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Spirit." And all our knowledge that does not spring from the teachings of that holy and blessed Comforter I must cast aside as a thing of nothing. A childlike spirit, a thinking lowly of ourselves, a panting after God, an insatiable desire after the waters of life, a conscience exercised upon good and evil, a love of the holy Lamb of God, and an abiding affection to His people, I look upon as more satisfactory evidences of grace than a sanctified countenance and a fluent tongue. We live in a day of great spiritual light, but it is to be feared of little spiritual life.

I feel increasingly disposed to turn away from the opinions of men and seek spiritual knowledge at the fountain-head. But, unless a man comes nowadays with a Shibboleth, he is almost set aside as a man of truth. He must use certain words, whether Scriptural or not, must preach in a prescribed manner, as well as with prescribed matter. He must not vary from a certain mold, and if he dares to use his own way of setting forth truth, in his own simple language, and as he simply feels and has felt, many can hardly tell whether he is right or wrong, and the majority perhaps set him down as wrong altogether. I dislike, amazingly, the artificial mode of setting forth truth by which, when you hear a text given out, you know all the divisions and mode of handling it before they are mentioned, and can tell the end of every sentence nearly as soon as you hear the beginning. It smells too strongly of Dr. Gill and collusion to suit me, but some cannot eat the dish unless served up every day in a plate of the same pattern; and, like children, when a differently shaped or differently painted cup comes on the table, cannot drink, as being so occupied with the novelty.

But God will bless His own truth and His own servants, and when He thrusts forth His own stewards, will not send them forth as apes and imitators either of Huntington, Gadsby, or Warburton. They shall have their own line of truth and their own method of setting it forth, and they shall be commended, sooner or later, to spiritual consciences as men taught of Him. My pen has run on, as it often does, according to the flow of my own thoughts.

Believe me, I shall be glad to hear from you your willingness to come. If I did not esteem you as a man of truth I would not ask you, as I feel responsible for the supplies. My love to the Brighton friends.

Yours sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

February 26, 1840

My dear Friend, George Isbell—I think in writing letters I sometimes feel as

a self-justiciary does. Being sensible of my defects, imperfections, and shortcomings in them, I offer or promise to write again, hoping I may then send something better worth reading, yet I fail again like the character alluded to, and then I am almost sorry I ever promised to write. Some such feeling I am now sensible of, and, therefore, hope you will throw a 'mantle of love' over all that you see foolish or deficient.

I felt much the savor in your last letter but one, I mean that containing Mrs. B.'s experience. I hope you will not deny me what I am about to ask, that is, to insert it in the *Gospel Standard*. I would omit the name, and would leave out all personal allusions, and anything that might painfully particularise you or her. But I mean not only that part which contains her experience, but what you have said of yourself also; of course, omitting everything strictly personal. A free letter to a friend is often far more sweet and profitable than a set piece, however well written, and I believe the private letters of gracious men have been much blessed, as Huntington's, Romaine's, Newton's, etc. Some letters of Warburton's, Tiptaft's, and others have been blessed in the *Gospel Standard*.

I fear — is an unhumiliated man, and mistakes what the world calls "spirit" for gospel boldness and faithfulness. Bunyan in the *Holy War* represents the ejected servants of Diabolus returning into the city of Mansoul, and hiring themselves as servants under assumed names. For instance, "Covetousness" hires himself under the name of "Prudent Thrifty"; "Lust" and "Licentiousness" under the names of "Gallantry" and "Good Breeding"; "Carnal Security" under the name of the "Assurance of Faith." I don't know that these are the exact names, but such is the idea of this deep observer and graphic delineator of nature and grace. So I think pride and self-importance have hired themselves to — under the names of "Gospel Boldness" and "Spiritual Faithfulness." I dislike exceedingly the bold, arrogant way in which he calls himself a minister of the gospel, knowing, as I do well, how he had previously starved the 'living family', and amused or bolstered up 'dead Calvinists'. I do not say he is not a good man; I do not say he is not a minister of Christ; but in my judgment, I see in him a spirit very different from what I observe in those whom I love and honor as such.

You will find, I fear, your visit to Ireland a painful one. You know what enmity is in the heart against all light which forces the Cross into view. Formerly, when people breathed a word against the Established Church, I felt the bitterest enmity rise up, and I wanted to put them down, stop their mouths, or keep them in any way from broaching a subject so painful to flesh. But still light would break in and work in my conscience. The burdens of a 'liturgy' and the awful lies which I was compelled to tell a heart-searching God, pressed me sore. There was no use my fleeing to this or that explanation. I stood before a holy God, and told Him with lying lips a 'senseless babe' was "born of water and the Holy Spirit", when I knew the blessed Spirit had no more regenerated the child than He had regenerated the font. I thanked Him for "taking a dear brother to Himself", who I knew died under His eternal wrath. But some might say, "How did you know either the one or the other?" "How did I know there was a God at all but by faith in His Word?" and by the same faith that I believed in Him did I believe that His enemies were not His friends, nor 'carnal children' the living

members of the true Vine. I twisted and turned every way, but I was here held fast. It is a lie, and the worst of lies, as being a lie unto God. "You have not lied unto men, but unto God" (Acts 5:4); and, therefore, far more aggravated. Let this be laid spiritually on the conscience, and a living man whose heart has been made tender must leave, come what will.

I saw a gloomy prospect before me. My health so weak that I could only preach once a day, with no other service or using my voice, and hardly recovering the effects until the following Wednesday. All my independence, which kept me comfortably, gone at a stroke, and I felt most unwilling to burden my mother, whose income is small. But I cast myself into the waters and found standing-ground. My health after a time so improved that I now stand two full services, rarely preaching each time under an hour, and often to a crowded congregation, with one and sometimes two services in the week, when I preach at least an hour. I found friends raised up, pulpits offered, my needs freely supplied; greater liberty of soul, and more utterance and power. Two years after I left (which was in March, 1835), my elder brother died, almost suddenly, which gave me a little present property and a prospect of more. See how the Lord has fulfilled to me His promise (Mark 10:29, 30). Oh, my unbelieving heart! which pictured a thousand gloomy things never yet realized, as sickness, poverty, and almost a parish workhouse! And here I am better, or certainly not worse, in worldly circumstances, with a free, unfettered conscience, improved health, kinder and more enduring friends, and a much larger field for my ministerial labors. I have been several times invited to settle in London, where I generally go to preach once a year, and should there have a congregation exceeding probably eight hundred persons, and many, if not most of those, not carnal, dead, bowing and curtsying Papo-Protestant parishioners, whose formality and ignorance made my heart ache—but a living, discerning people.

Have I not made a good exchange? an easy conscience for a galled one, liberty for bondage, worship in the spirit for worship in the form, and a living people for dead formalists. Oh, how the Sacrament, so-called, used to gall me! At the head knelt my carnal Pharisical squire, with his pleasure-loving, God-hating wife, who was so filled with enmity against me that she would never hear me preach. I was compelled to tell them individually and personally that Christ died for them and shed His blood for their sins (I believing all the while particular redemption), of which I put the elements into their hands, saying, "Take, eat this," etc. Lower down knelt a man generally suspected of having once committed murder, and near him the most hardened Pharisee I ever knew in my life, whose constant reply to my attempted warnings, etc., was, "I dare say it be as you say." I was so cut up and condemned that at last I could not do it, and employed my assistant to perform the whole, but then I had to kneel down with these characters, which was as bad; and so I found myself completely hedged in and driven from every refuge, until at last, like an animal hunted down to a rock by the seaside, I had only one escape, which was to leap into the water, which bore me up and afforded me a sweet deliverance from my persecutors.

Lying reports have been circulated that I wish to return, and some that I have actually gone back—but I have never repented leaving for five minutes

since I came out of her walls. I am convinced she is corrupt, root and branch, head and tail. . . .

I was long held by the example of others, but what is that? Am I to commit adultery because David so fell; or deny Christ because Peter so acted? "Every man shall bear his own burden." I cannot in death or judgment hide myself under another's garments, as the Papists think of entering heaven in the habit of Dominic or Francis. I stand before Him whose eyes are as flames of fire to search out the secrets of my heart. And what is this poor vain world, with all its gilded clay, painted touch-wood honors and respectability, and soap-bubble charms? What is all the wealth of the Church (falsely so-called), piled up in one heap, compared to a smile of a loving Saviour's countenance? And we must follow Him, not in respectability and honor, with maces and organs, and greetings in the market-place, and "Rabbi, Rabbi," but in contempt and shame, hated by the world, despised by professors, and condemned by well near all.

You will find poverty and wretchedness enough to break your heart in Ireland. What a pity that so rich and fertile a county as Meath should have a population well near famishing! Devonshire peasantry complain of poverty, but what is theirs to Irish misery? . . .

My pen has run on at a great length, and I have much to ask you to excuse. I generally write freely, and, therefore, often foolishly; but, I trust, as sincerely as a desperately deceitful heart permits. You will long to return to your own country and people. There seems in Ireland to be such a conflict between Popery and Protestantism that it nearly absorbs all other considerations. My recollection is, that the outworks were so vigilantly guarded that the citadel was neglected. The heavy blows the Establishment has since received have probably driven in her champions from attacking the Catholics to defend their own emoluments, and united, as in England of late years, parties once quite discordant, as the Evangelical and Orthodox. When parties thus unite to defend a system in the maintenance of which both are deeply interested, it usually detracts from the spirituality of the one without altering the carnality of the other. In my remembrance the Evangelical clergymen (so-called) in England were quite separate from the Orthodox (so-called equally falsely), but they have been united within these last ten years. I had but one pulpit besides my own open to me in the Establishment in my neighborhood, and that was more as an accommodation for the person than love to the truth, as he preached it, and, I believe, knew it not. I and another clergyman, a notorious adulterer, almost a *taurus publicus* in his parish, were the only people the bishop refused to bow to at his visitation. And did I mind his public slight? No. I saw and felt he was dead before God, and that it was for Christ's sake I suffered reproach, being classed with a man known everywhere for the basest immorality. And now, through mercy, I am free from all their shackles, the iron of which entered into my soul.

Write to me as soon as you return, and give me a full account of your voyage, and how you got on with your host. I have not heard from my sister since I wrote to her. I like much of what you said in your last letter but one. It describes much of my feelings. I insist upon an experimental knowledge of Christ in the soul as the only relief for poverty, guilt, leprosy, bankruptcy,

and damnation. This is, I believe, the true way of preaching Christ crucified, not the mere doctrine of the Cross, but a crucified Jesus experimentally known to the soul.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

March 31, 1840

My dear sister, Fanny—Though you might feel your letter was written in a presumptuous spirit, I cannot say that I perceived any trace of it, but thought it, like your other letters, breathed a tone of sincerity and humility. It is well, however, to be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and to condemn ourselves when we feel guilty, for if we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.

I fully agree with Mr. Isbell that Hebrews 10 and 11 refer not to the elect, but graceless professors; nor do I see any great difficulty in what is said of their attainments, though the language is very strong. I fully agree with you that the saints sin wilfully if by that expression is meant "deliberately." When David wrote to Joab to set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and then withdraw from him, that he might be smitten and die, he certainly acted in the most deliberate manner. Consider his writing the letter, signing, sealing, and sending it off to the camp. What room there was for conscience to work and check his meditated crime! So also when Aaron made the golden calf; what an interval of deliberation was there between breaking off the golden earrings, and fashioning it with a graving tool!

David's numbering of the people, in spite of the remonstrances of Joab, was clearly a deliberate sin; and so was Abraham's, in twice denying his wife. The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable, that as the saints sin wilfully, *that is*, deliberately, the Apostle in Hebrews 6 cannot mean such transgressions as all saints more or less fall into. My own conviction is that by "willful sinning" the Apostle means willful and deliberate apostasy; and that by falling away (Heb. 6:6) he means falling into open apostasy. For he speaks of treading under foot the Son of God, and "counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing," and "putting the Son of God to open shame." Now to sin is not "to tread under foot the Son of God," and still less "to count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing;" for when a saint falls into sin, even with his eyes open, when he awakes out of his delusive dream, he longs for nothing so much as to feel the atoning blood of the Saviour applied to his conscience. Nor in the greatest hardness of his heart does he ever tread under foot the dear Son of God, but shudders at the thought. And the Apostle adds even "wilfully" to apostasy, as Peter openly apostatised, but not wilfully, as Judas did. I acknowledge the words of the Apostle respecting the attainments of apostates are very strong, and that there is much difficulty in many of his expressions.

But I think they all may be explained of such a natural work as counterfeits the operations of the Blessed Spirit. It says, for instance, that they were "once enlightened." Now, this may certainly signify light in the head as distinct from grace in the heart. In the times of the apostles there were gifts of

tongues, etc., as pointed out in 1 Cor. 12. Now it seems probable that these outward gifts were bestowed upon characters devoid of grace for the benefit of the Church, and therefore Paul (1 Cor. 13) supposes he may have all these gifts and yet be nothing. I think, therefore, that such expressions as "tasting the heavenly gift," and "being made partakers of the Holy Spirit," refer not to inward regenerating grace, but to such outward gifts as were then common. That they "tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come," I think may be explained by their having such an acquaintance with it as amounted to a taste only in the mouth, without an eating, feeding upon, or digesting it. We know there are natural joys in professors, as well as natural convictions, and the power of Satan working as an angel of light upon a deluded heart is amazing indeed. All this may amount to a taste where there is no real feeding on the flesh of the Son of Man.

You will also observe that faith, hope, and love are not once mentioned as existing in such characters, nor is anything said of repentance, regeneration, godly sorrow, filial fear, contrition, humility, or patience. No, the Apostle compares them to earth that brings forth thorns and briers, and is near unto cursing, while he expressly says that he is persuaded "better things, and things which accompany salvation," of those to whom he was writing, plainly implying that such things as he had previously spoken of did not accompany salvation. These "better things" and "things which accompany salvation" are "love" (ver. 10), manifested by its work and labor; "hope" (ver. 11), as an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, entering within the veil (ver. 19); and "faith" (ver. 12), whereby the promises are inherited. These are graces in opposition to gifts. A man may fall from the latter, but not from the former.

Again, if you refer to the connection of Hebrews 10:26, I think it is plain the Apostle refers to apostasy. He says (ver. 23), "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering;" implying there was a danger of letting go even the profession of faith. And he adds (ver. 25), "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together," etc., which it appears many then did, for fear of persecution; and then adds, "For if we sin willfully," etc., connecting the willful sin for willful apostasy with ceasing to hold fast a profession, and forsaking the assemblies of saints. He also adds the pangs of remorse in such (ver. 27), and styles them "adversaries."

Now, to fall into sin, or commit it in a measure willfully, *that is*, deliberately, is a very different thing from being an adversary of Christ, despising His Gospel (as implied ver. 28), treading under foot the Son of God, counting His blood an unholy thing, and doing despite (literally, treating with insult and contempt) unto the Spirit of grace. The sin of the Corinthian (1 Cor. 5:1) was not so much as named among the Gentiles, and was a complication of adultery and incest. Of course, his taking his father's wife was a deliberate act, and not what is commonly called "a fall." And yet, when he repented after his being put out of the Church, and manifested repentance, he was to be forgiven and comforted (2 Cor. 2:6-8). Peter sinned willfully when he withdrew himself from the Gentile converts for fear of the Jews (Gal. 2:12), and therefore Paul withstood him to the face, and reprov'd him before them all. "There is," says John, "a sin unto death" (1 John. 5:16). This, I believe, is

willful apostasy, or the sin against the Holy Spirit; but he adds, "There is a sin not unto death;" such are the falls and backslidings of saints. I have here, according to your request, given you a mere sketch of my views on this subject, which cannot be fully entered into without considerable space, and, after all, there are great difficulties in the passages.

I have thought, sometimes, there is a purposed ambiguity to stir up the souls of the saints who need continual warnings of this kind to preserve them from declensions. God preserves all His saints, but He does so by means of promises, precepts, warnings, exhortations, threatenings, dreadful examples, etc., which serve as hedges against their falling away. He does not keep them from falling as a man puts a plate on a shelf, but as a mother warns her child of a deep well in the garden, and not to go too near it. I fear you will not find my exposition very satisfactory, but it may be a clue to further thought on your part.

I have received both Mr. Isbell's letters, and was much interested in his account of his visit to Ireland. He found things much as I expected. The Evangelical clergy are a dark tribe as to any internal acquaintance with the things of God. The little they know is chiefly in the letter, and they are not sound even in that.

I have a high esteem for Triggs. What a revolution that the daughter, wife, and mother of a clergyman should like to hear a poor mason! I am sure, if we have satisfactory evidences that it is a real work of the Blessed Spirit, we may well say with Hart, "Then grace is grace indeed." Oh, who is beyond the reach of sovereign, matchless grace? What a sweet way of salvation! How safe and secure to the elect! If our mother feels her deep need of the Savior's blood to be sprinkled and applied to her conscience, she has every encouragement to cast herself at His feet. Who were farther from God than we in our affections and desires? But He is found of them that sought Him not. It will be a blessed link in the grand predestinated chain that you left Walmer, that barren and icy land, to settle at Stoke, should the Lord's grace and mercy be clearly manifested in the remnant of our family. You are certainly highly favored in having Mr. Isbell at Stoke.

You do wisely I think, to mix but little with those who attend at the same place. To see occasionally a tried and exercised soul is profitable. "Those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another." "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." To visit the poor, also, of the flock, removes the imputation of pride which is easily affixed to too great seclusion.

You seem to begin to find the believer's path more rough and thorny than you at first anticipated. I have little opinion of those who find it a smooth and flowery road. As Berridge says—"The strait and narrow road they missed, which leads to Zion's hill."

There were little need of promises and such other encouragements as the Word of God is full of, if believers were not brought into such straits and difficulties as to continually need them. Our heart is full of unbelief, infidelity, worldliness, pride, presumption, hypocrisy, and every other

hateful sin. Where these evils exist they will manifest themselves, and it is this warfare between flesh and spirit which makes true religion such a continual scene of changes. What deadness is often felt, what darkness of soul, what coldness and hardness of heart, what disinclination, yes, what aversion to the things which belong to our peace! Thus guilt comes in and the conscience becomes defiled therewith, and we cry out, "Woe is me! My leanness, my leanness! Woe unto me! My soul cleaves to the dust; quicken me according to Your word. Will You not revive us again, that Your people may trust in You?" Some of God's people are not exposed to gross temptations. The fortress of their heart is not assailed by storm, but gradually undermined by the slower process of coldness, deadness, disinclination to spiritual things, and a miserable, careless, carnal, worldly, slothful state, which benumbs all the spiritual, faculties.

I am very pleased to hear my brother-in-law is so affectionate to dear Mary Ann, and allows her to go to chapel; and I am very glad she has an inclination to go and hear the word of truth. May the Lord visit her soul with His own rich mercy and love, and that will abundantly satisfy her soul! You must expect to bear a cross if you are on the Lord's side. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and you know from personal experience what dislike and contempt the carnal mind has to dissent; and you well remember what a character was entertained of Mr. Isbell, even by yourself, before you knew the meaning and power of what he preached. You need not marvel, then, if you are despised and hated, as well as slandered and misrepresented. It is the usual lot of those who follow Jesus in the regeneration. Yes, He has promised a blessing on all such reviled and; slandered followers of Himself (Matt. 5:11, 12; John 20:18-21).

Sarah sends her love to our dear mother, yourself, and Mary Ann, in which I heartily join.

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

April, 1840

My dear James Fowler—I consider it the part of a friend to act as you have done in asking me for an explanation of what you consider me to err in, instead of following the multitude to do evil in spreading my supposed errors behind my back and concealing them to my face.

I am glad you have asked me for an explanation of my meaning, as it allows me to clear up a point on which I think you misunderstand me. What were my words? "There are but two healthy states of the soul—hungering and feeding, etc. All other states are maladies and sicknesses." Is this new or strange doctrine? My friend, what are we by nature but one mass of malady and disease? But this malady and disease are not seen nor felt but by the entrance of divine light and life into the soul. The entrance of these heavenly blessings brings what I may call a principle of health into the soul, which, as Hart sweetly says, "lives and labors under load." And it is the working of this healthy principle, this new and heavenly nature, under the Blessed Spirit's operations, in which the greater part of experience exists. Darkness,

deadness, aversion to all good, headlong proneness to all evil, pride, unbelief, infidelity, lust, covetousness, enmity to God and godliness, what are those but maladies and diseases? Sorrow of heart for sin, breathings after God, hatred of self, living desires towards the Lord of life and glory, separation of spirit from the things of time and sense, faith in exercise, hope casting forth its anchor, love drawing forth the affections; these, when felt, are states of health, that is, the healthy man of grace seems for a while (alas! for how short a while!) lifting up his head amid diseases and sickness. Is this inconsistent with sound doctrine or sound experience? You and I would often much sooner read the *Examiner* than the Bible, and would sooner talk on indifferent subjects with our wives than seek the Lord's face. Is this deadness and coldness, and miserable aversion to all good, health or sickness? I feel it to be my malady, not my health.

But again I feel what a base wretch I am; I hate myself for my base lusts; I sigh after the Lord to come down and visit my soul; I feel a little spirituality of mind, and taste a sweetness in the Word of God. Is this a sick or healthy state of soul? I call my soul sick when sin reigns and rules; I call it healthy when grace more or less predominates. I may use wrong expressions, but you are not one who would make a man an offender for a word.

Now let us come to experimental preaching. Does he preach experimentally who traces out the workings of corruption, or he who traces out the workings of grace in and under corruptions? I believe the latter. You know much of the workings of pride, lust, and covetousness; and you know something of godly fear, self-loathing, and contrition under them. Which am I to enter into? You are dead, cold, and lifeless. Am I to describe deadness, or trace out life working under deadness? Am I to describe pride, or the self-loathing of the soul when pride is discovered? Am I to say to my hearers, "You are cold, dead, hardened, unbelieving, proud, lustful, covetous. All these are marks and tokens of life"? Or am I to say, "Life struggling against death, godly fear leading to self-abhorrence, groans and sighs under a guilty conscience, cries for deliverance, pantings after God, and so on, are marks of life"?

There is a precious experience, and there is a vile experience, and he who would be God's mouth must take the one from the other. I believe that to preach the corruptions of our nature apart from the workings of grace in them and under them is to build up illegitimate children. One is preaching the remedy without ever entering into the malady, thus bolstering up hypocrites and making the heart of the righteous sad. The other is this—to set forth corruption in all its workings towards evil, and leave out the workings of godly fear, in and under corruption. If I feel dissatisfied, burdened, grieved for my wicked and wayward heart and life, the very feeling marks the existence of life. But is a minister to build me up in this, that I am to take deadness as an evidence? Let him tell me to feel and hate myself, for it is a mark of life, and I may get some encouragement. But to tell me that deadness (that is, deadness unfelt) is a mark of life, is a pulpit-lie fit only for the twice dead.

You might write to me that you are quite tired of all religion, that you hate going to chapel, that you rarely pray, scarcely ever read the Scriptures, never feel a sigh or a groan, nor any pantings after Christ. Well, I would answer, I

know what you mean, for I am too like you. But do you mean to bring this forward as Christian experience? If you do, you are deceived. For if it be experience, the more of it the better, for we can never have too much experience, and to find it in its perfection I must go to the dead Pharisee or the twice dead professor. But tell me of some revival, of some brokenness, of contrition, of some glimpses of mercy, of some workings of life within, and I will say this is experience, and the more we have the better. I find the experience of the Scriptures that of mourning, complaint, sorrow of heart, pantings after God, hoping and trusting in His mercy. David, in Psalm 51 does not describe the workings of his lust towards Bathsheba, but cries and groans, "Cast me not away from Your presence," etc. If the experience of corruption be good, why should not the practice of it be good too? If to have eyes full of adultery be experience, that is Christian experience, why should not hands full of adultery be Christian practice? But, on the other hand, if to sigh and cry to be kept from evil is Christian experience, then to be kept from it is Christian practice.

What I call experimental cant is this. Professors without life say, "I am so dead, I am so dark, I am so unbelieving." "Are you ever otherwise? Are you resting upon that as an evidence? Is that your state for months together?" I would answer, "Then it is to be feared that you are an illegitimate child and not a son." I once heard a person give a long description of what a proud, covetous, lustful, slothful, rebellious heart he had. Among other things, he said that he never saw a farm, or a nice field, but he coveted it, or a carriage in the streets that he did not want to possess it. This, I suppose, he called experience. I do not; for if it is, Nabal and the rich fool are the most experimental saints in the Bible.

Suppose I coveted Woburn Abbey, and the titles, estates, and power of the Duke of Bedford, would you call this Christian experience? If so, there must be a throng of experimental saints every day in the week that the Abbey is shown. But suppose I were to walk in the park, and feel that I would sooner have Christ in my heart than a thousand dukedoms; suppose under that feeling I panted after Christ as the deer after the water brooks, and suppose that I dropped a penitential tear over my proud, covetous heart that ever coveted such toys, I might call that Christian experience. If pride, lust, and covetousness are experience, then the greatest sinner is the greatest Christian. See, my friend, to what great error, this kind of reasoning leads?

Had this person told us of his covetousness, and the checks, the sighs, the deliverances he experienced out of it, I would have called it experience; but to set forth corruption separated from the workings of grace under it, I call a mistake altogether. Who paints corruption like Hart? But who paints more strongly the working of grace in corruption? I believe the malady is to be described, but never apart from the strivings of godly fear, faith, etc., under it. Why do we preach experimentally? To find out the feelings of living souls and cut off dead professors. But to trace out sin without godly sorrow, guilt, or condemnation under sin, is to preach the experience of the dead, not of the living.

I meant no more than this, and if you have understood me otherwise, it must arise from my lack of expressing myself clearly. I believe I have advanced

nothing here in which you will not agree. If there be, I shall be glad to explain myself more fully, either by word when we meet, or by letter. Remember me affectionately to Smart, who, I suppose, is with you. I hope he and you will not set me down as wavering from the truth.
Yours sincerely and affectionately,
J. C. P.

May 12, 1840

My dear Joseph Parry—. . . I am sorry our dear and highly esteemed friend Dredge should be so hurt at my piece on "Strict Communion." [*Gospel Standard*, May. 1840, p. 97] Did he not always know that I held and practiced it? and what is to hinder my public defense of it when called upon to do so? I did not seek nor volunteer the controversy, but was called upon by name to defend it, nor could I shun it consistently with faithfulness. Will not friend Dredge defend and contend for his views of truth, and am I not at liberty to do the same? I love and esteem him far more than I do hundreds of Strict Baptists; but I am not to love and esteem his errors. And I say deliberately, that were the question ever to arise whether I am to part with a friend or truth, I would not hesitate to part with the former. For truth, hitherto, I have had to part with the kindest friends after the flesh, as well as all my prospects in life, an independent income, good name and respectability. I hope I shall not now be left to swerve from it, even though to defend it wounds kindest and warmest friends. A living soul cannot long fight against truth; its keen edge must sooner or later enter the conscience, and be well assured if there be an abscess anywhere it will pierce it, and let out all the blood and gory matter.

I have felt myself of late very jealous of doctrinal errors, seeing to what consequences they lead, and that they usually are connected with delusion in experience and inconsistency in conduct. It is a mercy to be well guarded by having the loins girt about with truth. Friend Dredge will see by W. Tiptaft's letter that both he and John Kay are of the same mind with us. His opposition produces no unkind feeling in my mind, but it will not move me a jot to swerve from truth. Let him search the Scriptures, like the noble Bereans, whether these things are so. I was forced into the controversy, and being in it was bound to defend the side I believe to be true as well as I could. No, more, I feel disposed to go on with it if needful, and not to shrink from the combat.

I have had an attack of my old complaint, which has confined me to the house, and in great measure to bed, since Friday. I could not preach yesterday. The day being wet, the disappointment was not so great, though some had come fourteen miles. Mr. Morris read a sermon of Huntington's; I am very sure a hundred times better one than I could have preached, but you know reading is rarely relished like preaching.

I shall be glad to have a friendly chat, or rather a series of them, with you. An author is once said to have published a book with this title (*that is*, translated), "Upon everything in the world and something besides;" I think this might almost serve for a title to our conversation. I could very well wish

to pass through London altogether and miss Zoar. It is a trying place to preach in, and I often feel I have no business in the pulpit at all. I was sorry to see the word "anniversary" used for the Welwyn preaching, as I have so often declined preaching at anniversaries, and this lays me open to the charge of inconsistency; neither can it be an anniversary, as it is on a different day from that of last year. Friend — will not find me making baptism a bone of contention, publicly or privately. When attacked I defend myself, and when called upon for my reasons I give them; but I never wish to introduce strife or needless contention. Can friend Dredge say I ever cut him off because he was not a Baptist? Can he say I showed more favor to Mrs. Wild and others? Can he bring forward any sermon, or any speech, in the pulpit or out of it, wherein I condemned the non-Baptists? I believe if I have erred it has been more in the other way. He has, therefore, no reason to say I have cut them off. I have a firm conviction in the matter, one formed before I knew him, and for this belief I have my scriptural grounds. If he can, he is at liberty to overthrow them, but if he cannot, he will do well to follow the advice of Gamaliel (Acts 5:39).

If I went through the world nipping a piece of truth off here, and clipping a corner off there, how many arrows would I escape from others? A faithful man like him should not complain of faithfulness. If he or anyone can with meekness of wisdom show my arguments false, let them do so; but let them beware of opposing truth because it cuts them. I hope, however, he will have some of the mollifying ointment fall upon his eyes and into his heart, and that will set him all right. I am happy that our highly esteemed friend, Mrs. Wild, is not angered by my remarks on strict communion; I am sure she is worth a thousand rotten Baptists.

Kay seems to have wielded the sword pretty freely and forcibly at Allington. But if he cuts off seeking and seekers, what becomes of his experience for a good many years? But, after all, his sword can never cut out that text from the mouth of the blessed Lord, which has been the support of thousands, "He who seeks finds." I believe the following verse is the key to his text (Luke 13:25)—"When once the Master of the house is risen up, and shuts the door," etc. This is spoken of foolish virgins who find, too late, there is no oil in their lamps, of a deathbed natural repentance, and tallies with Prov. 1:24-32. But it was never meant to cut off spiritual seekers and groaners, who put their mouths in the dust, if so be there may be hope. For if so, it would cut off the whole family of God at one time or other of their experience, for all are seekers before finders of the pearl of great price, though in the first manifestation of the only true God He is found by those who sought Him not. But the finding of guilt through the finding of the Book of the Law hid in the temple, makes the finder of a heart-searching God to become a seeker of a Saviour from the wrath to come, and thus these texts become reconciled.

"What comfort can a Saviour bring?" etc., says our great experimental authority. "Oh! beware of trust ill-grounded," etc. Hart will not allow a man to be healed before he is wounded, to be saved before he is lost. What can wounded folks do but seek for healing, and what can lost souls do but seek salvation. To discourage such is to act differently from the great Shepherd, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Yet to set them down safe as seekers before they find Him of whom the prophets have spoken, Jesus of

Nazareth the Son of God, is certainly as great an error on the other side, and this Kay, perhaps, was anxious to avoid, and so, instead of hitting the narrow channel, ran aground on one of the sand-banks, where a buoy had been fixed, but escaped the eyes of the pilot, seeing breakers on the other side of the vessel. Well, all of you came safe to land whom God had quickened, though the steersman pulled the helm the wrong way and drenched all who were heavy laden with doubts and fears. I dare say the salt water made you all cry, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." The pilot, however, seems for the present to have lost his commission, and another hand has got hold of the helm. May the God of Israel guide his hand and show him the narrow channel, and may he remember he has a precious freight on board, even if one pew could hold all the living souls in the chapel, and I believe there are more than that there. I am glad to hear that the Lord is with him, and that he is so well heard. May the Lord make one heart and one mind to be in us that love His truth.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

July 27, 1840

My dear Friend, William Brown—May the Lord go with you to Stamford and be your Protector. You know enough of the ministry to be deeply sensible that only in the Lord's light do we see light, and only in His life do we feel life. To be a daily pauper living on alms is humbling to proud nature that always is seeking to be something and to do something. "Though I am nothing," was Paul's highest attainment in the knowledge of self. Much pain in wounded pride and mortified self would we be spared were this self-nothingness wrought in us. "Venture to be nothing," says Hart. But it is like a man casting himself into the sea from the ship's upper deck, that he may be buoyed up by an invisible arm. If you can venture to be nothing in your meditated journey it will save you a world of anxiety and trouble.

But proud, vain, conceited flesh wants to be something, to preach well, to make a name for himself, and be admired as a preacher. With all this there is at times a hatred of such base feelings, and a willingness to be nothing that the Lord may be All in all. But doubts whether the Lord will be with us, whether He can condescend to bless such base wretches, and whether we have not presumption enough to damn thousands, will all at times work with earnest desires and breathings that He would bless us indeed, and that His hand might be with us, and that He would speak in us, and by us, and through us, to the hearts of His chosen.

Yours faithfully, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

August, 1840

My dear Friend, John Hards—I have thought that some of those sermons that I preached at Zoar, which I would myself most wish to have been published, were not, while others, in delivering which I felt less favored, have been printed in the *Penny Pulpit*. I certainly felt my soul opened and my

tongue loosed to set forth the various wiles of the crafty adulteress in hunting for the precious life, the last evening that I preached at Zoar [On July 14, 1840; Proverbs 6:26]; but as I cannot now call to mind what I delivered on that occasion, I fear it would be useless to attempt it. I might, indeed, were I so disposed, trace out the workings of this base adulteress; but I could not say it would resemble the discourse I then delivered, except in the general drift. Here the painstaking ministers, who lay out all their discourses by rule and plummet beforehand, have the advantage of us, who are compelled to trust to the Lord for His supplies of wisdom and utterance at the time. The text occurred to my mind as I was getting up on Tuesday morning, and I saw that there was a view of experience in it suited to the occasion, as well as to the daily feelings of living saints. I, therefore, was encouraged to take it with me into the pulpit, and the Lord, I trust, set before me an open door, for He shuts and no man opens, and He opens and no man shuts.

I was certainly gratified at seeing so large a congregation as was then gathered together, more especially as no notice had been given on the previous Thursday of the alteration of the evening to the next Tuesday. Having so many discouragements from my own fearful heart and unbelieving nature, and so much opposition from the professing church, as well as the world, I need occasional liftings up, lest I should sink into utter despondency that the Lord had not called me to the work of the ministry; dark in soul, dead in desires, cold in affections, earthly in appetites, barren in heavenly fruits, and everything but what I wish to be, and I feel I should be; I need many tokens for good to persuade me that I am in the King's highway of holiness, where none but the redeemed walk.

Many think that a minister is exempt from such coldness, deadness, and barrenness, as private Christians feel; and the hypocritical looks and words of many of Satan's ministers favor this delusion. Holiness is so much on their tongues, and on their faces, that their deluded hearers necessarily conclude that it is in their hearts; but, alas! nothing is easier or more common than an apostolic face and a Judas heart. Most pictures that I have seen of the "Last Supper" represent Judas with a ferocious countenance. Had painters drawn a holy, meek-looking face, I believe they would have given a truer resemblance. Many pass for angels in the pulpit, who if the truth were known, would be seen to be devils and beasts in heart, lip, and life at home.

It is our mercy, if we only feel and groan under corruption inwardly, without it breaking forth outwardly, to wound our own souls, grieve the people of God, and gladden our enemies. Let God but take the cover off the boiling cauldron of our corrupt nature, and the filthy scum would surface in the sight of all men.

I am glad you felt satisfied with my refusal to attend the anniversary, to which I was, through you, invited. I see no warrant for them in the Word, but rather to the contrary. "You observe *days*, and months, and times, and years, I am afraid of you," etc. (Gal. 4:10, 11). They are generally money-getting contrivances, and more fit for apes to play their mimicry at in the pulpit than for ministers of truth to attend. Many places which hate me for the truth's sake are desirous to deal with me as the monkey did to the cat, when it made use of its paw to pull the hot chestnuts out of the fire. I may

preach and bring down all the hatred of professors; but as long as I can get a few sovereigns for them, they munch the chestnuts, and abuse the hand that procured them. So I am resolved not to attend such places and seasons unless I well know the people and am certain they are striving not only for the faith of the gospel, but also among themselves to support the cause and pay off their debt. This is the case at Welwyn, where I have preached these last two years. Mr. Huntington, I believe, found that many wished to use him as a means of getting money, who hated his preaching; he, therefore, declined such invitations.

I understand that Mr. W. has declared his renunciation of that abominable error which he held in denying backsliding, but as I have not read his letter to Mr. A., I cannot say how true this rumor is. We feel ourselves to backslide too constantly and too basely every day to deny it. We must give the lie to all our feelings, our sighs, our groans, and our tears, as well as to the Word of God, if we deny the backsliding of believers.

May the Lord smile graciously upon you, and be the light of your countenance. I am, my dear Friend,
Yours affectionately, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

September, 1840

My dear Friend, William Gadsby—I am truly sorry to hear of your serious injury, and wish it were in my power to render you some assistance. Were we Arminians, I could supply you with abundance of precepts and counsel to act faith, exercise patience, and cultivate resignation under your present affliction. But all such counsel you would value at its due worth; and I believe were all the property of Manchester of equal value with such advice, it would puzzle all its accountants to find how much it was worth less than zero. My desire, then, for you is, that you may feel yourself the passive soft clay in the hands of the heavenly Potter, and experience His blessed fingers molding you to His divine will. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without Jehovah, much less the body which lodges the ransomed soul of William Gadsby. But what can old nature do under pain and confinement but murmur, rebel, argue, question, and find fault with the garden walk, and the slipping foot, and the fragile limb, and the splints, and the bandage, and the aching back, yes, and the Sovereign Ruler of all things Himself, who appointed this among the all things that are to work together for your spiritual good.

I have been long searching ineffectually for something good and holy in self, but after much investigation I have been obliged to come to Paul's conclusion—"I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing." But to be a pauper, and live all one's life upon alms, and they, too, to be rarely given, and usually not before the eyes fail with looking upward, how galling and mortifying to the proud spirit of a rebel! And then to have such long seasons of neither food nor famine, without either begging or receiving; but to be borne down by a heavy mass of carnality and death, well may the soul thus situated cry aloud:
"Needy, and naked, and unclean,

Empty of good and full of ill;
A lifeless lump of loathsome sin,
Without the power to act or will."

Wishing you a speedy recovery from your present state and that the Lord
may favor your soul with many sweet visitations from Himself,
I am, my dear Friend,
Yours affectionately, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

September 28, 1840

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I was sorry that you would think I cut you
off so short by sending only a note, but I wished you to write to Mr. Isbell
without delay, and thought a few lines would be sufficient. But, indeed, it is
now much with my writing, as Warburton sometimes says of his preaching, it
seems "going spark out."

* * * * *

My wretched helplessness and beggary were never more painfully felt by me,
and my most miserable impotency to all that is good seems to run through all
I am and have, all I think, say, or do. I feel, too, more of a bankrupt in the
pulpit than, I think, I ever before experienced, and seem to have nothing, and
be nothing that is holy, heavenly, gracious, or spiritual. Were I not kept and
held in I should feel disposed to run away from the work altogether, so
burdensome do I at times feel it to be. But the Lord can and will keep us to
the work, whether we will or not. I found this the case at Stadham. I could
not leave it, though I wished to do so, and now only wonder how I stayed. I
think were I then as rebellious and flesh-indulging as now, I should soon
have bid farewell to the damp green, and the miry roads, and the unhealthy
village; but, go where we will, we carry with us the body of sin and death.
The load of our nature's evil is so unalterably fixed upon our shoulders that
nothing but the icy hand of death can loosen it; and were we to sally forth in
a fit of rebellion, and rush to the ends of the earth—the old man, with all his
diseases, would still be part and parcel of us.

We are continually praying to have the fear of God in our hearts, and this
very godly fear causes all our trouble. Had you no inward principle of godly
fear you could soon slip your neck out of the collar by filling your pulpit with
a parson. My daily and hourly idolatries, sins, and pollutions, my ignorance,
folly, and blindness, my pride, presumption, and hypocrisy, my utter
insolvency and impotency would give me no pain, and cause no sighs had I no
internal principle, whatever it be, which discovers to me these evils, and
causes me to feel pain under them. I was thinking this morning of Tiptaft's
words, "Lord, grant that we may not sin cheap." If that prayer be answered
it will cut us out abundance of trouble; for, as we sin every moment, we shall
pay dear for it every moment. A dear bargain costs us sometimes, in earthly
things, a good deal of pain and annoyance; but if we are never to sin cheap,
our dear bargains, spiritually, will be always causing us pain and sorrow. . . .

Were you to get a minister whom neither you nor the people could hear, and you Allington folks are somewhat nice in your hearing, you would be worse off than you are now. The way to heaven is not to be lined out like a railroad, but traced through all its windings like a path through a forest. I don't know whether I would not sooner hear doctrine preached, than a cut-and-dry experience, so regularly laid out as though the all-wise and wonder-working Jehovah must needs move in a line chalked out by a worm. He never made our natural faces alike, nor created two flowers, nor two leaves precisely similar; nor do I believe that we can find two vessels of mercy dealt with precisely in the same way. And yet there is a blessed family likeness running through all the quickened elect race, whereby all are brought spiritually and savingly to know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Were there not these family features, there would be no use in experimental preaching, and it would no longer be true that, as in water, face answers to face, so the heart of man to man. I hope the Lord may bless Mr. Isbell's ministry to your soul and the souls of the people.

You have probably heard that Mr. Gadsby has broken his leg by falling down while walking in his garden. The church at Manchester has written to me to supply for a month; but the friends here are unwilling to let me go, and therefore I have been obliged to decline. It is feared he will be laid aside three months.

I am sorry to find Mrs. Parry continues indisposed. The afflictions of our wives are our own, and must always be keenly felt by those who have any affection for their second selves. . . .

If farmers were now to have no reverses I hardly know what would become of them. They would ride over everybody's head. Ballast is a very painful thing to carry, but what vessel could sail safely without it? Not the farmers, when the gale of prosperity so swells their sails. But, I doubt not, that you find temporal prosperity is but a poor balm for an aching heart. Guilt and fears of perishing eternally, with the heavy load of a wicked heart, are not to be allayed by wheat selling at forty shillings a sack. But with all your ballast and heavy weight you have not an ounce too much; you would not walk steadily without it. What has kept us both, ever since we knew one another, steadfast to experimental religion, but having so many bruises, wounds, and putrefying sores, which need mollifying with gospel ointment. You would have been long before this satisfied with dry doctrine, if your weights and burdens had not made you feel your need of divine power and heavenly manifestations. Probably you would have been shooting arrows at Huntington as an enthusiast, and at Hart's hymns as of too gloomy a cast, and have been despising Warburton as always muddling in corruption, unless you had had the top of the boiling pot of your own heart lifted off. Were we walking together by the side of your canal I could talk of many things more freely than I can write. Give Mr. Isbell my love and sincere desires that the Lord may be with him. My love to the friends, especially Mrs. Wild, E. Pope, and Mr. Dredge.

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

October, 1840

My dear Friend—I fear if I delay writing much longer, that you will begin to think that I have forgotten my promise to do so altogether. But indeed I feel such a disinclination to put pen to paper, that I often drive off answering the letters of my correspondents until shame fairly compels me to write to them a few lines, and then, perhaps, when I have broken through my backwardness, I feel less difficulty in writing than I expected. Various causes make me slow to write. Sometimes slothfulness, sometimes inability to think, much more to write a good thought, sometimes darkness of soul, so that I can scarcely discern my right hand from my left, sometimes such deadness and iciness of spirit that I have no heart whatever toward one spiritual thing, and sometimes pressure of other business, as preaching, traveling, etc. these and other causes hinder me continually from writing to my friends.

It seems a sad tale to be complaining continually to God and man of our deadness, unbelief, darkness, filth, and pollution. We would gladly soar above these "miry places," which cannot be healed with the waters of the river of life, but are "given to salt," that is, perpetual barrenness (Ezek. 47:11). We would gladly mount upon eagles' wings, and feast upon dying love and atoning blood. We are weary and tired of so much wintry weather, and, finding all the leaves, flowers, and fruit stripped from our trees, compelled by soul feeling, we cry out against ourselves as so perpetually base and vile, so idolatrous and adulterous, so backsliding and prone to err, so unbelieving and unable to do the things that we would. But how could grace be grace, how could it be manifested as grace abounding and superabounding over sin, unless we daily felt our vile body of sin and death? We would be conquerors without fighting, winners without running a race, at peace without ever having been at war, professors of religion without a possession of reality and power, were it not for having such a daily conflict.

I can fancy an ignorant person standing by the seaside, and seeing the sailors bringing ballast on board. "What are you doing," he would cry, "with all that dirty sand, and all those pebbles and gravel that you are putting into the ship? You will surely sink her. She is half-way down in the water already. The first storm will blow her over. She can never sail with all that heavy load on board." Such are the words a landsman would use. But a gray-haired, weather-beaten sailor would say, "Friend, I see you know nothing about the matter. All this ballast and these heavy loads which we put into the hold of our ship make her sail steadily. These very weights are her safety; and, were it not for them, our gallant ship would go to the bottom in the first gale of wind." So spiritually. What makes a Christian sail steadily? Weights and burdens. What makes him contend for life, and power, and feeling? A heavy load in his soul. What makes him separate from dead professors, notional Calvinists, whitewashed Pharisees, painted Arminians, and ungodly Antinomians? Plenty of inward trouble. Not that weights and burdens in themselves can have any gracious effect, any more than the ballast in the hold of a ship can drive her through the waves. But God the blessed Spirit works through and by means of these weights and burdens. They are tools in His divine hands, just as the carpenter handles the axe and the hammer, and so a work is done by them in your soul. What is the saw or the hammer without a skillful hand to use them? There they lie, motionless and useless, on the ground; but the carpenter takes them up, and forthwith brings out a

chair. So all our troubles, and doubts, and fears, and sorrows and afflictions do our soul no good, unless the Lord works in and by them, and then they become really and spiritually profitable. Thus guilt makes way for pardon, darkness for light, deadness for life, unbelief for faith, impatience for resignation, and despair for a hope both sure and steadfast, and that anchors within the veil. Salvation, with all its accompanying blessings, is sought for as a divine and revealed reality.

Christ is desired, highly prized, and, when manifested, firmly believed on, because He is felt and found to be a Saviour so suitable to our deep necessities. The teachings, operations, leadings, visitations, consolations, and gracious anointings of the Holy Spirit are sought after, earnestly desired, sighed and groaned for, because the needy and naked soul is utterly destitute without them. God the Father is worshiped and adored in spirit and in truth, and the soul is spiritually taught to serve Him with godly fear and holy reverence. The Bible is loved, because so full of suitable food and instruction. The true sent servants of the Lord are highly prized, as messengers of mercy and interpreters of our experience. The children of God are valued and loved, as travelers in the same path, and fellow-sufferers, as well as fellow-heirs of the grace of life. Worldly people are shunned, because their hearts and lives are at enmity with the God of truth. Carnal professors are departed from, because they savor not of the things of God, but the things of men. Secret prayer is practiced, because the soul is taught its deep need of spiritual blessings, and that they are the good and perfect gifts of the Father of lights, who sees in secret.

And what follows all this secret work in the conscience, so far as it is outwardly manifested by the life and conversation? The scorn and hatred of the world, the slanders of false professors, the persecution, where possible, of worldly superiors, the malice of the devil, and the rebellion of our own vile and wicked heart. By these things, as by hard labor, is the heart brought down; and this opens a way for visits from the Lord of life and glory—sips, tastes, and drops of divine favor, and the dewy operations of the Holy Spirit in the soul. There is found to be a power in vital godliness. We feel that we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, and that there is a solemn and abiding reality in spiritual religion, which, when experienced, makes ample amends for all difficulties, risks, losses, crosses, and persecutions. Were the soul always here, we would think it would do well enough. But to go back to the old spot of doubt, and fear, and darkness, and inability, and soul poverty, this seems to dampen all, and be like making ropes of sand, and drawing up water in a bucket with the bottom knocked out.

But when, with all our exertions, we can neither twist the rope nor draw the water, we are compelled to cry to Him who has all power in heaven and in earth, who can let down a cord from above of His own blessed twining (the cord of love and the band of a man), and supply our parched lips with a draught of living water. Our mercies we get by begging, and by begging hard too; and you know that hunger and nakedness make very importunate beggars.

Your cause seems still to stand, in spite of all enemies. I dare say it is often in your eyes, as well as in theirs, feeble enough; but the Lord has hitherto kept

you together. May He lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes. Give my love to your minister and the friends.

Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

October 28, 1840

My dear sister Fanny—I would feel sorry if you thought that there was any cause in yourself which has made me neglectful of my promise to write to you a long letter. Believe me, that it is not so. The cause is in myself alone.

Sometimes other occupations, sometimes preaching engagements, sometimes traveling backwards and forwards to Oakham have been hindrances; but frequent as well as more powerful obstacles have arisen from my own slothfulness, leanness, and spiritual helplessness and inability. The apostle says of himself, "The good that I would do, I do not—and the evil that I would not do, that I do;" and again, "When I would do good evil is present with me." Such were the complaints of this man of God, the highly-favored vessel of mercy and ambassador of peace and salvation. He was not "a saint," in the Popish and Protestant-Popish sense of the word, that is, a man universally and perfectly holy, one elevated, as it were, on a pedestal above human passions and creature infirmities. But he was "a saint" in the only true and scriptural sense—*that is*, one sanctified by God the Father, and separated in His eternal decree, sanctified by God the Son when He bought him with His own precious blood, and sanctified by God the Holy Spirit when He regenerated him and made him a new creature in Christ Jesus. And one evidence of his being thus sanctified was that he groaned in the body, being burdened. Sin was, in him, an indwelling principle, which continually put itself forth in thoughts, words, and actions, contrary to that new living and holy principle which the Blessed Spirit had implanted. So that, not absence of sin, but the groaning of the living soul under it is the evidence of saintship.

Sin, in our carnal mind, is like the blood that circulates through the arteries and veins of our body. I cannot pierce any part of my body with a pin where blood will not flow from the wound. Nor can I put my finger on any spot of my carnal mind where sin is not, and whence, if pressed by temptation, sin will not gush forth in a larger or smaller stream. And, to pursue the figure a step further, as blood is the element that nurtures our bodies, so sin is the nourishment of our carnal mind. Humbling thought! that what God hates, what made the Son of God bleed and die, what fills hell with miserable beings to all eternity, dwells in our carnal mind, and fills and occupies every part of it. But it will not destroy nor separate from the eternal love of God those whom Christ has redeemed by His blood. "Now, therefore," says Paul, "there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And he asks triumphantly, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ Jesus?" Not even sin shall effect this separation, nor undo the finished work of Christ upon the cross.

I was sorry to hear of Mr. Isbell's temporal and spiritual troubles. I would think that the anger of the old members of his chapel had a deeper root than that of baptism and strict communion. His faithfulness in turning up the

deep corruptions of the heart, and insisting so strongly on divine manifestations, is much more likely to have drawn forth their enmity, and have made baptism and strict communion merely a pretext. It is a tangible thing, and affords them some standing ground to accuse him of departing from their original church order, while to find fault with his faithfulness would be to accuse themselves.

You will, with the rest of his hearers that are attached to his ministry, be glad to welcome him home from Allington. I think it most probable that Mr. Isbell may meet my friend Tiptaft at Exeter, and I hope the interview may be pleasant and profitable. I have not seen Mr. Ireson since he returned from Plymouth, but I understand that he was gratified with his visit. His usual manner is very reserved, and I would think his silence arose more from what he felt in himself than from anything he saw in you or others. When our own conscience points out anything as inconsistent, we easily believe that others see that which we so keenly see ourselves. But their eyes are fixed upon something which we do not ourselves perceive, and which, perhaps, they view as more objectionable and inconsistent than those things which we ourselves feel. A conscience made tender by grace is a blessed gift of God, but it produces daily and hourly matter of self-condemnation.

"The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death." Proverbs 14:27. Snares of death surround and beset our path. Some arise from the world, some from Satan, some from the people of God; but far, far most from ourselves. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life which detects and manifests these hidden snares, and by its bubbling up as a living spring in the heart it brings the soul into the presence of God, and thus strength, wisdom, and grace are communicated to flee them when perceived before fallen into, or deliver our feet out of them when unhappily entangled.

I have read Mr. Isbell's sermon, which he preached at Saltash, and which you sent me. I think it is a very good one.

I am glad that Mr. Smart's sermon was made profitable to you. He has a deep insight into the corruptions of the heart, and of salvation through the glorious atonement of the Lord Christ.

I am sorry that any among you should be stumbled by my delay in baptizing and forming a church. I am waiting for materials before I begin. There are many here, I believe, quickened souls, but hardly advanced enough for baptism; and, as to myself, I believe I could not, with any safety, baptize, as the immersion in cold water for so long a time, and partial exposure of my body to that cold would probably be very injurious to me. But several have expressed a wish to be baptized. I expect Mr. Warburton next year, who will probably be requested to baptize, as he did when here before. To wait does not imply I mean to defer it altogether. A beginning has been made already, Mr. Warburton having baptized two of my hearers when here last year, who would be members of the church when formed.

The formation of a church will bring with it many troubles. Satan will blow the embers of pride and jealousy, envy, suspicion, and contention, and love will be hardly strong enough to endure the flame that will be created. I have

found it so painfully wherever I have been. At Allington one of my warmest friends, and, apparently, attached hearers, seems now quite alienated from me on account of my defense of strict communion in the *Gospel Standard*. I hope never to give up truth, whoever's friendship it may cost me, and to care neither for frowns or smiles in defense of the Gospel. You must expect many hard speeches and unkind words from professors of truth as well as from the world. This we are not at first always prepared to expect, or, indeed, well able to bear. Rebuffs we expect from the world and enemies of truth, but from those who profess to be people of God we as little anticipate unkindness as feel able to bear it. But all these things, however painful to the flesh, work together for spiritual good. They drive the soul more simply and more earnestly to the Lord, wean it from idols, and draw it off from leaning on Assyria or Egypt, finding that to do so is to lean on a broken reed, which runs into the hand and pierces it.

You will find it, I believe, your wiser, safer, and happier course to keep clear of party spirit, and to turn a deaf ear to all the whisperings, surmises, and tales that too often form a large portion of the conversation of the Lord's people when they meet together. Were they to talk more about the Lord and what He has done and is doing in their souls, and less of religious tittle-tattle, they would leave each other's company more profited and edified. We read in Malachi that those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and that the Lord hearkened and heard; but this implies that He heard with approbation. I fear, however, that He hears with similar approval few conversations now among those who profess to fear His great name. The exaltation of self seems more the object than the exaltation of the Lord of life and glory. . . . Our united love to our dear mother, Mary Ann and her children, and accept the same, my dear Fanny, from
Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1841 - 1845)

February 26, 1841

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I desire deeply to sympathize with you in your present distress. I believe you will find it hereafter to contain in it the root and seed of the best of blessings. I know that it is useless to try to comfort you, that being the Lord's sole prerogative. He alone can bring your soul out of prison, and I believe He will do it to the glory of His holy Name. If the Lord had meant to have destroyed you, He would never have thus applied His holy Law to your conscience, but would have let you go on in delusion and been in peace and quiet.

I believe the soul is often quickened before the Law is experimentally known, and this, perhaps, is your case. Look at all the saints of God—such as Hart, Bunyan, Huntington, Barry. They have all passed under the bond of the Law

before solid deliverance came. The Lord is able to deliver. He hears the cry of the prisoner, and preserves those who are appointed to die. Jesus is just such a Saviour as you need—mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him. You have never been in such deep waters before, but when the Lord shall bring you out, your joys will rise as high. My dear friend, can you not cast yourself at a throne of mercy and grace? Can you not confess how base you have been and are? Can you not groan forth your soul to the Lord, and seek salvation, mercy, and pardon from Him? You condemn yourself as a presumptuous wretch. Indeed, indeed, we have, all that know our own hearts, reason to cry and groan under the sin of presumption. But did you ever take up religion as a matter of gain, or ever were allowedly a hypocrite? I never heard you boast of things beyond your experience, or talk of liberty and assurance when it was not given you. I would gladly encourage your poor drooping soul to wait at mercy's doorposts until light appears. Thousands have been saved out of as deep waters as you are now wading in; and why not you—oh, why not you?

I would advise you, my dear friend, in your present state to have nothing to do with the chapel service, as Satan is sure to employ it as a weapon against you. Let Mr. Dredge and Mr. Tuckwell carry it on as well as they can.

I cannot allow a post to elapse without dropping you a line, but hope to write again in a few days. I will not ask you to write, but shall be glad, and indeed very anxious, to hear from friend Tuckwell how you are in soul matters. My dear friend, is there any limit to the Lord's power and love? Oh, may He quickly appear!

Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

March 2, 1841

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—As I wrote you so hasty a letter the other day, I feel disposed to drop you a few lines of sympathy again without waiting for an answer to my last.

I fully believe that you will one day, if not soon, see and feel that the present fiery trial through which you are passing contains wrapped up in it a spiritual and eternal blessing. "I will bring the third part through the fire;" "I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire." Are not these the words of Him who cannot lie? The Lord has seen good for your profit and His own glory to plunge you into these waves of trouble; but He who has thrust you down can, and doubtless will, one day lift you up. What has produced your trouble? Not the commission of some outward sin to disgrace you before men; not any providential reverses; but the application of the Word of God with power to your conscience. But why should God apply His word to your soul unless He has a gracious purpose in it? The Law was never applied to the conscience of a reprobate. The Lord allows the lost to glide smoothly on until they drop into hell. You have often sighed and panted after a divine deliverance into the light, life, liberty, joy, and peace of the Gospel. But, perhaps, you little thought that you would be plunged into such terrors,

fears, and alarms as to be, as it were, without hope; and that this would be the way to know Christ and the power of His resurrection. But when the blessed change shall come you will see and feel how needful all this work was to endear the blessing.

I dare say you think that you are not a common sinner, but a gospel sinner, a presumptuous hypocrite that has rushed into religion of your own accord. I think, my dear friend, few know you better than I do. Our long and unreserved intimacy has, of course, made me well acquainted with you spiritually as well as temporally. I will not allow that you have been a presumptuous gospel sinner; I know better. I have never seen allowed, indulged presumption in you. Like myself, you have a vile, presumptuous, hypocritical heart, but it has been with you as with Paul, "That which I do, I allow not." You have had more or less of a tender conscience. You have had at times some seasons of solemn prayer to a heart-searching God; you have felt a knitting of soul to the people of God; you have esteemed such as Mrs. Wild, Dorcas, Edith, etc., as the excellent of the earth. I will not say anything of outward sacrifices, as none who know themselves can take such evidences. But I would appeal to inward feelings and scriptural evidences.

But you say, "They are all swept away, and I cannot find in myself one evidence." No! if you could, there would not be such a thorough sweeping of the house. But cannot you cast yourself as the vilest, the worst, the basest of wretches, at the feet of sovereign mercy? Oh, my friend, is your case, however seemingly desperate, beyond the reach of Jesus' arm, or the efficacy of His atoning blood? Is He not mighty to save; and has He not saved, pardoned, and blessed thousands as black, as guilty, as helpless, and as hopeless, as you feel yourself to be? I know that you cannot lay hold of any truth of this nature. But your fear, and guilt, and terror, and despair do not alter the case, nor render Him less able, less willing to save. He is able to save *to the uttermost* all who come unto God by Him. You are not beyond "the uttermost," nor ever will be.

Many now in glory have sunk as low, many lower than you. Look at Barry, and Huntington, and Gibbs, and Wade; all have sunk below a hope in God's mercy, and all have been brought out to praise His glorious name.

A well-taught and well-exercised man, who could go in and out before the people, would be very desirable for you at the present juncture. I think you will find a suitable letter in the *Standard*, which was written to me by "a Sinner Saved" (A. Charlwood, Norwich), in December number. You will see there what a state of despair he was in for five years, and what a deliverance he enjoyed. He now seems to live in the enjoyment of pardoning love. The first letter in this month's number, signed "G. M." (George Muskett), is from the young man whom he mentions as his minister, and who seems to be a well-taught man.

I will not weary you, my dear friend, with more now. May the Lord bring you out of prison, smile into your soul, and set you at happy liberty. Who can tell the boundless riches of His grace to the vilest of the vile?

Accept my affectionate sympathies and prayers for your deliverance.
Your affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

October 4, 1841

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—. . . I would rejoice should it please the Lord to bless Daniel Smart's ministry to your soul; to wait for a deliverance amid many sinking fears whether it will ever come is trying work. Fear, guilt, bondage, and self-pity are painful companions. Hope delayed makes the heart sick, but there is no doubt a needs-be for the delay. It says, "He brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help." But it is not a little labor that can bring the heart down. The word implies long continued toil, and that they became faint and weary with perpetual exertion. Could you see matters from a right point of view, you would doubtless feel that your present state of soul trouble is far preferable to carelessness and carnality. In those wretched states of mind, deliverance is not desired nor sought after; but you feel that you must perish without it. It is a good thing to be crying for mercy, and sighing forth the desires of the soul, for the promise-keeping God has given many sweet promises to those who seek His face.

I trust that my late visit to Allington may be manifested to have been of the Lord. I felt more, I believe, of the power and presence of the Lord than I have often felt before during my former visits. I am much obliged to you and Mrs. Parry for your kind hospitality.

Your affectionate friend,
J. C. P.

October 15, 1841

My dear friend, Isaac Harrison—Our letters crossed on the road, as you would probably perceive by the date of mine.

It will not be in my power to go to Leicester for a Lord's-day this year, as I have been absent so many already. Next Lord's-day at Godmanchester will be the sixteenth that I have been absent at different intervals since the spring, and as this already exceeds by three or four Sundays my usual times of absence, I must now stay at home for some time to come. I think, however, I can promise (D.V.) two week evenings next month, November 10th and 11th, as I feel a desire to give you a little assistance, though I cannot go on a Lord's-day. I have not yet spoken to the friends, but doubt not to obtain their consent.

It is well to be on our guard against crafty and designing professors of religion; and yet I believe, especially in the matter of pecuniary assistance, we may carry our caution too far. Our covetous heart is very ready to suggest reasons why we should not assist those who are in need, and we are glad to catch at the idea that they are hypocrites, to save our own selves. But we are

to do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith. A man in distress is a fit object for relief, and it becomes those whom God has blessed with abundance to be "ready to distribute." If he is a child of God, he has a greater claim upon our sympathy, and to him it should be given freely; but it seems to me that to say, "I will give to none but those who are commended to my conscience as living souls," has a strong tendency to shut up a man's affections of compassion and foster a spirit of covetousness. Poor Morse, with his large family, is an object of compassion, even if he be not a minister of righteousness. Mr. Ireson gave him, I think, nearly a new suit of clothes when a little assistance was raised for him at Cliffe. The Lord has blessed you with abundance, and, in so doing, has made you a steward of His bounty for others. I trust you will excuse the freedom of these remarks, which have been drawn from me from a feeling I had in reading your letter.

I doubt not that you have your trials, and will have more. Standing as the head of a cause in a large professing town will bring with it plenty of trials, and your religion can only be proved to be genuine by being put into the furnace. An untried religion is no religion, and he who has no cross here will have no crown hereafter.

Remember me kindly to your sisters and Mrs. Hardy, and believe me,
Yours sincerely, for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

January 28, 1842

[Miss Richmond kept a school for young ladies.]

My dear friend, Miss Richmond—I feel so unable to give wise and spiritual counsel that I hardly know what to write in answer to your letter. My carnal mind would advise one thing, and my better judgment another. I feel for you temporally and spiritually, and would be sorry to hear that you were obliged to give up your school, and leave Stadham; but I have usually found whatever perplexities and difficulties occur in our path, that they are such more from our own crookedness and waywardness, than from what they are in themselves. The path is straight enough, but our eyes look crookedly at it, and then the road appears to be crooked. Were our eye single, the path would be plain and clear; but the films of self-seeking and flesh-pleasing darken in our view the path itself. We often know not how to act, not because the right way is difficult to find, but because the road is too rough and thorny for our tender and ease-loving feet.

But it is in this way, I think, that the Lord tries the strength and reality of faith. He brings the soul, as it were, to a certain point in the road, where He sets this question before it, "Will you serve Me or yourself? Will you act with a single eye to My glory, or please your flesh?" All looks dark and gloomy; no possible way of deliverance appears, and there is nothing but the naked word of God, lying with more or less weight upon the conscience. Now if the soul is secretly strengthened to stand on the Lord's side, and not hearken to the flesh, deliverance will sooner or later come. But if the flesh be pleased, bondage and the rod will follow. See this in the case of Abraham (Gen. 22),

Moses (Heb. 11:24-26), and the three children (Dan. 3). These would not consult the flesh, but acted in faith, and to them all deliverance came.

Your present difficulties seem to be two—1. Whether you should teach the Church catechism? 2. Whether you should have with the children what is termed "family prayer"? The first seems to be the more easy to answer. In the first place, your own convictions; and in the second, the word that you received, as you believe, from the Lord ["Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life," Rev. 2:10.] seem quite sufficient to decide that matter. You would be rebelling, not merely against light in your judgment, but also against the special word of promise in your soul, were you to draw back to consent to teach the children the catechism. You know that whatever they are in Covenant purposes, they are not manifestly "members of Christ, children of God, and the inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," still less were they made such when sprinkled at the font. I cannot see how you can swerve here without positive sin.

As to the other point, I cannot speak so decidedly. Family prayer might be preserved, and yet not a form persevered in. You might offer up a few petitions in the presence of the children, in which you might keep your conscience clear of, at least, wilfully mocking God. Their inattention is not your sin, and I think a few simple words might be offered up by you which need not pain your conscience, and which would yet preserve you from the imputation of utterly neglecting any recognition of God in your family. I do not think that you could conscientiously teach them or hear them what is called "say their prayers" individually; but I do not see that you are called upon to prevent or forbid them doing so, if they had been taught so to do before they came to you. I cannot say how I would act under similar circumstances; but I seem at present to feel this, that if I had a pupil who had been taught to pray before he came under my care, I would not forbid him, though I would not hear him. I could not make the child understand why he should not say his prayers without leading him to believe that there was no such thing to be attended to as prayer, because I could not make him understand the difference between carnal and spiritual prayer. If I were to teach him, or hear him say prayers, I am so far mocking God, and sinning against light, but the child has not my knowledge, and does not at any rate wilfully mock God thereby.

But, indeed, it is a most difficult point, and one on which special light is needed for our individual guidance. I can only refer you to the "Wonderful Counselor," out of whose mouth comes knowledge and understanding. You need much wisdom, much grace, much faith, much strength, which the Lord alone can supply you with. May you be much at the throne. "If any man lacks wisdom," etc. (James 1:5). The Lord is able to deliver you, and amply provide for you temporally as well as spiritually. "It is better to suffer than to sin." The Lord can send you children from most unexpected quarters, or so turn the hearts of the parents that they shall disregard what in your mind is burdensome. A lady who keeps a school at Kensington, and is a member at Zoar, was very fearful of losing her school when she joined the church, but her school has never more flourished. So full of unbelief are our hearts, so able to deliver is the Lord.

I am sure that it is our wisdom, as well as our mercy, when we can act as conscience bids. None were ever eventually losers by making sacrifices for Christ. With all my unbelief, I must say that He has been faithful to His promise (Mark 10:29, 30).

I shall be glad to hear from you again, and hope that the Lord may direct you in all things. I was very sorry to hear of poor Brookland's heavy affliction in the loss of his little girl. Give him my love and sincere sympathy in his heavy trial.

My love to the friends; greet them by name. My kind remembrances to your sisters.

Believe me to be, yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

March 14, 1842

My dear friend, Arthur Charlwood—I take shame to myself that I have delayed so long to answer your kind and experimental letter. I was so much pleased with it that I intended to send it to the *Standard*, but I have somehow or other mislaid it and cannot put my hand upon it. Your poetry would have appeared in the *Standard*, but it was lost upon the road there. I sent it with something of my own, and it never reached its destination. I could not understand why J. Gadsby did not send me the proof; and when I wrote and asked the reason I received for an answer that he had never received anything of the kind. I therefore concluded it was the will of the Lord that my piece should not appear, and did not attempt to rewrite it. I am sorry, however, that it involved the loss of your piece too.

I have been far from well of late, having suffered from pain in my chest and cough. Sometimes I have thought it has been sent to bring me to my end. This has produced some searchings of heart, and I have, at times, felt a spirit of grace and supplication whereby I have been enabled, in a very close and urgent manner, to wrestle with the Lord for His blessing. I have, however, chiefly desired Himself, as knowing and feeling that all gifts fall short of the blessed Giver Himself. I can join in Paul's earnest breathing, "That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection." O what treasures of wisdom and knowledge and grace are locked up in those few words—"That I may know Him!" The creatures we soon know, and, generally speaking, the more we know any man the worse we esteem him. But this glorious God-man cannot be known but by special revelation; and then how small a part do we understand; for who has sought out the Almighty to perfection?

All below the skies is uncertain and unsatisfactory. Day after day comes and goes, and finds as well as leaves us jaded and tired of the things of time and sense. What rest is there for a restless soul in this polluted world? We must die to it and die out of it before abiding peace and rest can be enjoyed. But here the flesh shrinks, reason fails, and nature stands aghast. To die in order to live, to put off the mortal to become immortal, to firmly believe this, and be willing to die to obtain it, what a triumph of faith is here! I cannot say I am in the spot. I shrink, and turn away from the gloomy portal. Jesus has

abolished death and brought life and immortality to light; but I need the sweet application of that truth to my soul.

I hope the Lord still encourages you to go laboring on in the vineyard. Many are our disappointments and humbling lessons in it. I sometimes think I am the dullest, blindest, least able to speak to edification, of all the ministers of truth. I can find neither text nor matter, neither thoughts, feelings, words nor power. I seem to labor all in vain, to beat the air, to thresh chaff and merely stir up dust, to stupefy, blind, and suffocate myself and my hearers. I cry to God for dew, savor, and power; but feel dry, dead, and barren. And should I feel otherwise, and I have some little enlargement of heart and mouth, there is a cursed something in me which would rob God of all the glory and burn incense to my own drag, though my sighs and cries for help previously should seem sufficient to teach my doltish heart that in me dwells no such good thing as unction and power.

We would not dare to serve our earthly benefactors so, and after receiving their liberality coolly button up our pockets and say we are indebted to them for nothing, for that they never gave us a penny. Truly the Lord must be stronger than I and prevail; truly He must overcome me and melt me into faith and love, by proving in me that His grace superabounds over all the aboundings of my iniquity. As the hymn says—"Your mercy is more than a match for my heart." And I am sure that nothing but superabounding, victorious, overshadowing, and overpowering grace will subdue me to the feet of Jesus and slaughter my idols. God knows what is in man, which legal preachers and dead Calvinists do not. It is not a man's head that needs subduing, renewing, melting, and winning. The 'law' works wrath, 'dry doctrine' works presumption, 'pharisaism' produces self-complacency, the 'letter' genders strife of words, and a 'dead profession' begets all manner of hypocrisy; while all the time sin, Satan, self, and the world reign and riot supreme in the carnal mind. The gates of the citadel are shut against God and godliness until the Prince of peace comes to take possession, and moves and melts the heart to realize, embrace, and submit to His blessed scepter.

"Lord," I sometimes say, "take my heart; subdue and melt it, and make it all that You would have it to be." But, alas! idols too often lift up their heads in it, darkness covers it, the wild boar out of the forest destroys it, dogs bark, swine burrow and grunt, and vultures prowl about to pick up carrion in it; so that it may be said, "What ails you now, that you are full of stirs, a tumultuous city?" The voice alone of the Prince of peace can still these stirs and make a great calm, wherein He is heard alone.

I am glad to hear that the Lord continues to smile upon the cause at Jireh. If room be really needed, an enlargement cannot be objected to, if done prudently and economically. I can hold out no expectation of paying a visit to Norwich this year, being obliged to diminish instead of increase my pulpit labors. I have even written to the friends in London to decline my annual visit this year. They have written, however, to say that, having been unsuccessful in procuring supplies instead of me, they intend to keep it open, hoping it may please the Lord to grant me better health in the summer. I need rest and quiet, and therefore must decline invitations until the Lord, if ever, may strengthen me.

My love to Mr. and Mrs. Charlwood and the friends. As I could not find your last letter I have sent another instead, though not so good, I think, to the Standard.

Yours affectionately, for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

March 24, 1842

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I would be sorry if my delay in replying to your letter should seem on my part a mark of neglect or of coldness. Most of my hindrances in answering the letters of my friends arise not from them, but from myself.

But were I to enumerate all the obstacles that daily and well-near hourly occur from that moving mass of carnality and helplessness which I carry about with me, and under the load of which I often groan, being burdened, my letter would be all preface, and, like some sermons that I have heard, consist almost wholly of introduction.

It seems scarcely possible for me to tell you how unlike I am to everything I wish to be, and how like to everything which I wish not to be. I would be spiritually minded, would read the Word of God with delight, would approach the mercy seat with freedom of access, would look back upon the past without sorrow, and to the future without apprehension. I would never throughout the day forget, "You, God, see me;" I would not occupy nor interest my mind in anything earthly, sensual, or devilish; I would be continually fixing my eyes on the cross of Immanuel, and be living upon His grace as freely, sensibly, lovingly, and savingly revealed. This is *what I would wish to be*.

And as to *what I would wish not to be*, I would not be a miserable idolater, raving and roaming after some ash-heap god, nor a wild donkey of the desert snuffing up the wind, nor a peevish rebel, nor a sullen self-seeker, nor a suspecting infidel. If not all these in open, daring, unchecked practice, I am it all in inward bent and wretched feeling.

A friend of mine brought me word the other day that some of the Bedfordshire Calvinists had spread a report that I was turned Baxterian or Fullerite. Had I no other preservative, I think my daily and almost hourly sense of my miserable helplessness and thorough impotency to raise up my soul to one act of faith, hope, or love would keep me from assenting to Andrew Fuller's lies. Nothing suits my soul but sovereign, omnipotent, and superabounding grace. I am no common sinner, and must therefore have no common grace. No texts have been much sweeter to my soul than Jer. 20:7, "You are stronger than I, and have prevailed;" and Rom. 5:20, 21, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," etc.

I find true religion to be a very different thing from what I once thought it. There was a time when, in all apparent sincerity, I was looking to my spirituality and heavenly mindedness as evidences of my salvation, instead of

being a poor needy suppliant and starving petitioner for a word or a smile from the Lord Himself. It seemed more as if my spirituality were to take me to Christ, than that my miserable poverty and nakedness were qualifications to bring Christ down to me; but all these idols have tumbled into ruins. I am now in that state that Immanuel, the God-man Mediator, must have all the glory, by stooping down to save, bless, and teach an undone wretch, who has neither spirituality, nor piety, nor religion, nor anything holy or heavenly in himself, and whose chief desire, when able to breathe it forth, is to be but the passive clay in the hands of the Divine Potter, and sensibly to feel the almighty, though gentle, fingers molding him into a vessel of honor fit for the Master's use.

You speak of "going down 'Lumber Lane.'" I, alas! seem to live in it. When we go down a lane, we may hope to get to the bottom of it; but I seem to have my house there, and besides all the mud in winter, and all the dust in summer, there are tall thick hedges made of thorns which shut out the sun. But I am glad to have that in me which hates "Lumber Lane," and longs after green pastures, still waters, and the warm sun.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 17, 1842

My dear friend, William Scott—I was truly sorry to hear of the affliction that has befallen you, which I learned on Wednesday on my return from Oakham, but only heard the particulars this evening. I have felt my mind moved to write you a few lines, not only to sympathize with you in your affliction, but also to express my affection for you, and my sincere pleasure that the blessed Lord has been with you to bless your soul with some melting sense of His mercy and love. My dear friend, if you can view it by the eye of living faith, you will see your present state of pain and bodily suffering a million times preferable to all that the worldlings can covet. The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. It is incalculably better to be afflicted and have Jesus in the affliction, than to have all the honors, pleasures, and riches that Satan can offer or the world bestow. But we do not voluntarily choose afflictions. The Lord takes care to choose them for us, and they are just such as are suitable to our condition and circumstances. You would not have chosen a broken leg and arm, but doubtless it was good for you to have them broken, or they would not have been so. It might have been your neck; and then how distressing would that have been to your wife and family and friends.

Now, though we feel for you, we can in a measure rejoice that the Lord has blessed your soul in this affliction; and this unspeakable mercy has knitted our hearts more to you than before. There is no curse in this affliction, no vindictive punishment. It is rather the voice of a kind Father, gently whispering to you, "My son, give Me your heart." You are withdrawn from your wife, family, and friends, and thrown among strangers. All this may be that the Lord may have more of your thoughts and affections. There is a

sweet hymn of Hart's in Gadsby's Selection, 707, which I hope you may sweetly experience.

My dear friend, it will be your wisdom and mercy to be often committing your way unto the Lord. You know how much I insist upon secret prayer and supplication. And it will be your wisdom, too, to read much of the Word of God during the time you are thus laid aside. Read Proverbs 2 and 3, and see the promise made to those who seek wisdom. You will find the Psalms sweet reading, and the Gospel of John, especially chapters 14, 15, 16, 17. To read, meditate, pray over, and ask the Lord to bless what you read to your soul, you will find sweet and profitable. I am not setting my friend a task to perform a duty to be done in an Arminian, Pharisaical way, but pointing out a sweet path in which we both, I trust have walked. Avoid unnecessary conversation with carnal people; they will make your soul lean and barren. They will want to amuse you, as they call it; but sin is all the amusement they know; and the guilt of that on your conscience will be far worse than the pain of a broken limb. Tell them you need quiet. The company of the Blessed Trinity will comfort you in solitude, and leave a sweet savor behind, which the company of the wicked will only mar and rob you of.

You will probably find a season of impatience after the season of patience that you have been favored with. Satan may be allowed to try your mind, and cast a doubt over the Lord's manifested mercy. It will be your mercy if you can hold fast your confidence in spite of unbelief and Satan. Remember it has great recompense of reward (Heb. 10:35), and is not to be cast away at the devil's bidding.

May the Lord make your bed in your sickness, and sweetly overshadow your soul with His love which passes knowledge.

Yours affectionately in the bonds of the gospel,
J. C. P.

July 19, 1842

My dear friend, Miss Richmond—It will not be in my power to visit Stadham for a Lord's-day on account of my other engagements; but I hope (D.V.) to be at Abingdon on Lord's-day, August 28, when I shall hope to see my friends from that place. As my time is so limited, I greatly fear that I shall not be able to visit it for a week-day evening, which I would like to do, did circumstances permit, feeling an interest in the place and in the cause of truth therein.

But what with weak bodily health, and what with similar or greater soul indisposition, I feel very unfit in every way to accept any engagement of a preaching nature. Many times I feel fit neither for the Church or for the world; being too barren and unprofitable for the former, and having too much light and sense of the evil of sin to join the latter. My own evil heart is more or less my daily burden, and hinders me in everything which I would think, say, or do in the name of the Lord.

Sin, in some shape or other, is continually haunting me; and I find the truth of what Paul says, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." But by this I am taught to prize the atonement which the Son of God has made by shedding His own precious blood, that it might be a complete propitiation for sin; nor can I find the least relief from the guilt, filth, or dominion of indwelling sin, but by faith going out towards and laying hold of the blood and righteousness of Jesus. Here, sometimes, the poor and needy soul is enabled to cast anchor, and only, so far as it does this, can any true or solid peace be tasted.

A child of God can never rest satisfied with the knowledge of sin. He cannot rest in a spiritual discovery of the disease. No! he must have some experimental acquaintance with the remedy, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin." Sweet words, when any measure of their truth is experimentally felt. "All sin" is a very comprehensive word. The horrible abounding of iniquity in our carnal mind, the vain imaginations, polluting thoughts, presumptuous workings, vile lusts—what can cleanse our consciences from the filth, guilt, and power of those hourly abominations, but the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot? Yet often in our feelings we are, as Berridge describes—"The fountain open stands, yet on its brink I dwell."

We lack the power to wash therein and be clean. And this makes us add—"Oh! put me in with Your own hands, and that will make me well."

I am glad to hear that the Lord deals kindly with you in providential matters, and, in spite of all your unbelief and distrust, still brings you pupils. What a mercy it is that though we believe not, He continues faithful. Did the blessed Lord change as we do, what would become of us? But with Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

My love to the friends.
Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

November 24, 1842

My dear friend, George Isbell—You must not expect me to answer your letters with much regularity or expediency. I have many hindrances to regular correspondence with my friends, of which the chief perhaps is the lack of what David felt when he penned Psalm 45. Were I, like him, "bubbling up some good matter", I would have more of the pen of a ready writer. One said of old, "Behold, my heart is as wine which has no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles." His heart was all in a ferment with the things of God, and he would gladly speak that he might be refreshed. Blessed speaking, preaching, and writing when such is the case. But oh, how rare with me to be thus alive in the things of God! How rarely do pen and tongue move with spiritual readiness and divine unction! Carnal fluency in the pulpit or in the parlour may and often does exist with much barrenness and leanness of soul. The liberty of the flesh in handling divine matters is very

different from the liberty of the spirit. The latter may exist where the tongue is tied, and vice versa.

I am glad you desire to see your way made plain before you leave —. I think — might prove a much more trying spot. The old garment and the new patch never coalesce; and there you would have to take to an old church as at —. I consider myself favored in having had new ground to till here and at Oakham. My best people are, like myself, seceders from the Church of England. I remember reading, I think in Anson's voyage, of the effects of a long calm at sea. Corruption and sickness were the consequence, and they gladly hailed the whitening surf at a distance as the herald of a breeze. So a calm in a church may not be the most desirable thing. If it teaches you patience and forbearance, meekness, gentleness and love, it will be a blessing eventually. — may be to you a Southsea Common to make you a soldier. I do not mean to say I understand the use of arms, but if I know anything of drill, I learned it in my seven years' exercise at Stadham. I was raw indeed when I went there, but had many trials and few friends or counselors in them. I often acted very rashly and hastily, and frequently mistook my own spirit for the Spirit of the Lord. You will find it your wisdom never to allude to church or personal matters in the pulpit. Leave them all in the vestry with your hat and gloves. A pulpit battery is usually more destructive to the assailant than the assailed. . . .

Our love to Fanny and our relatives.

Yours affectionately and sincerely,

J. C. P.

December 19, 1842

My dear Friend—According to your wish, I attempt to reply to your friendly and experimental letter. You do not, I hope, measure my esteem and affection for you by the frequency of my letters; as, were you to judge of them by that standard, you might almost conclude that I had neither one nor the other for you. But I do assure you that such a conclusion would be most erroneous. I have very much correspondence on hand, which must be attended to, and many necessary engagements to occupy both my mind and my time. But I confess, after all, that had I more of what David felt when penning Psalm 45, and were my heart, like his, "bubbling up with a good matter", my pen would be more that of a ready writer. And perhaps I feel this more sensibly in writing to those whom I esteem most. I feel my shallowness and ignorance, compared with their superior light and life; and perhaps my pride makes me loath to show them my barrenness and leanness. I am glad, however, to find so much in your heart that resembles mine—the same sense of helplessness and weakness, the same feeling of the beggary and bankruptcy of our fallen nature, and, through mercy, the same sighs and breathings at a throne of grace, the same restless dissatisfaction with the things of time and sense, and the same going out in desire and affection after the light of the Lord's countenance and the manifestations of His goodness and favor.

I find my religion more or less a daily work. Some trial or temptation, some doubt or fear, some seeking the Lord's face, some sighing forth my soul after Him, and, at rare seasons, some eating His Word and finding it precious, some relief and sweet sensations at a throne of grace, some life and liberty in preaching. Some of these things form more or less daily and weekly work with me. I am indeed very far from knowing what I desire to know, or being what I wish to be—and am often a puzzle to myself, seeing and feeling no more grace than the most carnal wretch who makes no profession; and yet having restraints and inward checks, breathings, and sighings of which I am persuaded such know nothing.

So you see, my dear friend, that I am at present very far from that strong confidence, so much spoken of in London, which speaks of sin as a nonentity, and as though there were nothing to apprehend or to suffer from the world or the flesh. As I feel on these matters, so I preach; and I find, every now and then, testimonies that power and dew have accompanied the word. My congregations continue large, especially at Stamford, and I have many proofs that I have a place in the affections of the people.

I am glad the friends among whom you are now ministering have made a separation on the grounds of truth. I am no friend to splits and divisions, where they can be avoided; but we had much better come out and be separate than live in error.

Yours affectionately, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

January 5, 1843

My dear Friend—You will doubtless have thought me very dilatory in answering your kind and experimental letter; but I am treating you only as I do others of my correspondents, and therefore you must not complain. Where there is a union from God, it will stand in the absence of communication, either personally or by letter; and where there is no such union, all the letter-writing in the world cannot create any lasting tie. Union with the members resembles union with the Head. There will be many things to try it, many hard tugs to snap it, many blasts from hell endeavoring to break it asunder. But, as union with Christ outlives every storm, so union with the people of Christ will stand amid all the gusts and breezes that blow upon it.

Where there is the fear of the Lord in the soul—spiritual humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity, a measure of faith in the blessed Redeemer, and of love to the tried people of God—my soul is glad to unite with such. But I cannot unite with vain confidence, dead assurance, and a reckless, careless walk and conversation. My path, indeed, lies more in the darkness than in the light, more in sighing and seeking after the Lord than in sweetly rejoicing in Him, more in the valley than on the mount. I have been led much of late from time to time to cry to the Lord to keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me. I see such sin in my wretched, fallen nature, and feel so much my weakness against temptation, and see at the same time what a horrible and dreadful

thing sin is, that I am led from time to time earnestly to call upon the Lord to hold me up that I may be safe. I feel, too, my ignorance in divine things; how dark my mind is when not enlightened by the Blessed Spirit; how unable I am to realize any portion of God's Word, to feed upon any one truth, or taste the sweetness of any one promise. And thus I feel myself led to look up for divine teaching, and that the Lord Himself would make His blessed truth known to my soul.

As I was taking my walk today, I seemed favored with a spirit of prayer, and was enabled to seek the Lord's face with some measure of sincere desire towards Him; when these words dropped into my mind, "In everything, by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." What a sweet promise! And shall not the Lord fulfill it? Can He deny Himself? For not to perform His promises would be to deny Himself. And what better, what richer, what sweeter thing can we receive into our wavering and often warring hearts than "the peace of God, which passes all understanding"? Peace through the blood of the Mediator, the slaughtered Immanuel, implies reconciliation to God, forgiveness of sin, blessed sensations of mercy and love here, and eternal bliss and glory hereafter.

But how short-lived are any divine sensations in the soul! If we find the Word of God sweet, if we are enabled to meditate on some blessed truth, if favored to pray with some earnestness and feeling, or to preach with some liberty of soul, we soon have to return to our place, and again walk in darkness, carnality, and hardness of heart. But something heavenly is felt again, and this once more lifts up the soul Godwards.

I fear you had not a very pleasant visit to L. I greatly fear that all is not right with the old gentleman, and that there is more crookedness and craft than I once imagined he could be capable of. But I would be glad, for the sake of the few who love experimental truth, that the chapel might be left open for the supplies who have hitherto gone there. In the course of things, his life cannot be very long; and it would seem a pity for the chapel to fall into the hands of the enemies of truth. I would counsel, therefore, the friends at L. to maintain peace as long as it can be done with a good conscience; not, indeed, to sacrifice the least portion of truth, nor wink at any evil, but in unimportant matters rather to give way than strive. I have a good opinion of N.'s firmness for truth, and yet quietness of spirit; and think much will depend upon him. Good, however, will be done where we little expect, and some casual hearer, whom neither we nor the church know, may carry off the blessing. One would hope that in that large town truth has not been preached in vain.

I wrote this last evening, and have now no more to add than that, with my kind regards to your wife and friends,
I am, yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

March 17, 1843

My dear friend—Time and circumstances did not permit me on Tuesday evening, when I saw you at Barrowden, to do anything more than merely acknowledge the receipt of your letter. I take this opportunity, therefore, to write a few lines in answer to it. I am exceedingly sorry that this fresh root of bitterness has sprung up to trouble us; but I feel glad that it did not originate in me. H— commenced the correspondence by complaining of my being prejudiced against him. I thought, therefore, as an honest man, I could not do otherwise than state my reasons for my unfavorable opinion. This seems much to have stirred up his indignation, and he wrote me a reply, of which I would much sooner be the receiver than the sender. I would like you to see it, that you may judge whether "the meekness and gentleness of Christ" are more visible in it, or the proud spirit of man's heart. I confess, for my part, though I would by no means un-Christianize the man, that I see in his reply little of those blessed fruits which spring from the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart. At any rate, I most earnestly desire to be kept from such a spirit, and feel no union with it.

How contrary are all the preceptive parts of the New Testament, and all the words and all the example of the Blessed Lord—to everything bitter, contentious, and self-exalting! Men, even good men, often err under the idea of boldness and faithfulness; and mistake the fire of their own spirit for the fire from heaven that came down upon the altar. I have had this spirit myself, and know from experience that there is no dew nor unction of the Spirit attending it. This carnal fire dries up all such heavenly dew. And I know from experience that a tender conscience cannot go into the sanctuary of the Lord's presence with this unholy fire burning in the heart or carried in the hands. It is far better to be censured unjustly ourselves, than for us to pass harsh and unfounded judgments on others; and it is, I believe, a part of a Christian's cross, and one branch of his inward suffering with and conformity to Christ, to be misunderstood and misrepresented. Jesus was said to have a devil and to be mad, was called a glutton and a wine-bibber, and was crucified as a blasphemer. Thus He was misunderstood and misrepresented; and the servant is not greater than his Lord, but must fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. If you feel your conscience bearing you witness in the Holy Spirit that you desire not to have the pre-eminence, to be called a Diotrephes cannot injure you; and if you feel meekness and love in your heart, and that you dare not give a false testimony, such charges as "murder," etc., may pain, but cannot harm you. The 'causeless curse' shall not come upon you. I trust we may one day clearly see the needs-be for this painful affair, and in the meantime watch, wait, and pray.

I was very glad to see Mrs. Clementson's testimony, which was fully commended to my conscience as a divine work. I felt I could give her the right hand of fellowship, and would be glad to see her one with us in the church.

I do indeed sincerely desire that we may be at peace among ourselves, and walk in union and brotherly love; "for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (James 3:16). The Lord clothe us with humility and fill our hearts with His dying love!

Yours affectionately, for Christ's sake,
J. C. P.

March 31, 1843

My dear friend, Isaac Harrison—I am glad that I did not go to Leicester this last visit in vain. I felt encouraged by the good attendance all the times I preached, and the great attention shown by the people. I felt also some little liberty, and had ground to hope that the Lord was with me of a truth. I believe I can say I delivered my conscience, whether men would hear or forbear to hear, and did not use flattering words. The result must be left with God, who works all things after the counsel of His own will. He alone can bless His own word. In these God-dishonoring days, when "truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter" doors, hearts, or chapels, it is a mercy to have an ear to hear, a conscience to feel, and a heart to embrace and love God's simple saving truth. Too few in our day can move along without being flattered at every step. Remove from hundreds their carnal motives, which keep them moving on in a profession, and they would stop as certainly as a locomotive would were all supply of steam cut off. And this seems to me the miserable office of many ministers—to keep their people moving along, by flattering them under various forms. Faithful and yet kind and affectionate dealing with their consciences is little thought of. So that when such people come to hear other ministers who speak to their consciences, they stand amazed at the novelty of the sound, and, if rotten at heart, kick and rebel against the unwelcome truth. As Job says, "They rebel against the light" (24:13). And the Lord says they hate the light (John 3:20). I have been surprised so many would come to hear their death sentence read; but it was so in the time of the apostles (Acts 7:44). And I believe faithful preaching will draw a congregation where unfaithful will not. "Wisdom is justified of her children."

Kind remembrances to your sisters and the friends.
Yours sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

June 24, 1843

My dear friend, Isaac Harrison—I purpose, if the Lord wills, to leave Oakham for Leicester on Tuesday morning by the coach, and intend to bring my wife and little girl with me. We think of getting down at the turnpike at Belgrave, as I did before, but as I have to preach that evening we shall sleep at the chapel-house.

I have been but poorly since I came home, and was able to preach but once on Lord's-day, and that much shorter than usual.

We cannot always, nor indeed often, see how these trials work together for good. Here, however, is the more exercise of faith and patience. "Let patience," says James, "have her perfect work;" but if patience has no trials

to bear no dark and mysterious dispensations to endure, she can have no work at all, much less a perfect one.

I have had a letter from Mr. Brown, of Woburn, and greatly fear the breach is irreparable. I certainly think he has not been treated well. But at present I have heard one side only, and therefore feel it premature to come to any decision on the subject.

I hope your sister at Belgrave will take care to have the bed well aired for my wife and daughter, as I shall feel anxious about them.

Yours very sincerely, for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

March 25, 1844

My dear friend, Isaac Harrison—I am sorry that I shall not be able to be with you on Lord's-day, April 21st. I am sorry it should happen so; but I cannot leave my people here wholly unprovided for. You may expect me, however, (D.V.) for the 14th; and it is my present intention to go on the Friday afternoon previous by Pettifer's coach.

I wish I could have had the pleasure of friend M'Kenzie's company here for a day or two. One of the friends (Mrs. Knight) offered to pay a part of his expenses if he would come; and I am sure the friends generally would have been much pleased to hear him. I so rarely hear ministers myself that I feel it to be a treat to hear a man of truth; and have rarely heard such without some profit, though not always with comfort.

I am glad the friends at Alfred Street hear profitably. What a wonderful thing truth is; and how much more wonderful to have it applied to the soul! It is a mercy when the soul feels the word of God to be sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. My earnest desires accompany friend M'Kenzie's labors, that the Lord may abundantly bless him. My sincerest Christian affection to him. Remember me affectionately to your sisters and the friends.

Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1846 - 1847)

April 24, 1846

My dear Sir—Few greater afflictions can befall the people of God than the removal of a faithful and beloved pastor. It generally happens, if he has been long going in and out before them, at his decease the candlestick is removed

with him; I fear that this may prove to be the case at — with the spiritual hearers of the late Mr. —. Affection and respect cannot be transferred to a successor as easily as a pulpit, and even if truth be preached, the ear has become so habituated to a certain mode of stating it, that even a gracious man has to contend with difficulties and, I many almost add, prejudices, who follows a much-esteemed minister.

I am sorry to hear of your trial. I feel so many evils daily, and sometimes hourly, working in my heart, and see so many traps and snares laid for my feet in every direction that my wonder is, not that any fall, but that any stand; no, I am confident that all must fall were it not for everlasting love and almighty power, "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

Like yourself, I have been much puzzled by men and things in the professing world; but where I find a great assurance and unwavering confidence, unaccompanied by godly fear, and the other fruits and graces of the Spirit, I cannot receive it; I therefore set it down for presumption or delusion. The Blessed Spirit is not the author of confusion inwardly or outwardly; where He works faith He works sorrow for sin, deadness to the world, tenderness of conscience, brokenness of spirit, humility, simplicity, sincerity, meekness, patience, spiritual affections, holy and heavenly desires, hope and love toward the Lord and His people. Where we see, then, these fruits and graces of the Spirit lacking, or sadly deficient, there we must conclude that faith, the root from which they all grow, is lacking or deficient likewise.

There are no freaks in the kingdom of heaven. I mean such as have 'little hearts' and 'large heads', active legs and withered hands, nimble tongues and crippled arms; such freaks are more fit for a traveling circus than the Church of the living God.

Little things, or rather such as are so called by dead professors, for nothing can truly be called little which God does for the soul, and what is wrought in the heart and conscience by a divine power, far excel all great and high 'speculative notions'. To fear God, to tremble at His word, to be little and lowly in our own eyes, to hate sin and ourselves as sinners, to pour out our hearts before the Lord, to seek His face continually, and to lead a life of faith and prayer, to be dead to the world, to feel Jesus at times precious, to behold His glorious power, atoning blood, and justifying righteousness, and dying love by the eyes of living faith—these realities are almost despised and overlooked by many great professors in our day; but they will stand when pretensions to greater things utterly fall. It seems to me a day of small things generally in the Church of God. We may therefore usually suspect greater things, unless they are attended by strong evidences of their being of heavenly origin, as well as accompanied by the fruits and graces of the Blessed Spirit.

I fear with you that the gospel sun is set at —, it was so at Providence Chapel, London, when Mr. Huntington was removed. A minister whose years are prolonged generally buries his best people, and the others mostly follow him; the rest are often dispersed by providential dispensation, and their places are filled with those who knew not Joseph; then truth declines in purity and

power, until place and people at last become like the salt which has lost its savor, fit only for the ash-heap. I hope this may not prove to be the case at —, but it is the history of many places where truth was once preached in purity and power.

Remember me affectionately to the friends, and believe me,
Yours sincerely, for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

November 27, 1846

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I am glad you did not stand upon ceremony with me, and wait until I answered your first letter. I seem slower at writing letters than ever. Unless the heart indites a good matter the tongue is not the pen of a ready writer; and my heart just now seems to be inditing ("boiling or bubbling up," margin Psalm 45:1) anything and everything but a good matter. Everything vile and abominable I feel at work within me, and the more I sigh and cry the less help do I seem to find—

"how long
Deliverance shall I seek,
And find my foes so very strong,
Myself so very weak?"

It much casts me down and burdens me to feel so much of the power of temptation and so little strength against it. But I must bear my own burdens and carry my own perplexing trials. You well know how powerless is an arm of flesh to relieve and deliver. Whatever I may suffer, this must still be my feeling; "Have you not procured this to yourself?" I read part of Jer. 2 at Oakham chapel on Tuesday evening; what a picture is there of my heart, lips, and life!

I have been obliged to decline going to Zoar again. I have felt at times as I like to feel in that pulpit, and as I have not often felt except at Allington, sometimes at home, and more than once at Pewsey. My dear friend, you know the feeling I mean—not what is called liberty, that is, a flow of words, but a solemn, sweet, spiritual feeling, better experienced than described.

As editors of the *Gospel Standard*, we have erred often and shall, doubtless, err again. But are not our motives in the main sincere, and for the glory of God and the good of the Church? I am sure it has caused me little else but anxiety and labor; and I would gladly lay down my office tomorrow, if any one whom I could depend upon would take it off my hands. I have had many bullets shot at me, my dear friend, but am alive to this day, and can tell you earnestly that I am more afraid of myself, my lusts and passions, and strong and horrible corruptions than of anybody in the whole world. Self is and ever will be our greatest enemy; and all our enemies would be weak as water against us, were we not such vile wretches in ourselves.

You were exercised about your preaching when you were here the Lord's-day; but I believe it was blessed to the people. Our own feelings are not always to be the best judges whether the Lord has blessed the word or not.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 13, 1847

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I think sometimes that no one professing to fear the Lord can be more tempted, tried, and exercised, than I am with sin. Unbelief, infidelity, and blasphemy, obscenity, and powerful lusts, are continually worrying my poor soul. At times, I feel quite cut up and cut down with the power and prevalence of these monsters. When entangled and cast down by these sins I have cried to the Lord sometimes for an hour with tears, groans, and sighs to pardon, pity, and deliver. But still the conflict continues; and if for a few days the wild beasts lie a little still they soon wake up as bad as ever. You and friend —, and a few more seem similarly exercised; but none seem so weak against sin, and so madly bent upon backsliding as I. It has done me good sometimes to have known a little of his and your inside. I must have often cut myself off had I found no travelers in the same path. And yet, perhaps, this knowledge of sin and self has enabled us to dig more deeply into men's hearts. At any rate, it seems to have stripped me pretty well of self-righteousness, and natural notional religion, and has made me try to strip others bare too.

I am glad to hear that the Lord should bless my poor labors to any of His children. I feel unworthy of the least of His tender mercies.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 26, 1847

My dear friend, Beecher—I was glad to read your experimental letter, as I have many trials and temptations, both as regards myself and the ministry; and a word of encouragement is now and then desirable.

No one can know the mighty power of sin and the horrible love that there is to it in our carnal mind unless he has been beset by some temptation, and that at times night and day.

In this school have I learned to my shame and sorrow what I am as a fallen sinner. No more, our very slips and backslidings are mercifully overruled to show us what we are, to hide pride from our eyes, to make us loathe and abhor ourselves in our own sight, and to make us put our mouth into the dust and say, "I am vile." We have no stone to throw at the vilest and worst, and can feel for and sympathize with the tried and tempted of God's family. The Church said of old, "You have showed Your people hard things; You have made us to drink of the wine of astonishment" (Psalm 60:3, 4). And to know and feel painfully and experimentally what we are is, indeed, a draught of the wine of astonishment.

I am truly glad that what I was enabled to speak at Zoar when you heard me there, was blessed to your soul and made a word in season. It seems that I must travel through temptation in order to preach it; and thus some of the Lord's family derive profit and comfort from my services. May the Lord hold us up under our various trials, temptations, and besetments, for we have abundant proof that we cannot stand without Him. May His precious fear be manifestedly in our hearts as a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. Grace, grace alone can suit and save such. Nature's strength, wisdom, loveliness, and righteousness, have received their death-blow, and we dare not glory in self any more.

I am glad my little productions have been blessed to your soul.
I am, yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

To the Readers of the "Gospel Standard"

October, 1847

It is with great reluctance that I bring forward any matters relating to myself; and yet to disarm (if possible) enemies, and to afford some explanation to friends, I have thought it best to publish the following correspondence.

It relates to the publication of my portrait—a circumstance most repugnant to my feelings, and a matter to me of unmixed annoyance and regret. J. C. Philpot.

My dear friend—If I may judge by my own feelings, many of your sincere friends will be much grieved at the announcement on the wrapper of the *Standard* [*Gospel Standard*, Wrapper, August, 1847. "Expected to be ready the 1st of September, a Portrait of Mr. Philpot, engraved on steel, by Freeman. Proofs, 4s.; prints, 2s."] of the publication of your portrait, as it will tend much to sanction that flesh-pleasing and money-getting system which appears to me so contrary to the simplicity of the gospel. If my view of the subject be correct, ought you not, if you have the power, to prevent the publication? If it is without your consent, and you cannot prevent it, ought you not publicly to avow it? Oh! my friend, these are not times to desire or allow such vain carnal trafficking, more especially in this case, when very many false brethren, and some unfriendly brethren, are doing what they can to vilify you, and render your ministry unacceptable to the people of God. I hope the Lord will enable you to weigh the matter, and to consider whether any possible good (not to say harm) will result, either to yourself or the Lord's people, from your portrait being exposed to the carnal gaze of hundreds. Let not custom sway your judgment. You will possibly think that such a lowly, empty mortal as I am, has taken a great liberty in writing thus to you, and that I am one of those who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel; but I can appeal to a heart-searching God, that, however wrong my judgment in the matter may be, the moving cause in my mind has been a love to you and to the church of God. Hoping you will excuse my writing, and that the Lord will bless all your trials and afflictions to your soul's prosperity, His

church's good, and His own glory.
(Name and address withheld by request.)

REPLY--

August 2, 1847

My dear friend—I am obliged to you for your kind and faithful letter. I can assure you that the publication of my likeness is very repugnant to my feelings; but I will just explain the circumstances under which it was done. Last year, when I was in London, an artist, professing to be a child of God, called upon me, and said how much obliged he would be if I would allow him to take my likeness, as he knew several who wished to have it, and he could make copies for them. I at first refused; but being taken somewhat by surprise, and being overcome by his importunity, as he had brought his drawing implements with him, I at last consented. Not a word was said about publishing it; and he now denies that he had such an idea. I certainly would have refused to sit, had such an idea entered my head. I gave him several sittings, for having given him the first sitting, and occupied his time, I felt that I could not now justly draw back. Soon after I reached home, he wrote to me, requesting my permission to publish it. I wrote back a decided refusal. When I came to London this year, he called upon me, stating that Mr. Gadsby had consented to buy the drawing; that he had bestowed much time and labor upon it, which was his bread; that his circumstances were low; that he had a wife and increasing family, and wished to change his residence. I felt there was great force in these arguments; and though they seemed hardly able to overcome my repugnance, still they swayed my mind, which, when he first came into the room, was determined to refuse him. In justice to Mr. Gadsby, I should mention that he would not close the agreement with the artist until my consent was obtained. This consent the artist called on me to procure. I refused it for a considerable time; but at last he so appealed to my feelings, appearing almost distracted at my refusal, that at last—after, I dare say, half-an-hour's resistance—I gave way, and said I would be neutral in the matter. I can assure you that nothing but my compassion for the poor man induced me to give way. But I have been sorry ever since that my feelings were wrought upon contrary to my better judgment.

I derive from the whole transaction nothing but annoyance, as I not only much dislike the circumstance itself, but have all along felt that my enemies would take occasion by it to wound and injure me. I was wrong in the first instance in sitting to the man at all, and one wrong step is almost sure to bring on another, as I have frequently found to my cost. But I had not the remotest idea of publication, or should certainly have refused to sit to him.

Yours very sincerely,
J. C. Philpot

This correspondence, but for a mistake at the office, would have appeared last month.

It is right to remark, that I have somewhat enlarged my original letter.

I am happy to say that Mr. Gadsby, in consideration of my repugnance to the publication of my likeness, has consented to waive bringing it out. I never had but one feeling about it as regards myself, nor should I have ever

consented to its publication, but from compassion for the artist.

J. C. P.

August 19, 1847

My dear friend, John Grace—I am much obliged to you for your kind and affectionate letter, and for the unpublished letter by Huntington which it contained. It is a very acceptable gift for the *Standard*, and I will (D.V.) take an early opportunity of getting it inserted.

I feel with you that no man's writings (always excepting our favorite Hart's hymns) seem to possess the savor, unction, and power of Huntington's. I think I may say I scarcely ever take up his writings without some sensible feeling being communicated. I do not mean to say always, or often, deep and lasting; but something that is brought to my conscience, as of God speaking in the man. I might say "Where is the man in England that can write a letter from a real divine experience, such as you have sent me of his?" If there be such a man, I have never yet heard him preach, nor seen his letters. He was, indeed, "beloved of God," and, therefore, "abhorred of men." In divine things I feel myself a fool by his side, and to know nothing as I ought to know. But it is our mercy that the fountain is still the same, and that Jesus says, "If any man thirsts, let him come unto Me and drink." The same blessed Teacher of the Church of God who instructed Huntington is able to instruct us, and make us useful in our day and generation.

This is a poor wretched world, and it will be our mercy to get safely and honorably through it. Trials, temptations, exercises and afflictions we must expect ever to have; and, indeed, without them there is very little going on of a divine and spiritual nature in our own souls, or little profit attending our ministry.

The family of God are, for the most part, a tried and tempted people, and an unexercised minister is to them rather a plague than a profit.

We have both suffered much from the hands of friends. God grant it may prove a blessing to our souls.

I am here for the benefit of my health, which has suffered from too much preaching. My medical advisers recommend perfect rest for a time, and promise restoration with due care. I think I feel, through mercy, somewhat better.

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

August 20, 1847

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I hope I may say I am, through mercy, mending somewhat under the treatment I am passing through here. The doctors give me encouragement to believe that I shall eventually recover; but

they say it will be a work of time, and that I must give up all ideas of preaching for a considerable period. I think they consider me in a very critical state, and that I might soon go into a consumption if I go on preaching. They say that my lungs are not diseased, but would soon become so if irritated, and that, if not arrested now, irritation would pass on into disease. I need not say that it will be a trial to me to give up preaching for a time; and no doubt it will be a trial to the people at Oakham and Stamford also. How mysterious are all the Lord's dealings, and how unable are we at the time to fathom them! I have never, I think, yet been in a trial in which I could at the time see the hand of the Lord. When seen, it has been afterwards. My enemies, no doubt, will rejoice and see judgments in it, but I hope the Lord will support me under, bless me in it, and bring me happily out of it.

I am here surrounded by the world, not a child of God to speak to. For nearly twenty years I have not seen so much of worldly people. But, through mercy, I feel at times a different spirit from them, and their presence and conversation, which I am almost obliged to listen to, is a weariness to me. I have a good bedroom fitted up as a sitting-room, and there I mostly pass my time when not walking or at meals. Sometimes I feel as carnal and as godless as any of the poor wretched creatures around me; but the Lord often favors me with a spirit of grace and supplications in my walks and on my bed, and I am often crying to Him, "Bring me near to Yourself," "Keep me from evil," and so on. But patients will stop and speak to me, and my mind often gets carnalized by their conversation, though it generally is upon our bodily ailments. I am not here by choice, and shall be glad to get away.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 18, 1847

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—Knowing that I am poorly, you will not expect a long letter from me. Still I will (D.V.) try and write a few lines.

As regards my health, I am much the same; if anything, perhaps, a little better. But all serious afflictions of the lungs are in themselves so perilous, as well as uncertain, that I cannot say much about my health. My mind much fluctuates upon this point. Sometimes I feel as if my race were run, and at other times I think I may recover. The Lord has brought me through some severe illnesses, and can bring me through this if it be His gracious will. I am very sure I deserve, as well as need, very heavy strokes. Gentle taps are not enough for me; nor, indeed, will heavy stripes do me any good unless in a special manner sanctified and blessed.

At present I can see but two fruits of my affliction—1. Chastisement, and that deeply deserved; and 2. A deliverance thereby from a temptation which has long beset me, and caused me some groans and tears. When I say "a deliverance," I mean in a good measure, for the tail of the torch burns yet. I cannot say much about the dealings of the Lord with me during this illness, as I have felt generally stupid and hard; but the other day my heart was in

some measure melted and softened toward the Lord in my walk, which is, you know, a sweet feeling while it lasts, makes all afflictions bearable, takes away the strong heart, fills the eyes with tears, and the heart with tenderness, meekness, patience, resignation and love.

I understand that some of —'s hearers are rejoicing at my illness, and expressing their hopes that my mouth is forever stopped. This is no new thing. Psalm 41:8 has been much in my mind, and I have sometimes breathed forth the cry, "Raise me up that I may requite them," not with anger and evil, but with what will grieve them more, declaring the goodness of the Lord to my soul. But is it not a horrid spirit, and one to be found almost only in professors? Who have slandered and persecuted me most, the world or professors? As a proof, the *Stamford Mercury* last week, mentioning my illness, spoke of me with kindness and respect; while those who profess so strict an adherence to the precepts of the gospel seem almost as if they thirsted for my blood.

I am glad you felt so at home at Allington. I believe it was mutual, for friend Parry mentioned how well you were heard, and what power and savor there was with the word. I have myself had most peculiar feelings in that pulpit, such as I have rarely had elsewhere, and much resembling what you describe—tender and soft, and a liberty of heart as well as of lip. I felt quite rejoiced there was such a mutual feeling at Allington, as I have a love and union to both, and I have thought sometimes I knew more of each and felt more towards each than they perhaps to one another. I mean more in a way of intimacy and friendship, for you were never brought much together.

Amid all the strife and confusion, what a mercy to feel a little real love and union to any of the Lord's family! I feel convinced that there cannot be this without real soul humility. Pride, self-esteem, and self-righteousness are brothers and sisters with strife, jealousy, and enmity.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 5, 1847

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I hope I may say I am gradually mending. Still, it is very slow; indeed, scarcely perceptible, and the time of year is against me. The inflammation, I hope, is slowly subsiding, but until that is fully removed I cannot recover strength, nor can I preach without danger of bringing it on again.

It tries my mind to be thus laid aside in many ways. I hope I may one day see more clearly the hand of the Lord in it. My mind just now is very dark and confused, and I can scarcely trace one grain of grace in my soul. But I at times know something of what you say in your letter of crying to the Lord to teach, lead, and guide me, for I am sure no one ever needed it more. Oh, how dark our mind is without His light, and how dead without His life! My religion is reduced to a very small compass, I can assure you, under these feelings.

Poor Dredge made a happy end, and was buried at Allington. My letter was read to him just before he died, and he sent me his dying blessing. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 24, 1847

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I was truly sorry to learn that you had been so seriously ill; but at the same time was equally glad to hear you were better. . . . In the autumn of 1822 I had, when a youth at College, a most severe attack of inflammation of the lungs. Indeed, the physician said that few survived so severe an attack; but I soon got round again when the inflammation was subdued. You must expect to be very weak for some time; but I trust, through the Lord's mercy, we shall see you by-and-by in the vineyard again. You have long enjoyed that great blessing health, and will doubtless learn to prize it more than you have yet done.

As to myself, I believe I may say I am better, and feel stronger and healthier. Still the inflammation is not wholly gone, and until that is fully subdued I cannot regain much strength.

I hardly know what to say about my soul. I seem such a strange being. Some days I am so earnest after the Lord, so prayerful and tender and pleading with Him to appear, as if I would and could take no denial. I have lain awake half the night and been pleading with the blessed Majesty of heaven for His sweet visits to my soul; and yet have, perhaps, the next day, for hours together, dropped into such a stupid, careless, insensible state, that I seemed to have no more religion than a horse. Today, for instance, had a person overheard me pleading with the Lord in the Park he might have thought how earnest I was, but this evening it seems as if there were not a desire in my soul after the Lord at all. To be taught, to be kept, to be blessed, to have the veil taken away, to have the Lord come into my soul to take full possession of me, how earnestly do I sometimes plead with the Lord for half an hour together. But it seems to pass away too much like the early cloud and morning dew.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 23, 1847

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I have been very poorly with the influenza, and, indeed, kept my bed nearly four days. I am now, through mercy, better, but still tender against the cold. . . . In my illness I seemed to have little else but the workings of my most miserable self, with little power to read, or pray, or think upon anything spiritual or divine. Oh what a poor, helpless, miserable wretch is man, especially when he has a burden to carry, which he can neither bear patiently, nor cast upon the only Burden-bearer! In these seasons the question with me is, not how much grace I have, but

have I one grain? For I am very sure I can neither see nor feel one. Oh how my heart wanders, wanders, wanders from the Lord! and how unable and how unwilling to return! And if for a few moments brought to His feet, how hard, how impossible to keep it there! As Berridge, I think, says, "Just like an eel," how it slips, and twines, and twists away out of one's hands.

I had just a little touch yesterday morning from reading the account of my old favorite Hannah (1 Sam. 1). I could see how long that tried creature mourned over her barrenness, and what a long row of fine children her rival had; and what taunting looks she could aim at poor Hannah, and how the poor barren wife felt it all; and how conscience gave her many a secret lash that her barrenness was a plain proof of the Lord's displeasure. But where did the poor thing go but where you and I, dear friend, for many years have been obliged to go—sometimes driven and sometimes drawn? To the mercy-seat, perhaps in her feelings for the very last time. And we know that she did not go in vain. I was glad her case was recorded in the Word of God; and have not thousands (dead and alive) felt communion with Hannah?

I am sorry to say that my younger sister, Mrs. Watts, is very poorly and in a very precarious state of health. I have great apprehensions about her. What a world of trial and sorrow we live in! I scarcely ever heard of greater grief than she felt at the loss of a child, about three years old, last year. She hardly had her senses for the first month. I fear it has ruined her constitution.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1848)

January 13, 1848

My dear friend, John Grace—I hope that by this time you are fully recovered from your fall, and have had additional proof that, if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without your heavenly Father, much less the body of John Grace. How much better, my dear friend, to fall from a scaffold, and break a couple of ribs, than fall into sin and break all your bones!

There is no guilty conscience, nor hanging down of the head, heart, and hands before God, nor rejoicing in the Philistines' camp, when we have only broken a rib or a leg. The dreadful consequences of sin, external or internal, I need not tell you.

I am sorry to have cast any doubt upon the previous non-publication of the letter of Huntington, and have, I hope, set the matter right in the forthcoming *Standard*. The great similarity of thought and expression to what I have met with in his published letters led me to believe I had seen it before; and I was not willing to give occasion to those who seek occasion to

bring charges against the *Standard*, in order to wound and injure its reputation and influence, and that of its editors.

I am glad you like the writings of John Rusk. I myself have the highest opinion of them, and think them most scriptural and experimental. Few writers, it appears to me, dive so deeply into the mysteries of nature and grace, and bring forward Scripture so closely and pertinently to clear up and prove every point and well-near sentence. He often describes the very feelings of my heart. He was, I believe, a poor sail-maker, and lived in Rotherhithe. He was a constant hearer, if not a member, at Mr. Huntington's chapel; and, after his decease, heard first, I believe, Mr. Robins, and then Mr. Henry Fowler. He died a few years ago; and, I think, there is some account of his death in the *Spiritual Magazine*, some years back. I know a person who knew him well. Mr. Gadsby bought all his MSS. two or three years ago, amounting to seven or eight good sized volumes, and we hope to insert them gradually in the *Standard*.

Send me, when you can, more of Huntington's letters.
Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 9, 1848

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—If I delay much longer to write you will think I have fulfilled the old saying, "Out of sight out of mind," or that something has occurred, as illness, to prevent me. I am glad, however, to say that neither of these causes has prevented; for, as regards the former, I can say, I never felt a better union with you since we first knew one another; and, as regards the latter, I am much as when you left Stamford.

I hope, my dear friend, your visit here was of the Lord. I am sure that our friends heard you with sweetness and power, much more than they ever did here before, and I hope we may one day see more clearly that you came with a message from God by the fruits and effects following. We sometimes do not hear for years, and perhaps never, of any blessing that may have rested on our ministry. We could not bear much of either—for or against. To hear too much, or to hear too little, of what God may condescend to do by us might not suit our pride or our despondency. I have sometimes thought myself a wonderfully great man, and sometimes felt myself one of the poorest noodles that ever stood up in a pulpit.

My dear friend, how much I feel as you describe; and it is, in my right mind, one of my greatest griefs and troubles that I am so earthly, sensual, and devilish. I remember, as I think I told you, somewhere about this time twenty-one years ago, when eternal things seemed first laid with weight and power upon my soul, that for many months two subjects only occupied my mind—a temporal trouble that I was passing through, which cost me almost rivers of tears and sighs, and the solemn things of eternity. I may one day open up a little of what I then passed through, when I have often wetted the pommel of my saddle with tears amid the lonely valleys of the Wicklow hills, or galloped half distracted along the seashore, where no mortal eye could see

or ear hear me cry and groan, sometimes from natural trouble, and sometimes in pouring out my soul before the Lord. I did not then think I would ever be the carnal and careless wretch which I often now feel to be. I once told friend Parry, when I first went to Allington, that "I often had no more religion than a horse." Friend Parry could not then receive such a speech, though since he has often found himself in the same plight. Next to the cutting feelings of a guilty conscience I feel my own carnality my greatest burden. Oh, what a cumber-ground! Oh, what an unprofitable wretch! Oh, what a fruitless branch do I feel myself to be! with just enough feeling to sigh a little after the Lord as I lie awake in the dead and still night. As Hart says—"Fickle fools, and false to You." And again—"Only wise by fits and starts."

I think I feel a little stronger these last few days. I get out and walk, which seems to do me more good than anything else. George Isbell and I walked to Tinwell today, and I felt all the better for it when I came home. The fresh air seemed to revive me. He is but middling, and much harassed with different things.

My poor sister, Mrs. Watts, is, I fear, very ill, and much tried both in mind and body. I hope the Lord may appear for her. . . . I wish you could drop in, that we might have a little talk as we had when you were here. I much enjoyed your visit and company. I have not had your depths nor heights, but I know scarcely another man that I can travel so well with in spiritual things. Your letters seem sometimes written out of my heart. I am, you know, a black man, and I must have an Ethiopian companion.

I once made great attempts to be holy, and was going on pretty well, with, however, some terrible inward pull-backs sometimes, until the winter of 1830-31, when it all went to wreck and ruin. Death stared me in the face, and I used to count how many months I had to live. How I used then to roll about on my midnight bed, with scarcely a hope in my soul, and turned my face to the wall like good old Hezekiah!

Some have said and thought that I stole my religion from books. But I preached experience before I knew there were such men as experimental preachers, or such writings as experimental books. I never stole a searching ministry from anyone, for I did not know there were such ministers. But I was searched, and I searched others; and I actually thought when I left the Church of England that all the Baptist Calvinist ministers were in that line of things. And I believe, in my conscience, that at my Thursday evening lecture at Stadham, when I was in the Church of England, I used to preach at times more searchingly than I have done since. For why? Because I was being searched myself. But I must not run on any more like this, for if I do you will begin to say, "What is my friend J. C. P. about, praising himself so?"

My friend, I have sometimes gone into the pulpit full of confusion, and sometimes as guilty as a malefactor, begging mercy, cut up with guilt and shame. Where was my, 1st, doctrine, 2nd, experience, 3rd, practice, then? And after preaching at Zoar I have almost roared aloud in the cab with real sorrow of heart, and just stopped while the wooden pavement was passed over, lest the cabman should hear me. There was not much self-applause for a nicely divided sermon then. To my mind, what we read together in —'s

sermon cuts up experimental preaching root and branch. Where was your nicely divided doctrinal sermon, the first evening you preached here, when the friends heard you so well? I know for myself that when I preach doctrinally it is when my soul is not exercised; and when I am in that carnal state I sometimes hate myself for every word that I say, and hate and am condemned for any prating chatter.

To preach what is called "a great sermon," condemns me inwardly as a presumptuous wretch; and my carnal liberty and great swelling words about Jesus Christ trouble me more than darkness and bondage. In my right mind I would rather stumble on with a little life and feeling in my soul than preach the greatest sermon in the world without it, and I know that my friend Thomas Godwin is of the same mind. How little godly fear can a man have to say inwardly, after preaching free grace, "Well done!" But I shall tire you with my chatter.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 12, 1848

Dear Friend—I shall be very glad to have any or all of the late Mr. Gadsby's letters which you can furnish me with. They generally contain much of the fullness and sweetness of the gospel, and in most cases are well backed with such views of and glimpses at man's deeply and dreadfully fallen nature as prove him to have been well and experimentally acquainted with both sides of the question. It is this which gives sweetness and savor to his very scraps of notes and short letters—that he wrote them out of his heart, and that his knowledge of Christ and of himself was not notional, doctrinal, and theoretical, but spiritual and experimental. The Lord in mercy teach and lead us in a similar way; for I am very sure that no other knowledge will "Stand every storm and live at last."

I shall be very glad to insert them in the *Gospel Standard* as opportunity may offer, and will give directions to have the originals carefully preserved. I am still laid aside from the ministry, and it seems at present uncertain when I shall be restored to labor in the vineyard. The winter and two successive attacks of influenza threw me back; but I trust I am gradually recovering from their effects, and slowly, very slowly, progressing onward. I labored too hard during the last two years for my weak constitution, and did not take warning in time, continuing to preach when perhaps a little rest might (D.V.) have restored me. I was once before, about seventeen years ago, laid aside in an almost similar way, though weaker then than now, and did not recover for more than a year.

I would not have troubled you with these details about my poor clay tabernacle but for two reasons—1. I was induced to think that my kind friends at — are interested about my bodily health; and, 2. so many false reports are in circulation that I thought it might be desirable to give a true statement as far as I can of my real state.

I hope you are being made and kept sensible of your utterly lost and undone state by nature, and that you cannot possibly deliver yourself from it, but at the same time are pressing after that experimental knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ which is eternal life. It is a great and inestimable mercy when our various trials and troubles are made a means of driving us to the Lord, as our only hope and help. Those circumstances, outward or inward, temporal or spiritual, which stir up an earnest spirit of prayer and supplication, make us cease from the creature, beat us out of all false refuges, wean us from the world, show us the vileness and deceitfulness of our hearts, lead us up to Jesus, and make Him near, dear, and precious, must in our right mind be considered blessings. It is true, troubles rarely come to us as such, or *at the time* appear as such; no, they usually appear as if they would utterly swallow us up. But we must judge of them by their fruits and effects.

Hezekiah saw no blessing wrapped up in the sentence of death (Isa. 38), but he found one when it had made him turn his face to the wall. Job could not see the hand of God in his troubles and afflictions; but it was made plain after he was brought to abhor himself and repent in dust and ashes. The smiles of God in providence, and the flatteries of his friends did not do him half the good that the frowns of the Lord and the cutting speeches of his old associates did. I am very sure, if we are in the right way we shall find it a rough way, and have many trials and troubles. I am obliged by the friends at — still bearing me in affectionate remembrance. It is nearly seven years since I saw them face to face. My kind love to them; greet them by name. Remember me affectionately to your wife and all that have any spiritual desire for the welfare of,
Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 9, 1848

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—When I tell you that my poor sister, Mrs. Watts, is dead, you will not be surprised at the paper on which I write. She departed on Lord's-day morning about 8:30. She was a great sufferer both in body and mind, believing herself to be a reprobate and filled with condemnation and despair. We have, however, some hope that her poor soul is not lost, as three times on the night before she died she said, "I am going to God above," and, I believe, never spoke after, being insensible all the night. My Sister, Mrs. Isbell, said that her convictions of sin were very deep; all her sins of childhood, etc., were laid on her conscience, and her distress of mind was very great, being fully persuaded hell was her portion forever. She was a remarkably sincere and honest person naturally; and, I think, the most reserved character almost that I ever knew. So that, knowing her disposition, and what she passed through, we cannot but hope that a sense of mercy at last reached her soul, and that she felt she was going to God above.

My poor mother is at present calm and resigned, though she was her favorite child, from whom she has scarcely been ever separated, and her life was almost bound up in hers. But I have often observed, and no doubt God has wisely ordained, that old age blunts and dulls the feelings, so that aged parents do not feel the loss of their children as younger ones do. . . .

Oh, my friend, what is all preaching or all the gifts in the world unless the power of God accompany it to the soul? I am at a point here. We need the mighty power of God to be felt in the soul, and without that, all is nothing. What two sermons William Tiptaft preached here last Lord's-day! As regards 'giftedness', what most professors would despise, and perhaps ridicule, but what weight there seemed to be in them to exercised souls!

I cannot say much about soul-matters just now. We need a little flowing in before there can be any flowing out; and where this is not the case the pen or tongue move in vain, or like Pharaoh's chariot wheels drive heavily.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

March 16, 1848

My dear George Isbell—I am truly glad to learn that my dear mother and sister have been supported under this heavy trial and affliction; and I hope they may still find that as their day so is their strength. It is a great mercy to be supported in and under the first outbreak of trouble when the heart is too full to find relief in giving vent to its feelings. The grief afterwards may be more poignant, but is more endurable.

I think that we are warranted in indulging a good hope that our dear sister's poor soul is at rest. Having sunk so low and been so near despair, putting away all hope, I think she would hardly have uttered the words which her nurse and husband heard, had not some divine intimation of mercy and acceptance reached her soul. There at least I wish to rest; and, indeed, have found my mind to lean upon it as a support. We might, indeed, have wished for earlier and clearer tokens, but these are not always given. We are apt to forget, or, rather, hard to believe, that salvation is all of grace from first to last; and that the Lord in all His dispensations is and will ever manifest Himself as a Sovereign. I have often thought of the dying thief. What a display of grace! One short prayer, one believing look, one act! Oh what a mighty act of living faith upon the crucified Son of God, and his soul was fit for paradise! What a death-blow to works and work-mongers! Simeon Stylites on his pillar for thirty-seven years, and the thief on the cross—how different their religion! Of the latter I would say with Hart— "Be this religion mine."

When I have sometimes felt my miserable carnality and earthly-mindedness, so that it has seemed impossible for me to be either going to or to be fit for heaven, I have, as it were, fallen back upon the dying thief. Where was his fitness, externally or internally? I have thus seen what grace can do by what grace has done; and I neither expect nor desire to be saved in any other way than the dying thief.

We may know, or think we know, a great deal, but really and truly in what a narrow compass does all vital religion lie? I am tried because I am day after day the same carnal and earthly wretch. No better, no better; no, never shall be in myself anything but a poor, filthy, fallen sinner. I have long believed the

doctrine of the non-sanctification of the old nature; but am now compelled to believe it whether I would or not. I might as well doubt whether ink were black or snow white, as doubt that my fallen nature is incurably corrupt. I must, therefore, ever despair of salvation from self or from anything short of the blood of the Lamb; and in teaching or preaching, dreams or doctrines, that lay the least stress on creature doings or duties, piety, or holiness, I look upon as I should a zealous defense of perpetual motion, squaring the circle, or aerial navigation.

I have attempted to speak a little here on the Oakham Lord's-day, confining myself, however, at present to exposition and prayer. I do not think what little I have hitherto done has at all hurt me. Still I hope to move cautiously, and not to attempt too much at first. I find this cold, damp weather much against me, and I am anxiously expecting the advent of a warmer and drier season.

I wish you could get a little rest. I think when medical advisers of acknowledged skill recommend rest, it is desirable to attend to their directions. I know, indeed, that it is a trial to be silent, but you know the adage, "for lack of a nail the shoe was lost." . . .

[The remainder of this letter is missing.]

April 4, 1848

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I hope I may say I am better. I preached here last Lord's-day morning, and went up and prayed in the meeting in the afternoon, and did not seem much fatigued by the exertion. As all tell me how much better I am looking, I cannot help believing what they say. I think, too, that I am getting flesh on my bones, which is perhaps more favorable than mere face-looks, which vary from day to day. . . . I would not have troubled you with all these details about my poor worthless body if I did not believe you wished really to know how matters stood with me.

I did not feel as I could wish on Lord's-day. William Tiptaft has been here, and other supplies, and they have quite daunted me as a preacher. I never heard William Tiptaft preach so well and with such weight and authority as this time. He was, indeed, most searching, and made such appeals to the conscience, that at times it seemed quite to thrill through me. Oh what a poor, ignorant, unprofitable, carnal wretch do I see and feel myself compared with some that I know! I see them growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and preaching with power and savor, while I feel a miserable cumber-ground, going back while they are going forward. I think once I had some life and feeling in my soul, and in the ministry; but now I seem to be destitute of all I value and esteem, as the only things that make and manifest a minister and a Christian.

But I can assure you, my dear friend, that I find it a much easier thing to get guilt on my conscience than to get it off again; and more easy to talk about and lament one's darkness and deadness, than get life and light into the soul. I told the friends on Lord's-day why the Lord had afflicted me, though I

could not enter into all the circumstances of the case. I can see mercy in it and mingled with it, and hope I shall one day see it more clearly. . . .

I have written to the friends at Eden Street to decline going there this year. I have two reasons for so doing.

1. My health, which is not sufficiently re-established for the exertion, anxiety, and excitement of London.
2. As I have been so long laid aside from my own people, I think it hardly right to leave them just as I am getting a little better. . .

Still, I hope to pay my Allington friends a visit in August.

Since I wrote part of this I have been among some of the friends, and to my surprise learned that I was very well heard on Lord's-day. I kept mumbling on with my own path, temptations, helps, and hindrances; and I suppose it suited some poor bewildered creatures. How different is preaching from what I once thought it was! All my vapouring knocked into nothing; and poor J. C. P. mumbling and stumbling like a fool.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 15, 1848

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I hope I may say I am through mercy better in health. I have partially resumed the work of the ministry, having commenced to preach once on the Lord's-day. I seemed shut up and embarrassed the first Lord's-day that I spoke here; but had somewhat more life, liberty, and feeling at Oakham. I seemed favored with a little of the spirit of prayer while going there by the coach, and also in the morning before preaching. It is a mercy to feel the heart sometimes a little softened and humbled, and life and power to accompany the word. I was in hopes that my long affliction would have done my soul more good, and produced more solid, spiritual, and visible fruit, internal and external, than I have yet experienced from it. It seems to be indeed a sad and lamentable thing to be continually chastened, and yet be after all an unfruitful branch and a vile cumber-ground!

A sickly body and a dreadfully diseased soul make a daily cross, and one sometimes hard to be borne. I cannot throw aside my religion, and yet how hard it is to keep it. To think, speak, act, and live as a Christian; to be one inwardly and outwardly; to be a true follower of the Lamb wherever He goes; to walk daily and hourly with godly fear in exercise; to conquer sin, master temptation, and live a life of faith in the Son of God—if this be true religion, how little I seem to have of it! I never could boast much of my exploits and attainments, or the great things I have done or mean to do; but now seem less disposed to do so than ever. Nothing short of an almighty miracle of mercy and grace can suit or save me! We often prate and prattle about sin and grace, faith and repentance, and Christ, and so on, when we

really know scarcely what the words mean. Many painful lessons and humbling cutting strokes are needed to teach us the A B C's of vital godliness; and perhaps all that we may know about eternal things, may be no more than what a babe a few days old knows of this life. It breathes, and cries, and nurses, and sleeps; and as regards divine things we may never here do much more.

I hope that the Lord may own and bless Thomas Godwin's word among you this time as He did before. I am very sure that all preaching without the power and blessing of the Lord upon it will be but empty breath. I never saw the littleness of man so clearly, and my own littleness in particular. I never felt so much my miserable ignorance, unfitness and insufficiency for the ministry. Indeed, I am and have nothing.

I hope Mrs. Wild will be comfortable at Allington. You must not, however, expect too much from one another. Man is a poor fallen creature, a selfish wretch, a very monster of iniquity. At least, I am. Nor does grace always reign even where it dwells. I very much esteem and respect her, and perhaps think better of her than she does of herself. But there is truth in what William Tiptaft says, that Christians are like cabbage-plants which flourish best when not too near. I am afraid of everybody, and afraid of none so much as of myself. No one has ever so much tried me, so much plagued me, or so much frightened me, as J. C. P., and no one, I am sure, but myself knows what reason I have to be afraid of him. . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

May 12, 1848

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—. . . I am much as I was in health, and do not seem to gain much strength at present. I still continue to preach once on the Lord's-day, and for the last three weeks have also spoken here on Thursday evenings. The friends at Oakham all seemed to hear well on Lord's-day. The day was fine, the congregation large, and I was enabled a little to speak on some vital things. My dear friend, we must plough pretty deep, if we are to get at the heart and conscience. Skimming the ground over will not do; but to be learning every day how vile we are is trying work. My preaching seems shut up into a narrow compass—sin and grace. I can assure you that when I was laid aside I seemed to have lost completely the power of preaching, and felt as shut up spiritually from a door of utterance as I was naturally. This made me a better hearer, for so far from thinking I could preach better than the ministers who supplied for me, I actually felt that I could not preach at all; and according to my feelings had not ten words to say upon any text, good or bad. I cannot describe how entirely all preaching gifts, if I have any, were as much taken away as if I had never opened my mouth, and I felt that even were I better in health, I could not get into a pulpit. I think I can see now this was not a bad thing for me, for when I heard Thomas Godwin and others, I was not measuring my abilities with theirs, and thinking how the great "I" would handle the text, but I really felt

I could not preach at all, even as to words and gifts, much more power and savor.

But I think I may tell my friend that since I have been able to stand up a little in the Lord's name I have not always been shut up, and have sometimes gone beyond the time when for my poor body's sake I ought to stop. Last Lord's-day morning I felt such a vile sinner that I could hardly help telling the Lord He would do right if He stopped my mouth. But it was not so, as I believe I may say without boasting (and how can such a vile sinner boast?), that I was well heard that day, and that the friends seemed melted and blessed. Oh that God's mercy and goodness would constrain me to live to His glory, would overcome that raging love of sin that so ensnares and captivates me, and make me and manifest me a Christian indeed! I cannot, oh, I cannot subdue and mortify my pride, and lust, and unbelief, and infidelity, and a thousand other monsters that, like the beast in Daniel's vision, are opening their mouths and saying, "Arise, devour much flesh."

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

May 18, 1848

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I believe you have long found, by painful experience, that it is impossible to do anything according to the word and will of God without trouble before, in, or after. To serve God in any way is a bitter-sweet. Sometimes conscience, sometimes Satan, sometimes the world, sometimes an evil heart, sometimes foe, and sometimes friend cause trouble. If we are let alone to have our own way, and sup up the east wind—*that* brings trouble; and if the Lord exercises our souls—*that* brings trouble. I do not mean to say that my troubles are so wonderfully deep and many, but pretty well all day long there is something as it were nagging and gnawing within. Love of sin, my poor body, family cares and anxieties, and a wicked, unbelieving heart, keep me from much rest or peace. I cannot, like the ungodly, rest in the world, and I cannot often rest in the Lord.

Oh, the amazing power of sin! I am sure that very few know its mighty power. I sometimes walk in the streets feeling and saying to myself, "Death in me, death in me;" and yet sin is active, strong, and lively as if I were to live a hundred years. It is really dreadful how eye, and ear, and tongue, and heart, are all alive after sin, like fish after a May-fly. I keep preaching man's dreadful corruption, and that nothing but grace through the blood of the Son of God, made known to the soul by the power of the Holy Spirit, can save such miserable sinners. My dear friend, we must plough deep, or we shall never get at the heart of the living family. I find that the worse I make them out to be, the better it suits them; and the more I draw from my own likeness, the more I hit theirs. But I cannot bring all out, only a hint now and then to the wise. A frail tabernacle and a wicked heart will I believe be more or less my daily plague until they are both laid in the grave.

I hope the Lord's-day at Allington and Tuesday at Calne may be days of blessing to your soul and those of the people. I trust I have had good times at

both places. I cannot at present preach more than once on the Lord's-day, and I am afraid I can venture to do no more should I come to Allington in July. Preaching tries my chest almost more than anything, and a little extra exertion would soon, I think, make me as bad as ever. . . . We have to live and learn; sometimes more of ourselves, sometimes more of others. To be quiet and meek, to think little of ourselves, to prize grace in others, to think very highly of and to cleave close to the Lord Jesus for everything, is far better than striving who is to be the greatest. Give my love to Mr. Warburton and any enquiring friends of the seed-royal at Calne. I wish you a real good day there.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

August 4, 1848

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—We arrived here safely, through mercy, on Tuesday evening, and found my mother looking pretty well. Friend D. is supplying at the chapel, but is not very well attended. I was there last evening, but there were very few hearers. Truth is pretty much fallen in the streets, as regards these three towns, with a population more than eighty thousand. It seems strange that there should be so little concern about their never-dying souls, until we feel what careless hardened wretches we ourselves are, except at times and seasons when eternal things lie with weight and power on our consciences. When my poor soul gets a little revived out of its dark and dead state, I wonder at my own previous state of carnality and worldliness. I need not then go far to find the cause of all men's carnality and carelessness, for where would I not, and where, indeed, do I not get when the Lord does not revive my poor dark soul? If we had no gracious dealings from the Lord, either in judgment or mercy, we would soon be a great deal worse than the professors whom we are so loud to condemn. A sense of these things stops my mouth, and makes the stones drop out of my hands, which, in times past, I have been ready enough to throw at others. I cannot say what I would not do, or what I would not be, were I left to myself; for I never hear of evil or error committed by professor or profane which I do not find working within my heart, and a great deal worse too; for no man ever did, or ever could, carry out in word and act what our imagination can breed and sit upon until hatched, like a serpent upon its eggs. It is a mercy when our eggs are crushed before they are hatched, for, depend upon it, an adder would come out of every one of them!

What a mercy it is to have our hard hearts softened and blessed at times, and to hate and abhor those vile things which at other times our fallen nature so lusts after! What a paradox are we! What a bundle of contradictions! We love what we hate, and hate what we love; we follow what we flee, and flee what we follow. Sin is our sweetest, and sin is our bitterest morsel; God is our greatest friend and most dreaded enemy. But I must not run on with my contradictions, or I shall fill up my sheet with them. You have got both the riddle and the key locked up in your heart.

As there was a very great attendance at Allington I was induced to preach twice on Lord's-day. I think I never saw the chapel so crowded. It was, I think on the whole, my best day; but I have not been much favored at Allington this time. I had so many outer-court hearers that they seemed almost to stifle any soft or tender feeling; and I was several times led rather to hammer away at Wiltshire profession than feed the lambs.

I am much as I was in health. That great blessing, good health, I never expect to enjoy again. I only could wish that my various trials, exercises, and afflictions were more blessed to my soul, but I have lived to prove that nothing but almighty grace can do the soul good.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1849)

February 23, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—It is a mercy amid all one's coldness, deadness, and hardness sometimes to feel a little revival, and to be blessed in speaking of the Lord's people. It encourages us to go on in spite of all opposition within and without. I think more of the value and blessedness of the preached gospel than I once did. It often stirs up prayer, shows where we have been wandering, revives the soul, points to Jesus and His precious blood, and encourages us to believe that where sin did and does abound, there grace does much more abound. And, I believe, where the preached gospel is little valued, it arises from deadness and carnality. It is, I believe, a great mercy when the heart of the preacher is enlarged and his mouth opened to set forth the truth as it is in Jesus, and the ear and heart of the people enlarged and opened to receive and feel it. It will detect many snares, make the soul cry at times, "Search me, O Lord, and try me," and give now and then a little strength to fight against besetting sins and temptations, as well as lead the poor soul at times to the fountain once opened for all sin and uncleanness. I once thought I really would get better before I died; more holy and pure, and strong and spiritual. But I find that these things are only at times and seasons, as the Lord is pleased to work in the soul to will and to do of His good pleasure; and that left to ourselves we are, and ever shall be, sinners of the deepest and blackest dye.

But religion and experience, and all that regards the work of grace in the soul will ever be a mystery; and we not only can know only just as much as we are divinely taught, but seem only then to know it when under the feelings and influences. I can recollect having seen and felt such and such things, and may, perhaps, be able to describe them; but how different this is from being under their power and influence. Then they seem to be really known, and only really then. . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 8, 1849

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—You will be very sorry to hear that our poor friend M'Kenzie is dangerously ill. He broke a blood vessel on Saturday last, and brought up much blood, and had a return of the same on Monday. The doctor says it is from the lungs, which makes it all the more dangerous. He may not be immediately removed; but I would greatly fear the ultimate event, as such attacks generally terminate in consumption even when not quickly fatal. The Lord, however, mercifully blessed his soul, after the first attack, with His presence, and that, after all, is everything. Our time here in this world must at the very longest be short; and what is the longest or most prosperous life without the Lord's blessing? When we feel what vile sinners and dreadful backsliders we are, and have been, it almost makes us despair of a blessing. Indeed, we could not entertain the least hope of one were it not for free and sovereign grace—but this opens a door of hope for the vilest and worst. How valuable, how indispensable a blessing seems to be when sickness makes death stare us, as it were, in the face! How empty and worthless really are all human cares and anxieties, as well as all human hopes and pleasures, when viewed in the light of a vast and endless eternity!

I have not been very well of late, having suffered from my old complaint, cold on the chest. I generally suffer from it every spring, especially when the winds are cold and searching. It much confines me to the house at present; but I still go on preaching as usual. I never have been attended better since I was settled here, and especially since the weather has been dry and fine. We have many country hearers, and short days, bad weather, and dirty roads are hindrances to their attendance.

I do not see any probability of my being able to be at Allington more than the first three Lord's-days in May. Poor M'Kenzie's illness will make a sad gap in the supplies. He was to be at Leicester in April, and to follow me at Eden Street chapel in August. What they will do at the latter place, I know not. I would not be surprised if they should wish me to stay another Lord's-day, and then it will be, perhaps, a question with me whether I ought not to stay in preference to coming down to Allington. When I dropped hint of coming to Allington on my way to Abingdon for August 12, I, of course, could not contemplate such an event as M'Kenzie's illness. Ministers have to consider not merely their own feelings and wishes, but the good of the churches.

Mr. Harrison has already applied for me to help them at Leicester, and I would like to do so, if I could see my way, or procure an acceptable supply here. I find it more difficult now to leave home than ever, there being a greater unwillingness among the people that I should go from home. Churches, like individuals, are selfish, and rarely consider or consult each other's profit and convenience.

How our friends and acquaintances seem continually falling around us! R. Dredge lies in Allington graveyard, and J. M'Kenzie may soon be numbered

among the departed. Such things have a voice, could we but hear it, and be stirred up by it. It seems to say, "you, be also ready." But what can we do to prepare ourselves for the solemn hour? Nothing. The God of all grace can alone, then and there, by appearing to us, and for us, enable us to say, "Come, Lord Jesus!" But it is a mercy when deep and solemn considerations about death and eternity have some effect in loosening the strong bands of sin and the world, and lead on to that spiritual-mindedness which is life and peace.

I doubt not that the low price of corn, conjoined with the bad yield, sometimes tries your mind. But you will have enough of "the thick clay," doubtless, to carry you honorably through. And why need you covet more? We shall always have enough for needs, but never for covetousness.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 26, 1849

My dear Tiptaft—I consider poor Mrs. C.'s case a very trying one, and one very difficult indeed to pronounce any decided opinion upon. Say, for instance, that we gave it as our decided advice that she should stay away from chapel; that would seem shunning the cross. Say, that we advised her still to go, and she should lose her life in consequence, painful reflections might be cast upon us. Such dreadful brutality we rarely hear of—indeed, I might say, such murderous proceedings. I think, however, there is a decided difference between doing evil and forbearing to do well. Thus, I think, she might resolutely deny to go to church, whatever the consequence. *There*, I think, my mind is pretty clear. But whether she might not abstain for a season, during his present dreadful madness, I might call it, from going to chapel, is another matter. Christians, when persecuted in one place, might flee to another. Here was an allowed declining persecution by flight; but, on the other hand, God, we know, can make a way of escape even by people persevering to go. Look at D—, how her husband stood with a knife at the door the morning she was to be baptized, to stab her, and how she crept out at the window, was baptized, and how all was overruled, as we hope, for his eventual good.

A note which fell into my hands this morning gives an account of a poor woman much in Mrs. C.'s situation. I think much must depend on the state of her mind; what she feels led to do, what promises the Lord has applied to her soul, what faith and strength she has in exercise, how her own conscience is exercised in the matter. It is so hard to lay down rules of action in these matters, for what one can do another cannot. Peter, who once denied his Master, could afterwards be crucified with his head downwards. Nicodemus comes first by night, and afterwards goes boldly into Pilate's presence. Elijah flees before Jezebel, and then meets Ahab in Naboth's vineyard. David kills Goliath, and then flees before Absalom. Thus, good men act differently as faith is weak or strong; and we would not counsel any man to walk on the waves unless we knew he had Peter's Master near, and Peter's faith in

exercise. Thus I feel slow to offer advice, or give counsel in this painful and difficult matter. We feel, however, encouraged to hope the Lord will appear for her from the promise He has given her.

We had a church meeting here yesterday. Two candidates were fully received, Miss B, and Mrs. L. They were both well received, but the latter particularly. Oh, with what sweetness and power did she speak! I never myself was so melted with hearing an experience, and I am sure there was not a dry eye among us. I did not know I had such a hearer. She has been, and is, a most deeply-tried woman; bodily pain, until lately, deep poverty, and soul trouble have sunk her very low; but lately she has been so much blessed in her soul, especially yesterday fortnight and the following Tuesday. Besides this lately, she was much blessed in her soul some years ago. I do not think we ever had a candidate before the church so much in the present savor of things. Others may have as good an experience, but they did not come before the church in the savor, blessedness, and power of it. It seemed quite to encourage me in the work; she could speak of what she had felt under this and that preaching, and how it abode with her and what it did for her, so clearly and sweetly. She has great trials about coming to chapel, having opposition at home, and an afflicted body. She has been a hearer eight or nine years.

R. S. has been blessed again in her soul. She thought she was dying, but had no fear. She has a great desire to see you. Some of the friends, I think J. C. among them, have seen, and think well of her.

Mrs. L.'s testimony has much encouraged us all. I felt I would not care for the speeches of a hundred enemies if the Lord would condescend so to bless the word.

If spared, I hope to baptize the three candidates (D.V.) April 8. Mrs. L. spoke of how she heard you on baptism. What a power there is in true religion, and what can be compared to it! but how it is got at only through trials and exercises! My heart cleaves more and more to the power. All without is worthless—a mere tithing of mint, anise, and cummin. Mrs. B. speaks highly of Mrs. L.'s consistency.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 24, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—We were well attended at Leicester. Many, I am told, could not get into the chapel in the evening. I hope it was a good day, as I had a spirit of prayer on the Saturday, and a text came with some sweetness to my mind; and I had some liberty and sweetness in speaking. There is quite a spirit of hearing there.

I baptized here the Lord's-day previous, and the candidates were, I hear, much blessed in their souls. One was so blessed in her soul that she could not sleep that night, and could do nothing but bless and praise God for two or

three days. So that we have some little evidence that the Lord has not forsaken us, whatever men may say or surmise. Indeed, it matters little what men may say or think for or against us. If God is for us, it matters not who is against us; and if God is against us, it matters not who is for us. My mind is much more here than it used to be. Everything cries aloud, "Cease from man," who cannot make one of his own hairs, nor ours, black nor white. How much better is it, instead of seeking man's smile, or fearing man's frown, to be committing our way to the Lord, to be seeking His presence and smiles, to desire to know and do His will, and live and walk in His fear! What support under trial, deliverance from temptation, comfort in affliction, submission in sickness, or peace in death, can man give us? What blind unbelieving fools, then, to be looking so much to the creature and so little to the Creator!

We have a poor girl dying in this town, and it is, indeed, marvelous to see what a work God has done for her soul. I saw her in her trouble and distress, and have seen her since the Lord blessed her soul, which He has repeatedly done. All fear of death is gone, and her soul seems filled with peace. She has had convictions for years, and been a constant hearer, but nothing decided until lately. What a wonderful thing grace is, both in its Fountain and streams! Well may we contend for nothing else, for what else can save, suit, or bless a poor guilty, fallen sinner?

I am much as usual, sometimes feeling very poorly, and then again a little better. Our poor clay tabernacle, what a burden it is to us from sickness and sin!

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 2, 1849

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I reached home safely, through mercy, on the Friday, to dinner, and found my dear wife and little family pretty well.

I preached at Wellingborough Thursday evening, 24th. If "like priest like people," be a true saying, I would fear there was not much life, power, or feeling in the congregation; and I felt but little in my own soul. My words seemed to rebound upon me almost as if I were throwing balls against a brick wall. Good, however, might still be done, as our feelings are in these matters by no means infallible marks. I would be sorry to set up my feelings as a tribunal from which there is no appeal; though we cannot help being to a certain extent guided and influenced by them. I consider this a nice and difficult point. I have generally found that when I have gone contrary to my feelings as regards men and things, I have erred, and more or less suffered in consequence. We may be thus slighting the secret leadings and impressions of the Holy Spirit. But, again, we may be under wrong impressions which a subsequent experience may correct. In this, as in all other matters, wisdom is profitable to direct. In all our movements and actings we need grace to teach, guide and direct; and without it we are sure to err.

My visit to Allington seems now almost like a dream. I would hope, however, that all the effects have not so passed away. A minister should leave a sweet savor of heavenly things wherever he goes. If he does not he will make the people worse instead of better. When the Holy Spirit makes our bodies His temple He will cast forth some rays of His indwelling presence. Christians will either spiritualize or carnalize each other; will stir up one another to good or evil. When we are ourselves a little spiritual, we are grieved to see the children of God, and especially those whom we love, worldly and carnal. This makes us get away from them, and in solitude seek the Lord, feeling no pleasure nor rest outside of Him. Time and experience correct many errors, and especially in religion. I am daily more and more convinced that it is a secret work carried on in private between God and the soul. The conscience is the grand battlefield where the conflict is fought. Condemnation and justification in all their various branches and workings are there felt and known. And unless we live much alone, and are more or less continually engaged with this inward communion of heart, our religion withers away. "Commune with your own heart on your bed, and be still." I only wish I could live a more separate life, and have eyes, ears, and heart more separate from the world lying in wickedness.

The friends here consider me looking better than when I left; and, indeed, I feel so myself. It always suits me best when I can get air and exercise. But I often find when I am, as it were, congratulating myself with being better, and so forgetting to die daily, I get a pull-back; and so now some of my old pains and sensations admonish me not to be high-minded, but fear. Like escaped greyhounds, how madly and eagerly we rush afield when the hand that checks seems a little to slacken its hold! But evening comes, and the old collar is slipped over our necks; and perhaps a beating is added for our wild roamings.

A head-ache or a sinking market, or a sense of guilt and bondage, or a solemn view of eternity, or a remembrance of past backslidings and sins, or a slip with the tongue or feet, or some unaccountable depression of spirits—each or any or all put the feet in the stocks. I am well persuaded that without exercises the soul cannot be kept alive; that is, in a healthy or spiritual sense. He who began must carry on; He who kindled must keep alive; He who is the Author must also be the Finisher of faith. This we are well persuaded of in our judgment; but we have to learn it in daily experience. And, I believe, it is often to us a cause of inward condemnation that we are what we are; that we have not more life and feeling, more prayerfulness and watchfulness, more knowledge of and communion with the blessed Jesus. We condemn graceless professors, and would rather open our lips no more upon religion than speak like them; and yet how much we really resemble them! Indeed, we differ from them only as far as our souls are kept alive by exercises and gracious influences and operations. All things that we see and hear, the very necessary business of life, and all our relationships in the world, only tend to deaden and harden our souls. And though we can leave neither our families nor the world, and must continue in the calling where God has placed us, yet we shall ever find it our wisdom and mercy to live much alone as regards our souls.

In this point you are much favored. You have fields and downs, quiet meadows and isolated walks, where you may think, meditate, and pray. And

as these fields have formerly witnessed your sighs and tears, so may they witness your blessings and praises until the green sod covers your body in that little spot which many gracious feet have trod, and where sleep our friends, R. Dredge, poor farmer Wild, and others, that we have been united to in life, and from whom we hope death will not separate us.

We may have worldly troubles and worldly mercies, and our hearts may be often depressed by the one, and carried away by the other; but, after all, there is nothing really enduring and satisfying but grace in its Fountain and in its streams.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 7, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—It seems that troubles and trials still await me, and what is to be their end or outcome, I know not. I was thinking the other day that either Satan must hate me very much, or that there must be something in me very wrong, for many seem to rise up against me.

And having so much besides in me which causes condemnation and fear, and the Comforter who would relieve my soul being far from me, makes me wonder how the scene will end. What adds to the trial is my public situation as a minister and editor of the *Gospel Standard*. Were I obscure and unknown, like many private Christians whom I envy, how many trials should I be free from! But so many eyes are fixed upon me, some for good and some for evil. I have so many enemies as well as friends; and I find it so difficult, either by pen or tongue, to express myself so as to be free from misunderstanding, misrepresentation, or cavil, that my way seems completely hedged up. But in the midst of all these trials I trust there are some mercies. The Lord has not withheld that spirit of prayer and supplication which I trust He first gave me more than twenty years ago, and to His throne of grace He from time to time draws me.

I have still encouraging testimonies that the work is going on at Oakham. A woman came to see me on Tuesday afternoon who has been a hearer ever since the chapel was opened. The Lord quickened and blessed her soul many years ago, but for the last seven or eight years she has been in a lukewarm profession, with only just enough life to keep her out of the world, and burdened with its cares and anxieties. But within these last few months the Lord has set to His hand the second time, and wrought very powerfully and blessedly in her soul, first bringing her to the deepest self-abasement and sorrow for her long state of backsliding, and then manifesting His mercy and love to her soul. She could hardly speak for tears and blessing the Lord for His mercies. It was not altogether under the word, though she said she has heard with new ears the last few months; but it seems that the work was helped on by the word. She will (D.V.) come before the church at our next meeting, when I doubt not she will be well received, and I hope to baptize her on my last Lord's-day at Oakham.

I am, you know, slow to receive what are called "blessings," especially when said to have been under my preaching; but these cases at Oakham have been so clear, and there has been that savor and power attending the testimony which the friends have given, that I could not but believe them, they have come with such weight to my conscience.

Amid all this, when I look within I feel much to condemn me. My past backslidings rise up to my view, with many sins and temptations, besides my continual propensity to carnality and folly. And then, when these attacks come from without, it makes me sink, as if the Lord had a strong controversy with me, and that after all my enemies might be right and I might be fearfully and perhaps wholly wrong. Why have I so many opponents? Other ministers pass along untouched, but book after book comes out against me, as if they would sink me outright. If this be the price paid for many hearers such as at Allington and elsewhere, methinks it is very dear.

When, after hearing Mrs. L.'s testimony at the church-meeting at Oakham, I was walking from the upper vestry, I think, to the pulpit, I felt and said to myself, "If the Lord bless so my word to the people, let me go on preaching, I shall not mind a hundred —s." But, alas! how soon the heart sinks again when trouble arises, and I could not help wishing I had lived and died in the Church of England. I thought I might have been quiet there, and need not have preached at all. I was struck last evening with Psalm 11. I cannot say that either was applied to my soul, or that I would or did call my adversaries wicked. But the drift of the Psalm struck me as peculiarly forcible. We must be tried if we are the Lord's, and when our trials bring us to His feet, we may hope they may do us good. I do not wish, however, to burden you with my trials, though I know and feel you are and always have been a kind and sympathizing friend.

I hope the Lord may be with you at Allington this time, and bless you in your own soul and in the ministry of the word to the hearts of the people.

I think (D.V.) of going to Lakenheath for Lord's-day, August 12. You know how desirous they have been for me to go there, and having that day to spare, I seemed led to spend it in that way.

I had a pleasant and I hope a profitable visit at Allington this time. But if I had my encouragements there, and many hearers and friends, I have had since and have now my ballast. . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 19, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—We had a church-meeting here, on Lord's-day, and received two candidates for baptism. They were both well received, being well known to the friends and hearers almost ever since I came to Oakham; but one gave a blessed testimony, being now in the sweet enjoyment of the love of God, so that she could speak of the Lord having

blessed her soul not once or twice, but again and again even to last Tuesday. She has been a backslider in heart many years, though a most consistent woman; but with what self-abhorrence does she now speak, and did, at the church-meeting, with the tears of sorrow and love mingled together.

I went to K— yesterday, and saw both her and the woman whom I baptized last, who so melted us all at the church-meeting before I left home. I found also two other gracious people there—constant hearers at the chapel—one a woman whose soul the Lord wonderfully blessed some years ago in a severe illness, but now much tried and harassed. Since the Lord has revived the work here I have seen more of the friends, and believe when you come here you do not preach to stocks and stones. Amid all our darkness and bondage there is, I believe, life and feeling in the souls of some, and I am sure, that next to feeling life in his own soul, there is nothing so encouraging and so drawing, as it were, life out of a preacher, as seeing there is life in the hearers.

I certainly felt some life and power when in Wilts, but since then seem to have well-near lost it all. On Lord's-day morning I really could not find one grain of grace in my soul, and I think sometimes I am one of the greatest hypocrites that ever walked, and all I feel and talk about is but pretense. Sometimes my mind is filled with infidelity, as if the Bible and religion were all an invention; then again with unbelief as to my own state and standing, and then with all manner of hypocrisy and falsehood. So that when one's poor soul gets a little respite from the devil's snares in one way—lust and filthiness—there are snares and temptations on the other. There is either filthiness of the flesh, or filthiness of spirit, and we hardly know which is the worse.

But these things we must know experimentally, that we may dive into people's hearts and penetrate beneath that crust of self-righteousness and ignorance which hides so many from themselves. Men's motives, and thoughts, and feelings, are laid bare to us by knowing ourselves, and we are sure there is nothing really good in any, but what God Himself puts there by His grace; and thus while we value at its due worth all human pretensions, we put a great price upon everything commended to our conscience as really of grace; and thus by these exercises we can not only draw a clearer line between people in a congregation, but also more sift and separate the hearts of God's people and speak more to their comfort and encouragement.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

July 17, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I never came to London more unwillingly. I left Oakham very poorly, and weak in body and tried in mind, and called myself a thousand fools to have made the engagement. But hitherto the Lord has helped me, and I hope the poor and the needy may have reaped some little benefit from my trials and exercises. I hope the Lord was with me on Lord's-day, and I was enabled to speak pretty plainly upon

the difference between exercised and unexercised persons, whether ministers, deacons, or hearers. I see this—that we must give up all idea of being what is called generally useful. There are very few children of God anywhere, and of these very few who are really tried and exercised, and know what they hear. There are but few who are really panting after heavenly blessings, or know the difference between the letter and the power. A 'doctrinal' sermon about Jesus Christ will suit them far better than a real experimental one fetched out of the furnace. However, all we can do is to deliver our conscience, and speak what we know and feel to be true, and leave it in the hands of the Lord, who has promised that His word shall not return to Him void. There may be a few poor needy souls to whom it may be blessed, and that is all our reward and comfort as regards the ministry.

I think I have not felt so strong in speaking for months, I might almost say years, as I felt on Lord's-day. Though the place was very full, my voice seemed to ring through it like a bell. The preceding Lord's-day it seemed like speaking through water. But I had some life and feeling on Sunday; and that, you know, makes a wonderful difference even with our natural voice. What poor creatures we are without the Lord! And with Him we seem able to thresh the mountains! It seemed to raise up a little gratitude that the Lord had so far restored my health and enabled me to speak.

I hope you have found the Lord with you at Oakham and Stamford. I hope there is a work going on at Oakham, and that we shall have more come forward to declare what God has done for their souls; but it will be sure to make Satan rage, and stir up new trials and temptations.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

July 24, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I believe on the main points of experimental truth and vital godliness we see eye to eye, and feel heart to heart, and this makes us cleave to each other in affection and esteem. I am quite sick of the generality of Calvinistic professors, and I believe we may read their charter in Ezekiel 34—especially the ministers. But I leave them. Time and circumstances will make many things clear which now are dark and mysterious, and I wish neither their company, nor their standing, nor their spirit. When Osbourn's letter came out against me, these words were almost continually in my lips, "O Lord, fight my battles, and bring me off more than conqueror." All their strife and bitterness only give me more errands to a throne of grace and stir up my soul, which is so sadly prone to rest on its lees. Osbourn's scurrility, pride, and bitterness seem to excite general disgust. Are these the fruits of gospel liberty, and such manifestations as few have been favored with since the times of the apostles? Judge such men by their fruits; and what is their religion really worth? The blessed Lord did not speak in vain, "By their fruits you shall know them." Men may come in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. "Not every one who says, Lord, Lord," etc.

I am glad you saw Mrs. —; she is a choice and well taught woman, and I think I never call upon her without seeing the grace of God shining forth in her; and I think I could show you some who attend the chapel at Oakham who can give as good an account of themselves as she, particularly some who have joined the church lately.

It is a consolation and encouragement to me to believe and feel that the Lord has a people at Stamford and Oakham to whom, from time to time, He blesses the word. Men may rage and storm, and try to crush me as a worm under their feet, but if the Lord blesses His word through me, what more, as a minister, can I desire?

I am well attended here. I think I never saw the chapel fuller than on Lord's-day evening. They were standing wherever they could, in the aisles and about the doors. But it was not a good day with me either time, and I seemed to have neither life and feeling in my soul, nor a door of utterance with my lips.

I believe your remarks about the real hearers are quite true. It is not the great body of seat-holders, but the unknown in holes and corners. Our hire, like Jacob's must be "the speckled and spotted," "the brown and the ring-straked;" all the snowy fleeced are Laban's.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

August 31, 1849

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I was so poorly on Saturday night, and coughed so much during the night, that I almost despaired of being able to preach at all. I was sharply tried, for as I seemed to see the Lord's hand so plainly in my going to Lakenheath, it would have been very trying and mysterious if I could not preach, and I knew it would not only be a disappointment to the congregation, but would open the mouth of my enemies. I got up, however, and when soon after breakfast the gigs and vehicles came pouring in, I felt I must preach, or at least make the attempt, come what would. I think if ever I looked to the Lord alone for strength and help, I did that morning. When I went up to the chapel it was so crowded I could scarcely get through to the pulpit. I read and prayed very short, and my cough kept interrupting me, so that I quite dreaded the sermon; but when I came to preach I found my voice strengthened, and I was mercifully helped through, beyond my expectation in every sense of the word.

There were people there from twenty miles' distance, and the number of the vehicles very far exceeded that at Allington. I preached again in the afternoon, and my voice seemed clearer and stronger than in the morning. The people were standing back nearly as far as the trees, and yet my voice seemed able to reach them. On Tuesday evening I preached again to a full chapel. I came home on Wednesday. Tiptaft preached for me on Thursday, but I was so unwell I could not go out to hear him. I preached, however, on Lord's-day here twice, and had so good a congregation that I thought there was some mistake, and that there was an impression Tiptaft was to preach.

I hope I may one day see clearly why many painful things have been permitted. I think, indeed, I am getting more light upon them. The Lord has delivered me from some very trying temptations, and seems of late to be drawing me nearer to Himself. When we are under guilt and condemnation, all things seem against us, and there is a fleeing when none pursues. All things in providence and in grace have a veil over them, and we see nothing clearly. But as the Lord draws us out of these feelings by drawing us nearer to Himself as the God of all grace, light begins to dawn upon the soul, and many perplexities are cleared up. It is a blessed thing to be drawn out of the world and things hateful and evil, by tasting that the Lord is gracious. It is the power of sin which needs breaking, and this can be only by being brought under the power of grace.

I have had many trials, afflictions, persecutions, and temptations; and I hope these have all worked together for my soul's profit. It is not often at the time that we see the good of our trials and afflictions. But what poor useless beings we would be without them—a burden and a nuisance to the children of God! I was thinking the other day that there were only two things really worth living for; to be blessed ourselves, and be made a blessing to others. Without this, what is life? To eat so many pounds of bread and meat, drink so many tumblers of water, sleep so many hours—is this life? But to be blessed and made a blessing, to have the hope of immortality in one's bosom, and for some of God's children to bless the Lord that we ever lived—this is worth living for, and dying for too. Let us live twenty years longer, it will only be the old scene over again, and we with less strength to bear it. The world, sin, and Satan will not change. But if by living we are made instruments in the Lord's hands of spiritual good to His people, this will be a blessing for eternity. This may reconcile us to our trials, if through them we are made a blessing to the heirs of glory.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 18, 1849

My dear Mr. Beecher—From various causes I have not been able to attend earlier to your kind and friendly letter.

I think sometimes that Satan, seeing the Lord has blessed my ministry, is doing all he can to overthrow it. The doctrine and the experience cannot be overthrown; and therefore attempts are being made to overthrow the author. And what more ready way than to say that he borrows what he preaches? But surely they ought to point out whence it is borrowed. I have not read nor, indeed, seen poor old Osbourn's book, but I am told it is a shameful production, and full of scurrility and abuse. But how little he can know of me, or of my experience. When he was at my house he seemed to have no inclination to talk upon experimental things, nor did he ask me one word about my experience. Nor do I believe he has read any of my writings. The poor old man was annoyed and disappointed because I would not praise up his writings, which I could not do when I found him so different a character from what I anticipated. And when the remarks in the *Standard* appeared, it

incensed him all the more. I believe, therefore, in my own mind, his letter to me was written altogether out of spite and revenge. It is not likely, therefore, that God will own and bless a book written from such motives and in such a spirit.

I cannot now sit down and write you an experience spread over more than twenty-two years. My experience is incorporated in my sermons. And if you cannot see nor feel that to be genuine and my own, it is not all I could write that could do it. I have felt guilt and bondage; have had sweet and blessed views of Christ; have seen His glory by the eye of faith; have felt Him precious to my soul; and, did time and space permit, could tell you where, when, and how. But you will find my experience in my sermons, for I feel what I preach, and preach what I feel; and this makes them blessed to God's children, and stirs up the malice of Satan. If I were to be satisfied with a dry doctrinal religion, I would be let alone. But because I contend for the power, some seem almost as if they would pull me to pieces. And if I know nothing of experience, why do I contend for it? Why did I not stay in the Church of England, where I might, but for conscience' sake, have been this day, without let or molestation?

But I hope the Lord will bring me safely through all this strife of tongues. I mean to keep quiet (D.V.), and let them say what they will. All their attacks only give me fresh errands to the throne of grace.

Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

September 20, 1849

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry,

It is a mercy that where the Lord has begun a good work He will carry it on, and bring it to perfection. If it were not so, what hope could there be for such poor, dark, dead wretches, who can no more revive themselves, than they can quicken their own souls? And when we have no trials or temptations, or at least not heavy ones, how soon we sink down into carnality and death. I dare say you find that nothing past, either trials or mercies, can do for the present; and that you need the Lord to set to His hand as much as if you had never known and felt anything of a vital nature.

I am, through mercy, better than I was after my Abingdon visit, but not so well as I could wish. I was remarkably well this time last year, and I then thought I was almost as well as before my illness in 1847. But I fear this will never be the case, and that I shall never know good health again. I still, however, continue to preach as usual, and walk out most days when the weather is tolerably fine. At present we have been mercifully preserved from cholera, having had only one case in the town, and that caught passing, it is supposed, through London. At a village near Oakham it has been rather severe. I hope the Lord may mercifully preserve us and our families from that dreadful disease, which has already carried off so many thousands. It has been very bad at Plymouth and Devonport; but through mercy those dear to us have hitherto escaped at Stoke. I think our Government very

culpable in not having a day of national humiliation. Ahab and the city of Nineveh are quite scriptural precedents. As we are afflicted naturally and nationally, why should we not repent naturally and nationally? Some of my friends do not see with me in this matter, but I think my views are scriptural.

Poor dear M'Kenzie is at rest. There will appear (D.V.) a short account of his last days in the next Standard. He is taken away in the prime of life and, we might say, usefulness. Truly may we say, "God's thoughts are not our thoughts," etc. His death throws more labor and responsibility upon me; but for some time before his death I had most of the Standard work to do, and I have long had to endure the chief responsibility. I hardly know where to look for help to fill his place; and must, I suppose, for the present, at least, bear the undivided burden. It is an office that requires some judgment and experience, as well as some degree of literary qualification, and it is hard to find all these in one individual.

My mind has of late been more settled. That matter troubles me but little now. I believe it is a legalized gospel such as the Galatians were bewitched with; and we see from it similar fruits—"biting and devouring one another." I hope to go on in my own path not moved by what is said for me or against me. It is through "evil report," as well as "good report," that ministers must pass. It is a mercy when the former does not cast down and the latter does not puff up.

You have had most beautiful weather for the harvest, and I hope have had a good crop. But prices are ruinous to the grower, and I fear will continue so. All things seem out of course. Thousands cut off by cholera, illness generally prevalent, much distress everywhere. And abroad still greater calamities. What a mercy amid all the turmoil and strife to have eternal things to look to—a kingdom that cannot be moved! In twenty years, today's price of oil will probably mean little to you. But it will much matter whether

your soul is in heaven or hell. When the cold winds are whistling over your grave, or the warm sun resting on it, what will it matter

whether sheep sold badly or well at the market? Could we realize eternal things more, we would be less anxious about temporal things. "So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." It is only our unbelief and carnality which fetter us down to the poor things of time and sense. "Lord, increase our faith."

Through mercy we are all well, and this is a great mercy, for the town is full of sickness, chiefly small-pox, and many, especially children, have died. I consider ourselves favored in having a healthy locality to dwell in.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1850 - 1857)

March 25, 1850

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—My, I can assure you, has not arisen from lack of friendship and affection. Since I have had so many enemies and so many 'treacherous friends', I have only more valued and cleaved to my few real friends. But writing is to me a great burden generally, and thus I keep putting it off until at last conscience compels me to make the attempt. But this morning, something I hope more than conscience, urges me to drop you a few lines in answer to your kind and affectionate letter. . .

I am glad you were comfortable at Leicester. Preaching is very pleasant when the Lord is present, but when all is dark and barren it is indeed hard work. I often wish I was anything else, or that I had more grace and qualifications for it. I had but a poor day yesterday, and seemed unable to get at anything which had dew and savor in it. I have so much opposition without and within. On the one side the Pharisees, and on the other the Antinomians; who are the worse, I can scarcely tell.

And then so much opposition within, so many temptations, lusts, and follies, so many snares and besetting sins, and a vile heart, dabbling in all carnality and filth. I am indeed exercised by "sin and grace", as you say. I liked the expression, it suited me well. Sin or grace seems continually uppermost—striving and lusting against one another. What workings, checks, lustings, sorrowings, fallings, risings, defeats, and victories. What a battlefield is the heart, and there the fight is lost and won. When sin prevails, mourning over its wounds and slaughter; when grace and godly fear beat back temptation, a softening into gratitude. Thus I keep hammering on at the old strain—soul exercise; and this sometimes meets with the experience of the poor and needy, and we see eye to eye and feel heart to heart in the things of God.

I have never wished nor cared for my sermons to be published, but if the Lord condescends to bless them, to Him be all the glory. I have never lifted up my little finger to spread or circulate them after I have corrected the proofs to prevent errors. Nor do my friends take any trouble about them more than myself. None of my people recommend them or circulate them. They are what they are; and are cast upon the waters and left to the Lord to do as He pleases with them.

Thus, if they are blessed it is of Him. And I think, sometimes, how hard the devil has been trying for years to poison people's minds for fear any good should be done by them.

I baptized Miss N. on the 17th.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

December 30, 1850

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—You must not measure my feelings towards you by the frequency of my letters. Letter-writing to me is usually quite a task; unless there is something which I much wish to communicate, I go to it as a schoolboy to his homework. But I have felt for the last few days desirous to drop you a few lines.

I hope on the whole we had a pretty good day yesterday. I felt a little of the spirit of prayer on Saturday evening, and I trust we had a good morning. One of the friends, with whom I have a good union, told me afterwards what a spirit of prayer she had had through the week, that we might have the Lord with us yesterday, and she had found her prayer answered. Our old friend at Trowbridge says, when he is shut up, the friends often hear him best. That however is not my experience, nor do I think it is yours. When I have some life and feeling in my soul, I generally find it is so with the Lord's people; and when I am dark and shut up, they are often so too. At those seasons I can get into nothing and describe nothing, and therefore how can I reach their hearts and consciences? The well is deep, and I have nothing to draw with; and then what water is there for minister or people? I do hope there is some little work going on here. One candidate was well received, and we have two others coming forward, whom I feel some union with.

At Stamford too, I had more life and feeling on the 22nd—more than I have had since I came home. I told the friends I hoped it might be the dawn of a better day; that was the meaning, if not the words. I am, I hope, also somewhat better in health, and have less irritation about my chest. The Lord is good, if we could but trust Him.

You are, I dare say, exercised about your Liverpool engagement. Well, you don't know what you are going there for. It is not the seen, but the unseen, whom the Lord often blesses—some poor creature, cut up with sin and sorrow, who has neither pew nor seat, place nor name, among the great folks. Look at our large towns, Sheffield, Birmingham, Bristol, etc., what a state they are in. The only time I ever was at Liverpool, and heard preaching, there were less than twenty present, that was on a week evening. But there may be scattered individuals, who may creep in, whom you don't know. I believe you would sooner be going among our friends in Wilts.

To by far the greater part, the Gospel, it is to be feared, is but the savor of death unto death. I am more and more convinced of this. We, who know a little of ourselves, need not wonder that men are what they are. What are we ourselves when left to our fallen nature? When I have felt my own carnality and aversion to spiritual things, I have ceased to wonder at the general ungodliness. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 7, 1851

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—Before the February number of *The*

Gospel Standard came out, I saw that I had laid myself open to attack upon the point which you so kindly and faithfully name, and sent a partial correction to the office; but the letter being delayed to the morning mail, the *Standard* was already on the printing machine.

My meaning was, that the body of Christ was not natural in the sense of deriving any taint of corruption through natural generation. I did mean that it was not animal, nor strictly identical with ours; but that it was sanctified in the very moment of conception, and was therefore intrinsically holy. I have thought that the supernatural generation of the dear Redeemer's human nature is too much overlooked. My mind was drawn to it many years ago, chiefly through Irving's heresy about Christ's "sinful flesh". And what I wished to convey was, that the human nature of Jesus was and is "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners". And this because begotten in a spiritual, supernatural way. Indeed, what but a holy nature could be taken into union with the Son of God?

When upon my bed I had, as I hope, a revelation of Jesus. I saw by the eye of faith, most distinctly, His two natures, in a way that I cannot describe, which has always made me so firm a contender for them.

I shall hope (D.V.) to explain my meaning more fully in the next number. I was wrong in using the words natural and spiritual. Meanwhile I thank you for your kind and faithful letter, and will (D.V.) look into the subject more closely.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 24, 1851

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—I am glad you are coming our way, but am sorry your stay will be so short. It generally takes a little time before we get into the marrow of anything. The bone, you know, lies pretty deep in the flesh, and the marrow deeper still. We need an evening together, and a little oil on the heart and tongue, such as we had, I hope, once before at my house.

...

At present we are very comfortable here as a church. We had a church meeting yesterday, and received two candidates, and had a very comfortable meeting indeed. I never saw a better feeling among the friends; and the simple tale that one poor old woman told seemed to melt our hard hearts. I have not seen so many tears shed since Mrs. L. came before us. We are very full too as a congregation, and I hope the Lord is sometimes with poor vile us.

I am called, "the blind leader of the blind", but if I am blind, I have, I am sure, some who can see and feel too, and some who will shine as the stars forever and ever. Nor am I blind to my own sins and follies, ignorance, unbelief, and helplessness; nor am I blind to the blessedness, grace, and suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in standing up before the people, I feel a sincere desire for their soul's profit; and as far as the Lord enables,

labor for their edification and consolation without fear or flattery. Herein I have, through mercy, the testimony of a good conscience.

My dear friend, I was not in the least hurt or offended with your kind letter about the review. I know you are a sincere friend, and that what you say or do, you do out of real affection. I would be a poor proud wretch—worse than I am—if I could not take advice from friends. I know how many enemies I have, and how many are watching for my halting; and there is so much hypocrisy in men, that I am weary of most professors. How true is Micah 7:2, 3, and there is such cursed pride, envy, and enmity in the heart! I see it in myself and in others too. Oh what a wretch is man, and the best of men!

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 25, 1851

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—I would have answered your kind and friendly letter before, had not my time been so much occupied.

I have been down to Stoke, to pay the last mark of respect and affection to my poor dear mother. She died early on Thursday morning, the 13th. I left home on Monday, slept at Exeter that night, and reached Stoke Tuesday evening. I found Mrs. Isbell better than I expected, and more calm and collected. On Wednesday morning her remains were committed to the earth. She was buried in the new cemetery at Plymouth (Dissenters' side), and Mr. Isbell performed the ceremony. He did it very well, reading 1 Cor. chapter 15, and making some remarks on her character, etc., closing with prayer. It rained nearly all the time, and therefore we were not long at the grave. My mind was in a whirl from the time that I heard of her death; and what with so much traveling, I was so confused that I could not realize that she was dead. Indeed I seemed hardly able to believe it, until I saw the coffin, with her name on the plate, let down into the grave. She was in her 79th year, and had suffered much from rheumatism in her hand and limbs. Her last malady was influenza and bronchitis, from which she suffered much. Mrs. S., whom I think you know, has a good hope of her—indeed, has no doubt of her state. She knew more of her feelings and experience than anyone, as my poor mother was much attached to her, and could converse more freely with her than almost anyone else. She had once a sweet manifestation of the love of God to her soul, on which she seemed to hang, but was for the most part much pressed down with a sense of her unworthiness, and fears of being deceived, and being a hypocrite. She was always to me a most kind and affectionate parent; and I do not recollect that we ever disagreed once in our lives. When I left the Establishment, she felt it, but said her house was open to me, and that I might go and live with her. And I can assure you, I have sometimes wished I had done so, and thus lived a quiet obscure life, without the troubles and trials which I have had in occupying a more prominent place; but God has fixed the bounds of our habitation, and it is folly to think of carving out our own path. The weather being so wet and cold, made the journey more trying, and has made me feel quite poorly and out-of-sorts. My

poor mother's death will be much felt by Mrs. Isbell, who was much attached to her.

I baptized three persons here last Lord's day, and hope the Lord was with us. . . . All here is labor and sorrow. Our own sins, and the sins of others, will always make it a scene of trouble. "Oh, you hideous monster, sin!" What a mighty power it has—a power which grace alone can subdue. It seems sometimes subdued, and then rises up worse than before. Well may we cry out—"Oh, wretched man that I am!" etc.

Yours every affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 7, 1851

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—It was my intention (D.V.) to write to you today, even if your kind letter had not met me here on Saturday.

I feel for you in your troubles, especially in *one* which I know presses you sore. My dear friend, most of us have to learn Micah 7:4, 5, in painful experience. It is bitter work, especially where there is soul union. I do hope the Lord will appear for you in this trying case. Oh, how He can soften hearts, melt away bitter feelings, and subdue that demon of hell—cruel suspicion! My dear friend, how would I get on with you, if I could not depend upon your friendship behind my back, as well as before my face? It is because I believe you to be a man who truly fears God, and a sincere affectionate friend as well, that makes me cleave to you. We have all great faults and failings before man, as well as awful damnable backslidings and sins before God; and I dare say my friend T. G. has his, as well as others theirs. I do hope it may please the Lord to make this crooked thing straight.

I have not been well since my return from Stoke. The cold wet weather seemed to try my chest, though, through mercy, I was preserved from cold. I would be glad to slip out of my London engagement, my chest being unfit for the exertion, heat, and mental labor and exercise which I have at Eden Street. What a life of toil, sin, and suffering! All we do, cannot subdue those dreadful lusts, which swarm like ants in an ant-hill on a summer's day. I have had two desires uppermost in my mind for years; one that I might not leave my wife and children destitute, the other that I might make a good end. The one has, by my poor mother's death, been in good measure accomplished. The other remains with the Lord. But indeed it must be all of grace, and no common grace, for I have been, and am, no common sinner. I am beset with temptations on every hand, and my vile heart will still meditate villainy.

I hope we had a pretty good day yesterday. In the afternoon I felt some little life and liberty. The day was fine, and we were well attended. As far as I can see and feel, there is much more right and real religion in the country than in London. We know some in Wilts., and there are others in Berks, and a few, I hope, in Rutland and Lincolnshire, who in my mind outweigh those whom we see in town. They have more life, and feeling, and simplicity, and tenderness

about them. But I hope the Lord will bless you among them in your own soul and ministry. It is a day of very small things, really and experimentally. There is much talk and noise, much light in the head, but little life or grace in the heart; and matters seem getting worse. I had more life and feeling ten years ago at Alie Street, and I have heard you and Tiptaft say the same. I had scarcely a barren season at Zoar in 1841, and I could no more preach those sermons now than I could fly. I had a large congregation at St. Ives, but I hardly know what to make of things there. The anointing oil seems much lacking. How easy to talk, preach, pray, and hear—without the only thing which makes them a blessing. Alas! I see the nakedness of the land, when I am a poor naked thing so often myself. Like a barren woman, I complain of the barrenness of others. God alone can make the barren woman keep house, and be a joyful mother of children.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 28, 1852

My dear Duncan Mathieson—I have indeed reason to bless the Lord for the way in which in His mysterious providence and grace He has condescended to spread and bless my little productions. And this because I have never attempted to spread them myself, and have no pecuniary interest in them. It is indeed mysterious that they should have reached your remote district, and especially so that your first knowledge of them should have come through such a remarkable channel [The Duchess of Gordon]. A few days before your letter came to hand, I received one from a clergyman in Herts, who had been under great distress of soul. Change of air was recommended, and he went to Ramsgate. Going one morning to bathe, his eye glanced in at a shop window, in which the "Heir of Heaven" sermon was exposed for sale. He was struck with the title, and went in and purchased it. It was made a blessing to his soul. He was led to procure my other writings and sermons, and speaks of them as being blessed to him.

How mysterious are the dealings of God! Feeling my own dreadful sinfulness, it makes me wonder at His free, sovereign, matchless, superabounding grace. Of all men, I was most unlikely to be made useful to the Lord's family. Until I went to college in 1821, I actually never knew there was any such thing as religion professed, beyond the mere Church of England formalism in which I was educated. There, by the conversation of a fellow-student, my judgment was convinced, but my heart untouched; until in 1827, in a solitary part of Ireland, in the midst of a deep affliction, the Lord was pleased, I trust, to quicken my poor dead soul. This entailed the overthrow of all my University prospects, which were good, as in human learning I had in 1824 taken what are called high honors; and indeed my heart was devoted to books and the acquisition of earthly knowledge. From 1828 to 1835, I was a minister in the Establishment, residing chiefly in a lonely village, where I had much sickness, and learned, I hope, in soul some of those lessons which are embodied in my ministry. As my conscience became burdened with the unscriptural character and services of the Church of England, I was compelled to leave it. My path has been, and is, one mainly of trial and

temptation, having a heart so evil, a tempter so subtle, and so many crosses and snares in which my feet are continually caught and entangled.

But I hope that my trials and temptations are mercifully overruled for the benefit and edification of the church of God. We are overrun with a shallow, superficial ministry, which is destitute of all life, savor, and power. The trials and exercises of the family of God are untouched, or if alluded to, are trampled down with contempt. A dry, dead-letter scheme of doctrine, as mathematically correct as the squares of a chess-board, prevails, where what is called "truth" is preached, and to move texts on the squares as pawns or pieces is the art of preaching. Where heart and conscience are not reached, where the inward conflict is not opened up, where the sweet and savory Gospel is not preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, there the flock of slaughter cannot feed. Ezekiel 34 is a true picture of the false shepherds.

How simple is truth! Man's misery, God's mercy; the aboundings of sin, the super-aboundings of grace; the depths of the fall, the heights of the recovery; the old man and the new; the diseases of the soul, and the balm of a Savior's blood—these lessons learned in the furnace of inward experience, how different from the monkish austerity of the Puseyite, the lip service of the Pharisee, and the dry Calvinistic formulary of the church!

A friend of mine, now departed, was called, in the providence of God, to Glasgow. Thence he wrote to me that he had wandered from church to chapel, and, I think, the same at Edinburgh; but all was dead joy. At last he used on the Lord's day evenings to leave the town, sit on a hillside, and there pray and read, drawing sometimes from his pocket one of my little sermons. He would have rejoiced to find a few there with whom he could have united. When I sent forth my little productions, I had not the remotest idea of their being so widely spread, or that the Lord would condescend so much to bless them, as I trust He has done. With the sermons which have been taken down, I have had still less to do; but as they have obtained a wide circulation, and are read in many little chapels where there is no minister, I think it right to revise them before they go forth.

May the Lord lead us more deeply into His most blessed truth. What are all the painted toys of time, compared with the solemn, weighty realities of eternity? But alas! what wretches are we when left to sin, self, and Satan! How unable to withstand the faintest breath of temptation! How bent upon backsliding! Who can fathom the depths of the human heart? Oh, what but grace, superabounding grace, can either suit or save such wretches?

Tender my love to all in your circle who bear me in their heart. I deeply need their prayers. May the Lord keep and bless you.

Yours, I trust, in the best bonds,
J. C. P.

June 4th, 1852

My dear Friend, Mr. Godwin—I think sometimes when I am gone and carnal feelings buried in my grave, my writings and sermons will be more understood than they are now; and I hope I have a place in the hearts and affections of some of God's people.

You may depend upon it there are some of the right sort of people at Oakham and Stamford. I felt once at the ordinance at Stamford much as you did—as if I could take the friends all into my arms and heart.

I must not complain of my Allington visit thus far. I had a good day the first Lord's-day, and we had a very full chapel.

I am glad you have felt at home at Stamford and Oakham. It is miserable dragging work when there is death without and within. It is sweet and blessed to have one's soul watered while watering others. I hope we have had some right feeling in the chapel since I have been here. We went up to Shaw Farm last evening. We had a comfortable visit with the old lady (Mrs. Wild), and more conversation on the things of God than usual. We see well eye to eye. Providence, too, seems more smiling than at Stowell, and, therefore, less unbelief and repining. I enjoy the pure air from the downs, and they say I look better than when I came. This quiet life, retired spot, and walks by myself, suit me well; much excitement would soon kill me. I suppose I must try and fulfill my London engagement, but it will be hard work.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

June 9, 1853

My dear Friend, Miss Richmond—I hope, if the Lord wills, and health and strength be given, to speak a little at Stadham on Thursday evening, the 23rd, on my way home. If your sister at Sutton Courtney would do me the kindness of meeting us with her sociable at the station, we could spend an hour or two with her before proceeding to Stadham; and I think Mrs. Philpot would like to see the place where her uncle was when in the Church of England.

It is some time since I was at Stadham, and I hope the Lord may bless the visit among my old friends. We hope that amid much weakness and ignorance He did bless us in times past, and He is the same gracious God now as He was then—"the same yesterday, today, and forever." And we, too, are the same poor and needy sinners who only see light in His light, and without whom, indeed, we can do nothing. Many years have passed away since I first came to Stadham, and we have seen many changes in ourselves and others; but the foundation abides sure, and if we are indeed built on that we are safe amid all trials. You have seen two sisters who married with every prospect of worldly happiness widowed and bereft, and thus have in your own family the strongest testimony how fleeting and vanishing all dreams of earthly comfort are. How good it is when these painful lessons produce spiritual abiding profit!

But, alas, we are slow and dull learners, and need line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little, and, after all, often seem as if we knew nothing as we ought to know.

If salvation were not wholly of grace what hope could we have? In this bottomless sea of mercy poor sinners can cast anchor when there is any discovery of this superabounding grace to their hearts.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 30, 1853

My dear Friend, Mr. Godwin—You seem favored with two great blessings—health of body and health of soul. Such blessings are they, that without them life is not life. I wish you may long enjoy both, and be made a blessing for many years to the Church of God.

I am, through mercy, better. I preached at Oakham in the morning last Lord's-day, and spoke in the afternoon from the chapter nearly three quarters of an hour. We had our annual collection for the poor, and got £26 7s. 3d., the largest collection for fifteen years. I urged them to liberality on account of the dearness of provisions and fuel, and the severity of the weather, and they came forward most liberally.

But I think, my dear friend, we have both seen much of a God of providence. I told them at Oakham on Lord's-day that I have sometimes thought I could write a "Bank of faith," for money has come in just as needed. What I want most is grace, spirituality of mind, fear of the Lord, tenderness of conscience, and power against besetting sins.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

August 22, 1854

My Dear Friend, Mr. Grace—I am much pleased with Miss H—'s letters. There is a freshness, a simplicity, and a *naivete* about them which, with their slightly foreign English, are very characteristic. I like the absence in them of that almost conventional language which has become almost the common epistolary style of gracious people. I shall better, perhaps, convey my meaning by quoting the remark of a friend, that "nearly all the letters in the *Standard* might have been written by one person." Like a clear brook, Miss H—'s letters allow you to see through the water to the bottom. Her very ignorance, in some points, pleases me, as it shows she is struggling upwards and onwards for divine light. A few sincere simple souls, thirsting for divine teaching, open a minister's heart and mouth, while heady, high-minded, carping, caviling hearers only bar and close it. Mr. Beeman always wondered what Mr. Huntington could see in him to like. It was his humility and his seeing nothing in himself.

I am sorry to hear of your trials and afflictions. But what would you be to the Church of God without them? An unexercised, untried minister is of little use to the suffering Church of God, Hart's "noble army of martyrs." I wish you well under them, and I wish you well through them, and I wish you well after them, and then you will say, "It is well." I was glad to see you in town, and believe we could have found matter for conversation had your visit been longer, as I felt free to talk with you, and believe that on most points, and on all important ones, we are well agreed. You occupy an important position in your large town, and feel, doubtless, that all your sufficiency is of God. Without Him the wisest and strongest labor in vain, and with Him the worm Jacob can thresh the mountains.

Accept the best wishes and sincere Christian love of
Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 11, 1854

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—I am much obliged to you for your kind and acceptable present, which came safely to hand.

I much like what I have read of Huntington's 'Letters'. They give us himself not as the controversialist, though in that a good soldier of Jesus Christ—but as he was in his secret chamber. There is an infinity of admirable touches whereby the secret work of the Spirit on the heart seems in some respects more effectually traced out than when drawn out in a clearer, more systematic manner. Some of his hints and directions are much to the purpose, and bear a stamp of genuine godliness. It may be taken up, too, and laid down at vacant moments without, as in systematic writings, losing the thread, and may thus lie on the table side by side with the Bible and Hart's Hymns.

I hope the Lord was with you in your late tour. We would be very happy to see and hear you here when you come again into these parts. It is a mercy to be blessed with will and power to labor in the vineyard. There is certainly in our day a spirit of hearing in many places, and we have reason to hope that among these thick boughs there must be some fruitful branches.

Things, perhaps, are not so bad as some think, though not so good as most imagine. But that the life of God is low, even where it exists, is, I fear, too true.

Wishing you the enjoyment of every covenant mercy,
I am, Yours affectionately and obliged,
J. C. P.

September 27, 1854

My dear Friend, Mr. Godwin—I desire to sympathize with you in all your trials and sorrows, which the Lord has laid upon you so very heavy and severe. But I see in them marks of a kind and gracious Father's love to make

you more useful to the Church of God, and establish you more in the truth and blessedness of the Gospel. Whatever men may think or say about you, they cannot say that yours is the illegitimate child's portion, and that you have all that the carnal heart can wish for—you are plagued all the day long and chastened every morning. But what a mercy that you are not left either to hardness of heart or to rebellion under your afflictions, but are favored with a spirit of grace and supplications, and prove from time to time that the Lord is a God who hears and answers prayer! I hope it may please the Lord when this affliction has worked out its destined end and brought forth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, to remove it in some measure. I say "in some measure," for I never expect poor Mrs. G— will have much health in this life. It will be a daily cross for you both until her poor frail tabernacle is laid in the grave to wait the sound of the great trumpet on the resurrection morn, and then she will have a new and glorified body, fit companion for an immortal soul, and each as full of glory as they can hold. But she had better be tried in mind and afflicted in body, and have grace in her heart, than be mistress of Woburn Abbey and be called "Your Grace."

I am going (D.V.) to Leicester, Friday next, for Lord's-day and the Tuesday after.

I am much as usual in health. I did not come home very well, but feel a little stronger since I returned. Few places suit me better than my own home.

I am afraid our friends at — are in a good deal of trouble and confusion. I hardly know what advice to give them. When churches get wrong it is like family troubles, which people out of the family are very sorry for, but cannot interfere in. We can only give them kind and scriptural advice, and there we must leave it. I dread church troubles, as there never is an end to them, and they break up all peace, confidence, and union. We are, through mercy, pretty comfortable at present at both places.

I hear the old warrior was well heard at Leicester. The place was very fully attended, and many came a long way.

My dear friend, we have all our trials and sorrows. The great question is, what they are doing for our immortal souls? That is the main thing after all, for they must come one day to an end.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 9, 1854

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—You have given me, in your kind and affectionate note, so friendly and cordial an invitation, that I cannot feel it in my heart to decline it. I shall have, therefore, much pleasure in staying over the Wednesday, and will make my arrangements accordingly. I have for many years seen much difficulty in maintaining Christian communion with those towards whom we feel spiritual union. It is usually only at rare seasons that true spiritual communion is obtained with them; and without this, social

communion rather damps than maintains our union. This feeling has long influenced me in declining much visiting among the friends, beyond those friendly and pastoral calls which the Lord may make mutually pleasant and profitable. But one may err on the right hand as well as on the left; and Christians may keep themselves too widely apart—or be too intimate.

Any profit that you may derive from the ministry is wholly of the Lord's mercy and grace. This is my increasing feeling. What the Lord blesses is His own truth. Pure water in a horn, is better than foul water in a golden cup. My desire is to preach God's pure unadulterated truth, and leave the blessing of it to Him.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 25, 1854

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin,
Mrs. S. gave a sweet and blessed testimony before the Church. I never heard a sweeter account of the love of God shed abroad in a poor sinner's heart. But it was fresh and warm in her soul, and therefore came forth sweet and savory. I understand she has been much tried about it since.

I am (D.V.) to baptize three candidates tomorrow, and hope we may have a good day. I expect we shall also soon have a baptizing at Oakham, as we have received one candidate, and another is coming forward.

I have been applied to about the propriety of breaking up the church at C., and re-forming it. There are, I believe, not more than four or five members left, the others having withdrawn on account of F.'s bad conduct; and as the present members seem to have sanctioned his evil ways, it has been thought an advisable step to break up the church, and so remove the reproach, and then form a new one. My own mind is in favor of it, as I think there will be neither peace nor prosperity while the present church continues. But the question arises, "Who has a sufficient authority to do so?" A 'temporary Supply' hardly seems to have sufficient authority to do it. For if one Supply may do it, why not another? And then you may establish this principle, that a Supply may go and break up a church, like Eden Street or Allington, where there is no pastor, whether the church agrees to it or not. So that, while I think it would be best for the church at C. to be broken up, I hardly see how it is to be done, or who has authority to do it in a Scriptural manner. Turn the matter over in your mind, as I dare say they will ask your opinion about it. I think it must eventually be done; but I believe it can hardly be done in a right way before they get a permanent minister.

Monday, March 27

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin,

I had a hard day's work yesterday, and having a bad cold, was almost unable to finish. The baptistry here is most inconvenient, being so long; and the women were all much agitated, and I had almost to carry them through the water, after I had baptized them, to the further side, and the lattice under my feet quite slippery. I hope however we had, on the whole, a good day. I am quite poorly today, and therefore am not much fit for writing; but it is a mercy I was brought through yesterday, and did not disappoint the candidates and the people.

Mrs. Philpot is, through mercy, better in health. Amid all our trials and afflictions, we have our mercies and favors. My chief burden and trouble is sin, which haunts me night and day. Oh what an enemy to the soul's peace!

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 1, 1855

My dear friend, John Grace—I am exceedingly obliged to you for your kind present of the fourth volume of the invaluable "Posthumous Letters of William Huntington", and for your friendly and affectionate letter. I have been reading some of his most sweet and savory epistles this morning, and find them instructive, edifying, and profitable. They contain the cream and marrow of vital godliness, and real, genuine, heartfelt religion unmixed with that controversial spirit, which sometimes mingles with his other writings. What I admire most in them, next to their sweet savor, is the way in which he draws up the living water from his own experience, and that past as well as present. I would much like to make them better known through *The Gospel Standard*, and put down a few thoughts which have occurred to my mind in reading them. What a dreadful lack is there of such preaching now! I look round and see so few men qualified to feed the church of God. We are overrun with parsons, but, oh dear! what are they? I cannot but attribute much of the low state of the churches to the ministers, who rather preach them dead, deaf, and blind, than stir them up and ministerially quicken, enlighten, and enliven them. I am sure that the life of God much consists in, and is much manifested by, the breathings, cries, and longings of the soul after Him, and that by these, that coldness and deadness are sensibly relieved, which many so much complain of.

With you, I admire above all others, Hart's blessed hymns. I would be glad to help in their circulation, and I think a notice in the *Standard*, or short advertisement, might help this. As all his hymns are in Gadsby's Hymn book (with one or two omissions), our friends are pretty well furnished with copies, but I will mention the cheap edition to them.

Do you not think the churches should use prayer and supplication at this momentous crisis? The Lord's hand seems going out against us at home and abroad. How paralyzed and dislocated all the men of war and counsel seem, and none able to stand in the gap. Mr. Huntington was a true lover of his country, and lived in still darker times than our own. With what boastings

was the war entered upon, and now what despondency. How few acknowledge that the Lord reigns!

I desire to sympathize with you in your trials and afflictions, but they are all in due weight and measure.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 6, 1855

My dear friend, Miss Richmond—I am much obliged to you for your kind communication of the closing scenes of our lamented friend's earthly life. I perceived, when I last saw him, the inroads which his disease had made on his appearance and constitution, and was therefore the less surprised to hear of his decease. He was a man so thoroughly sincere, and indeed so scrupulous to say nothing of himself but what his conscience could fully bear witness to, that we can receive with implicit credit what he said in those solemn moments. In those who have walked many years in tribulation's thorny road, and have at various times been favored and blessed, we do not expect such a, what is called, triumphant death-bed, as in those who are removed in their first love. The promise is, that in Jesus they shall have peace. Their experience of the deceitfulness of their own heart has stripped them of lying hopes and a false peace; and therefore when we see them in the enjoyment of peace, with eternity in full view, we cannot but believe that the peace of God is keeping their heart and mind through Christ Jesus. This our dear departed friend seems to have felt and enjoyed. I attach more weight to this, and his holding up his hands at the last, than what you mention of a more visionary nature. He was, as you justly observe, a firm friend to, and unbending pillar of, truth; and his quiet demeanor and consistent conduct for many years recommended and adorned his profession. Being so long afflicted with a complaint from which recovery was hopeless, we need not wish him detained here below. Among the blessings of the realms above, is that "the inhabitants thereof shall no more say, I am sick." Those only who have a sickly tabernacle can fully prize such a promise. Our dear friend, we fully hope, has entered into the enjoyment of it.

I am at present but poorly myself, having an attack of influenza on my chest. Truly this is a dying world. On last Saturday, my friend Mr. Harrison, of Leicester, was removed from this valley of tears. In helping to move a tree, he received a blow on the chest which produced inflammation of the heart, under which he sank. He was one of the kindest, sincerest friends that I was ever blessed with. How all these dispensations speak to us with a loud voice, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth!" Twenty-four years have passed away since I spent the winter at Sutton Courtney, and nearly twenty since I left the Establishment. Mrs. Lowe, H. Witney, and poor Brookland, with many others who used to hear my voice, have been removed from time into eternity, and these departures of our friends all seem to say, "you also be ready". But the Lord Himself must be our help, and hope, and all. To Him, and to Him alone, must we ever look, for there is salvation in no

other. He is the way, and the truth, and the life, and no man comes unto the Father but by Him.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

August 16, 1855

My dear friend, Thomas Godwin—I believe you will be pleased to hear that, through rich mercy, I have been brought through my labors here much better than I anticipated. I came up with many fears and faintings, but have broken down neither in body nor mind. I found more exertion needed than at Eden Street, but I think what tried me so much at Eden Street was the foul air. I had all the windows opened at Gower Street round the gallery, and therefore felt not the least bad air or closeness.

We had great congregations, and I hope I was faithful to them. I did not feel all I could wish, far from it; but I must not complain. I see and feel my great deficiency and shortcomings as a minister. I felt Tuesday evening before the Lord—"Oh, that I could preach better—with more power and savor, and be more blessed to the people!" I always seem to come so short of what I want spiritually to be. I am coming short all the day long, and sinning with every breath I draw. What a debtor to grace! What else can I preach to poor guilty sinners?

Gower Street was the first London pulpit I ever stood up in, as I preached once for Mr. Fowler, August 8, 1836, just nineteen years ago. I am much pleased with the chapel, and hardly know whether to be more grateful to the Lord for the chapel, and bringing me through, or to Him for putting it into the heart of Mr. and Mrs. Clowes to take us in. Their rooms seem to suit my health, so that I may say that, on the whole, I have not got through my London labors so well for some years. I hardly dare say much, as I may fall ill when I return home; but as far as present feelings go, I seem better than these last two or three years. I always much dread my Abingdon Lord's day, both for body and soul. There are many gracious well-taught people there, and they come many miles, and I feel my weakness in every sense of the word.

I hope the Lord will come with you to Gower Street. What an affliction you have! But ballast we must have to sail steady. We do not like trials and troubles, but what are we without them?

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 26, 1855

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—I shall be most happy to see you at Stamford in October, but I cannot by any means consent to your being a hearer, for which I will give you three sufficient reasons: 1. The rest will do my body

good. 2. I am afraid your being there might shut me up. 3. My people would be much disappointed. I am to them but an old song; but the Lord might, and I hope would, bless the word by you. I hope Mr. P. delivered my message *verbatim et literatim*. "Tell Mr. Grace I shall be happy to give him a seat at my table, a bed at my house, and a door into my pulpit."

I was glad to hear that Mr. H— made a good end. The Lord is faithful to the work of His dear Son on the cross, and the work of the Holy Spirit on the soul. Clouds and darkness may surround the work on the soul as they do His eternal throne, though He himself dwells in the light which no man can approach unto; but at evening time it is often light. Grace is undying—and that is the mercy for the living family of God.

I am preaching here to large congregations.

Grace be with you.

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

October 30, 1855

Dear Friend,—I am sorry I cannot accept the invitation contained in your kind and affectionate letter. My will is to labor in the vineyard; but I do not possess the health and strength needful to carry out my will. My chest being weak and tender I can only just manage, with the Lord's help, to go in and out before my own people. Besides which, the winter season is fast advancing, during which I rarely go from home, except backwards and forwards here, which, indeed, is my second home, naturally and spiritually.

Apart from my own bodily comfort I have often much desired better health, that I might labor more in the Lord's cause. But He knows best what to do with, and what to do by us, and what we cannot alter, it is our wisdom and mercy to submit to.

I have no doubt that you find it hard work to carry on the cause of truth at L—. But if this make you feel more deeply your need of help from the Sanctuary, it will work together for your spiritual good. Those causes, or rather those people, usually flourish best where there is much opposition and many painful trials. These show how far we are sincere in our love to the truth, and give an errand to the throne. We soon sink down into a cold, careless state, when there are no trials; and, therefore, we may say of them that they are blessings in disguise.

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

November 19, 1855

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—I received quite safely both your kind letter and the book. I have not had much time as yet to read the latter, but like what I have seen of it. It is wrong to use such a term, but it has almost

amused me from its pithy quaintness and dry expressions. It much resembles a book you are probably unacquainted with, a great favorite with Dr. Johnson, Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy." The short Latin quotations were then the style of the age, as Latin was then as generally understood as French now. But apart from this there are many useful hints on experimental subjects.

I have lately adopted the plan of making a few short comments in a familiar manner as I read the chapter, and find it puts a life and interest in that part of the service of God. Our hearers are many of them exceedingly ignorant and need a little instruction, and things stumble them which a word of explanation might remove. A poor woman whom I knew was troubled that Peter should have had wicked Judas for his son (John 13:2), and a man, how there could be calling without repentance (Rom. 11:29). Two words would have removed these stumbling blocks. Many a poor child of God has gotten a real blessing from a verse in the chapter or a line from the hymn, when all the sermon was an empty sound. What we need is the blessing of God, and if that is not sought or wanted, preaching is but a worthless noise.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 15, 1856

My dear friend, Miss Richmond—I am much obliged to you for your kind and sympathizing letter, and the invitation therein contained.

I am much pleased to learn that the Lord has graciously turned your captivity. It much resembles a manifestation which I was once favored with, when the Lord Jesus was so presented before the eyes of my enlightened understanding, and I had such a view by faith of the two distinct natures in one glorious Person. It was on my bed one morning, during a long illness. I can therefore quite understand your feelings and experience. It will give truth a deeper place, and a firmer hold in your heart; and though it may be often disputed or doubted, hidden in darkness, and buried in confusion, still it will afford you some standing-ground which you had not before.

It is a very blessed thing, and a high favor, to have clear and spiritual views of the Person of Immanuel. It gives faith a firm foundation to rest upon, and makes Jesus all in all. We are exceedingly obliged to you for your kind invitation, but all our family are now with us, and we cannot leave them to servants.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 22nd, 1856

My dear friend, John Grace—I cannot call to mind any distinct promise to

review (my usual way of noticing) Huntington's letters. I may possibly do so, but much must depend on how I am led in the matter. I cannot write a review, unless the subject be one which I feel I can handle in a manner edifying to the church of God. I take a book more as a peg, on which to hang an essay on a subject which I think I can write upon feelingly and profitably, than to commend or censure the book itself. Now it may be a most excellent work, but unless I can produce out of my own mind, independent profitable matter on the same or some allied subject, I cannot review it. A review to me is almost like a text. It must come to me, not I go to it; and therefore I can no more promise a review, except conditionally, than I can promise to preach from a given text. Whether good or bad, the reviews cost me much time and thought, and are written with great care. I have a large well-instructed and critical circle of readers, besides many cavilers and fault-finders; and I must not attempt subjects which I cannot handle Scripturally and experimentally. I may, if not just at present, take up the "Posthumous Letters", and the best time will be when the angel troubles the waters.

I feel much as you do about the truth of God. It is dear to me, and I can neither buy nor sell it, as men would have me. It is to be bought without money and without price, and to be sold for neither. It alone makes free. How can it then be parted with? Many of God's children are weak in judgment, and soon drawn aside, which should make us doubly desirous to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. I am, through mercy, a little better, and have resumed preaching, but my chest is still tender. That and my own heart are my two greatest trials.

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

October 13, 1856

To The Deacons and Members of the Church of Christ Assembling themselves for the worship of God at Gower Street Chapel, London, mercy, peace, and love be multiplied:

My dear friends,

Having taken into serious and prayerful consideration the expression of your desire that I should come among you for a season, with a view to a settlement as pastor over you in the Lord, if approved of by you, I have been obliged to come to the resolution to decline the proposal.

Two obstacles have, from the first, presented themselves to my mind, which I feel would be insuperable, unless specially removed by the Lord Himself.

1. The first is the delicate state of my health, in consequence of which I am sometimes laid aside from the public exercise of the ministry. This, which is much felt by my own people in the country, would be a serious objection in London, and with a large and more mixed congregation. Besides which, my general delicacy of health, and susceptibility to cold, would much hinder

those pastoral visits, that attention to the sick, and interment, when needed, of members of the church, which would reasonably be required of a settled minister. Nor can I reasonably hope that, after so many years' duration of ill health, it is likely to improve with advancing life.

2. But, secondly, I have felt that, after having been settled over two churches and congregations for about eighteen years, among whom I trust the Lord has blessed my labors, I could not dissolve that connection, unless I had some clear intimation that such was the will of God.

My own people, both at Stamford and Oakham, have deeply felt even the idea of my leaving them, and have expressed their apprehension that such a step might, at least at one of the places, issue in the breaking up of the church altogether.

Unless therefore I clearly saw my way, and unless the pillar of cloud went more manifestly before me than it does, I feel I could not take a step so important as that to which you invite me.

There are indeed many circumstances, both as regards you and myself, which would have made your invitation acceptable to me, had these obstacles not intervened. But I am very certain that, to undertake such an important charge without clearly seeing the will and hand of God, would issue in sorrow and disappointment to both you and myself.

I am, my dear friends,
Yours affectionately in Christ,
J. C. P.

November 24th, 1856

My dear friend, Jesse Crake,

I hope this illness has not altogether been unprofitable to me, as during it I have had many seasons of prayer, meditation, and reading the Word with sweetness and feeling. There must be times, especially in a minister, for laying up, as well as laying out. There is a trading in divine matters, whereby the soul becomes enriched with heavenly treasure. Seclusion and solitude, of which I have had much, are favorable seasons for confession, meditation, and self-examination; and when the mind is solemnized with the weighty matters of eternity, prayer and supplication are made to the Lord for those blessings that we feelingly stand in need of. Much of my time, at various seasons during my illness, has been so spent. And there has been joined with it, at times, careful study of the Word of God, especially some of the Epistles of the New Testament.

The mind and judgment need to be informed and established in the truth of God; and a minister or writer who does not give his mind to the revelation of God's truth, and does not take solemn delight and pleasure therein, will not much feed the church of God. Here I see many ministers deficient in our day. There is so much gossiping and visiting from house to house, not as godly instructors, but for mere society's sake, that precious time is wasted, and the

mind dissipated, until the soul becomes like the garden of the sluggard. My delicate health, it is true, in a good measure, keeps me from these things, and thus it may be, for this and other reasons, a blessing in disguise. . . .

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 30, 1857

Dear Mr. Tips, friend and Brother in the Lord of Life and Glory,

I received and read with much interest and pleasure your gratifying letter, the whole of which I was able to make out with tolerable facility. But though I understand enough of the Dutch language to be able to read it, I am not sufficiently conversant with that tongue, as regards its idioms and grammar, to be able to write it. I therefore avail myself of your kind permission to write to you in my native tongue, which it appears you understand, and in which I hope to express myself in a manner intelligible to you and easy to myself.

The information which your truly interesting and spiritual letter contains, that very many of my sermons have been translated into Dutch, and widely circulated among the tried and afflicted people of God in your country, humbled and melted my soul before the Lord, and I was enabled to praise His holy name for His great goodness and wonderful condescension, in making use of so sinful and unworthy an instrument as myself, to spread abroad His gracious and glorious name, not only in my own country, but in a foreign land (2 Cor. 2:14).

It also led me to supplicate His gracious Majesty, that He would still go on to make use of me as an instrument in His hands, to spread the Gospel of His sovereign, distinguishing, and superabounding grace. What made the matter more surprising in my eyes, and showed me more clearly that it was the Lord's own work, was this circumstance, that I had no hand in the matter, and knew nothing of the work that was going on, until the pleasing news reached my ears. And it has been the same in this country; for with the exception of two or three little publications sent abroad by me twenty years ago, I have never had any hand in spreading my own sermons in this land, but have left the matter wholly in the hands of the Lord, as feeling if they were worthy to live and be spread, it would be done, and if not, let them die.

It may perhaps be interesting to you, and the readers of the sermons in Holland, to learn how they first came into public notice in this country. You are perhaps aware that I was brought up in the communion of the Church of England, our great national establishment, and was educated at the University of Oxford, where, to speak with all humility, I distinguished myself by my knowledge of Greek and Latin literature. I was ordained to the ministry in the Church of England in the year 1828, being then not quite twenty-six years of age. At that time I hope the Lord had, about a year and a half previously, quickened my soul into spiritual life, and taught me, by His Spirit and grace, something both of sin and of salvation. But my eyes were not then open to see the errors and corruptions of the National Church. I was

much afflicted with illness in the years 1830 and 1831, and as eternal things came to lie with greater weight and power on my heart, and the Lord's work was deepened in my soul, I became led to see more clearly, and feel keenly, the errors and evils of the Church of England; and after some years of trial and prayer to the Lord to lead and guide me, I was compelled, in the Spring of 1835, to withdraw myself from its communion, though obliged to relinquish at the same time a comfortable living which I had in it, and to renounce all my prospects of future advancement, which were much bound up in it.

At that time I was in a most delicate state of health, without any property, or the prospect of any; but like Abraham, I went out at the call of God and conscience, not knowing where I went, and I was enabled, through rich grace, to esteem, with Moses, the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. A door however, in answer to the prayers of a spiritual friend, was soon opened for me to preach the gospel outside of the Church of England, and since that period my ministry has been among the Particular Baptists—a religious denomination in this country called by that name, as holding the baptism of believers only, and also holding that the Lord's Supper is, by Apostolic practice, restricted to baptized believers, holding those particular doctrines which are generally termed the doctrines of grace, and which were so clearly laid down by your forefathers at the Synod of Dort.

Since the year 1837, I have been in the habit of going to London once a year in the summer season, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, as well as to other places, where I proclaim the Word of life; though my stated residence and ministry are chiefly at the town whence I date this letter, and another about twelve miles distant.

In the summer of 1839, being then in the metropolis on my annual visit, I preached a sermon at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, London, which has lately been translated into Dutch by J. Nieuwland, and published by J. Campen of Sneek, in his "Eerste Zestal Leerredenen, von J. C. Philpot", from Psalm 106:4, 5, under the title—"De begeerte des harten van elken wedergeborene".

This sermon was taken down entirely without my knowledge, and printed in a publication called, "The Penny Pulpit", but I saw neither the MS. nor the printed sermon, until it was put into my hands. This sermon however, which was on the whole a faithful report, had a most rapid and amazing circulation, the sale having reached, I believe, nearly twenty editions. This circumstance, of course, encouraged the printer to work a mine, which seemed likely to yield him such profit, and thus since that date it has gone on, Mr. Paul and other publishers having availed themselves of my visits to London, to take down and publish the sermons which I have been enabled to preach there, so that they now amount to a considerable number, and many of them are out of print and cannot be procured. They have also been taken down at other places, and published in the same way. In all this matter I have taken no steps to have them reported, or to forward their sale; nor do I derive any pecuniary profit from them. But in order to secure myself from the unavoidable errors which would arise if I did not look them over, I make it a

point to revise them before they are published, and thus they have all passed under my eye.

I have looked over those which you have kindly sent me through Mr. Bayfield, and as far as I have had time and opportunity to examine them, they appear for the most part faithfully and ably translated. The idiom of the two languages so much differs, that it is not possible always to preserve in Dutch the exact structure of the English sentences, in which much of the force and clearness of the English language consists. Nor is it possible in *extempore* preaching (all my sermons being delivered completely *voor de vuist*) to give that clearness and precision of thought and expression which can be communicated to a written discourse. Yet as far as the Lord enables me, I do what I can to make them clear, distinct, and forcible, that the trumpet may give a certain sound (1 Cor. 14:8). The sermons, I know, are much read in this country, and by all classes, both rich and poor, educated and uneducated. Knowing therefore how much the truths I preach are opposed to the carnal mind, and how gladly many would make me an offender for a word, I bestow what pains I can to cut off occasion from those who would seek occasion to wound, through me, the truth of the Gospel. At the same time, I bear in mind that whatever the sermons are, much more dwells in Christ, for "it has pleased the Father that in Him all fullness should dwell" (Col. 1:19); and it is declared that "God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). It will be then our wisdom and mercy, to be ever looking unto this blessed Jesus (Isa. 14:2; Heb. 12:2); and to be living upon Him, as the Apostle declared, that he did (Gal. 2:20). It is in this way that we receive out of His fullness (John 1:16), feed upon His flesh, and drink His blood, and thus dwell in Him, and He in us (John 6:56). We should be much in prayer and supplication to the Lord for His own teaching and blessing. This is the direction given to us by James (1:5), and the same Apostle describes to us the blessed nature of that wisdom which is from above, and which, with every other good and perfect gift, comes down from the Father of lights (James 3:17; 1:17). The promise is— "All your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children" (Isa. 54:13); and the Lord Himself tells us what the effect of this divine teaching is (John 6:45). To come unto Jesus for salvation, for pardon, for peace, for sanctification, for victory over our besetting sins, is the fulfillment of the declaration, that every man who has heard, and who has learned of the Father, comes unto Christ (John 6:45). It is not a name, or a sound creed, or a mere calling Jesus "Lord", that can or will save the soul from death and hell. There must be a living faith, a good hope through grace (2 Thess. 2:16), and a spiritual love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5), in order that the soul may be saved and blessed. Thus it is not merely the soundness of his creed which distinguishes a Christian, but that work of the blessed Spirit upon his heart, whereby he knows the truth, and finds to his soul's joy that the truth makes free (John 7:32).

There is a blessed unity of spirit among all who are truly taught of God. They are loved by the same everlasting love, and redeemed by the same precious blood, are justified by the same righteousness, are led by the same Spirit, and are traveling toward the same happy and heavenly home. They all too speak the same language; for though in their time state one may speak English,

another Dutch, and another German, yet they all speak a pure language, according to the Lord's own gracious promise (Zeph. 3:9).

I much thank you for your kind invitation to come to Rotterdam, but I cannot accept it, as I am so much engaged in the work of the ministry. Besides which my health is delicate, and has been so for many years, so that I cannot go about as many do, who are more favored with bodily health and strength. But the Lord has been pleased to spread my writings among those who know and love His truth, and I hope that they have been blessed to many.

My friends in England greatly rejoiced in the circumstance that my sermons had been translated into your native language, and spread among the believers in Christ Jesus in Holland. Many wept rejoicing tears over your letter, which I translated into English, and inserted in *The Gospel Standard*. As this periodical circulates nearly 10,000 copies, it made your letter widely read. I have been requested to insert in the same periodical my answer to it, but have not at present done so. It is a blessing to be fellow-helpers of each other's joy and fellow-laborers in the service of the same blessed Master. As there is a commercial connection between Holland and England, each interchanging with the other the commodities of life, so there may be, with the help and blessing of God, a spiritual exchange of those heavenly wares, the possession of which makes the owner rich indeed.

If anything spoken by my mouth, or written by my pen, has been blessed to my believing brethren and sisters in Holland, to the Lord be given all the praise, honor, and glory. It does not, it cannot, belong to me. Everything worth having, knowing, or enjoying is the pure gift of God, and to Him be rendered everlasting praise by the suffering saints below and the glorified spirits above.

My Christian love to your wife and all who love the Lord and His truth.
Yours affectionately in the truth of the Gospel,
J. C. P.

From *The Gospel Standard*, December 1, 1857

Good news from a far country—

I always feel a great unwillingness to obtrude myself on public notice more than absolute necessity may require, and have therefore considerable hesitation in bringing the following letters before the readers of *The Gospel Standard*; but as most of my friends who have read them have felt much interest in their perusal, and have rejoiced with me in the glad tidings communicated, I have been induced to comply with their expressed wishes to make them more widely known; and I hope in doing so, I desire to seek the glory of God. Apart from all personal considerations, it may rejoice our hearts to see that the Lord has a people in other countries as well as our own. Of course, where self is in question, it is extremely difficult to judge righteous judgment; but as I had not the least hand in the matter, and well know that the truths which I endeavor to set forth are only acceptable to the poor and needy children of God, I may well hope that the translation into Dutch of my

sermons, and their great circulation in Holland, afford some evidence that the Lord has a people there who love and fear His name. A few words, however, of explanation may be necessary, to give a clearer understanding of the circumstances under which the first of the following letters was written.

I received some time ago a very kind and friendly letter from a minister in London, mentioning that he had, in the providence of God, a short time before, visited Holland, and that at Rotterdam he had met with a Dutch gentleman, who asked him if he knew me, and could furnish him with my address. On his answering in the affirmative, the gentleman showed him several volumes of my sermons which had been translated into Dutch, and which, he said, were much read and valued by the children of God in Holland. In my answer to his letter, as he had mentioned he was likely soon again to visit Rotterdam, I begged him to mention to his Dutch friend that I would be happy to receive a letter from him. The first letter, which I have translated from the Dutch as faithfully as the two languages, so different in idiom, admit, it will be seen was sent to me in consequence of this reply.

The second, which was written in English, was sent to me by one of the publishers of my sermons in the same country, and has no connection whatever with the first letter.

I cannot but say that I felt both humbled and softened in my soul at the receipt of these glad tidings, and was enabled to bless and praise the Lord's gracious name for His kind condescension in making any use of one so unworthy to take even His name into his polluted lips. Though my prayers and supplications have been up to the Lord, that He would bless me to the souls of His saints, yet I never sought even here in England, still less in a foreign land, to spread anything that fell from my lips or pen, knowing well how much the pride of the flesh and self-exaltation mingle with such matters, and being perfectly conscious that it is with the Lord alone to bless whom and what He will bless. My feeling has ever been this—if anything spoken or written in the Lord's name be worth living, He will make it live; if worth spreading, He will make it spread; if not, let it all die and come to nothing.

I felt also, as an additional reason for bringing forward the first letter, that it would be read with interest as unfolding a little of the present religious condition of Holland; and though a dark cloud of unbelief and infidelity broods over that land, yet there are evidently bright gleams that break through.

J. C. P., November 18, 1857

The following are the Dutch letters referred to—

"Respected Sir; It is now about three years since the glad news became generally spread among the people of God, that your sermons had been translated into Dutch, purchased by many people, and read and re-read by not a few with an insatiable pleasure—and this in consequence of the hunger which, by God's grace, is still felt by many in Holland—a hunger, not after

natural bread, and a thirst, not after the water of the River Maas that flows by Rotterdam. Many a soul among that people, which in self is ever poor and wretched, has been revived and refreshed by the precious grain strewed by your hands; and the indispensable growth of that grain, which alone proceeds from God the Holy Spirit, is to the praise of free grace, both here and elsewhere not withheld.

"To me also was the privilege given to purchase one of your sermons, to read aloud to my wife and friends; and in truth, as a blessing attended it, this sermon, to use an expression of an excellent but departed friend, 'created a taste for more'. In consequence, I kept buying and reading one sermon after another, until I have now in my possession all your sermons (about fifty-four in number), which have been translated into Dutch, besides your answer to the question, 'What is it that saves a soul?'

"But just in proportion as I found and received more and more food for my soul from your sermons (and I must confess that in these things I live, and in them is the life of my spirit), there arose a strong involuntary desire in my heart to learn to know more about you. And every now and then among the people was the question asked—'Who is this J. C. Philpot, a man so taught by the Holy Spirit? Where and when did he live? Is he still in this wilderness, or has he already entered into the heavenly Canaan?' These and several other questions about you were not seldom asked of me, and exchanged among us. But my inquiries continued fruitless; my questions remained unanswered; no one knew these particulars about you more than myself; and so my hope vanished like smoke, to become ever better acquainted with you.

"But wonderful even in this case have been the ways of God, as I have frequently found before by experience. When we give up all heart, when our counsel is all come to an end, that is often the Lord's time to appear. Just see it in this case. Some weeks ago, the Lord sent me a person whom you know, Mr. — from London. He happened to come to the counting-house of Messrs. —, where I am chief manager. When I learned that he was a preacher in London, I at once asked him if he were acquainted with you. 'Yes', was his answer, 'I know Mr. Philpot very well, and he is yet alive; but he does not live in London'. Upon this I related to him how your sermons had been translated into Dutch, and also what a great desire there was to buy and read them. I also told him how closely I felt knit to you in spirit; and I begged him, if possible, to favor me with your address and residence. 'That I certainly will do', was his answer. And now all that he promised is fulfilled; for through the free goodness of the Lord, and His providential disposing, I have now your address and place of abode in your own handwriting, for which I return you my friendly thanks.

"And now let me address myself more particularly to you. Forgive, respected Sir, the liberty taken by a stranger, unknown to you even by sight, and separated from you by the sea; but one who feels in and through the Spirit, that you in a spiritual sense are one of the same family. Forgive, and count it not amiss, that I take the liberty of writing to you these few lines; and in my opinion, I think I have a ready inducement so to do, since you in your letter to Mr. —, which I have read, use these striking words—'*There were formerly*

in Holland many distinguished Christians; but I understand that vital godliness, for the most part, has sunk there to a very low ebb'.

"As you will remark, I have underlined your words, and feel willing to communicate to you something (for *all* is impossible) of our present state. But do you see with me in this point? And in the first place may I ask, 'Do you mean preachers and people, as well as the professors in the universities?' Alas! your supposition is too true, and is not a mere fancy. It is so. The 'peculiar people' are not now so numerous as they were formerly; and the doctrine of the Bible, and that of our fathers which was founded upon the Word of God, and compared with which they held life and goods cheap, is, sad to say, by their cowardly descendants, not only dragged in the mud, but trodden under foot. A pestilential teaching has thoroughly penetrated through all the higher and lower schools in Holland, so that even the precious Word of God is banished from the greater part of the schools; and through the venom so strewed, thousands are poisoned; and alas! through that circumstance, my beloved country, where God has wrought so many wonders, has thereby declared that it has no longer need of the God of its fathers. If Satan has thus mounted the throne, and if he rules as supreme among us (through the Lord's permission), and if God does not preserve us, we are all undone. If you would wish to read some account of the erroneous and lying spirit which is openly proclaimed in Holland as from the housetops, I will, with your permission, buy you a work of Mr. I. da Costa, entitled—*What is taught and delivered by the Theological Faculty at Leyden; A Voice of Woe and Lamentation*. By this you will perfectly understand the present religious condition of Holland, and will indeed see that there are not now so many Christians as formerly. But, through mercy, there are still a few men who blow the Gospel trumpet. There are still those who will not keep silence, but lift up their voice loudly in defense of the truth against these lies. There are still on Zion's walls, watchmen who pray earnestly for the peace of Jerusalem.

"You speak, in the second place, of the spiritual condition of Holland, and say that 'vital godliness is here at a low ebb'. If I do not mistake, I understand you to mean by the expression 'vital godliness', the inward spiritual life of the children of God. And alas! on this point generally one must speak with the mourning prophet—'Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep over the condition of Zion here!' Ah, how has the gold become dim! Much more is heard spoken about points of disunion and disagreement, than on points of agreement and union. These things should not so be. One says 'I am of Paul', another 'I of Apollos', and 'I of Cephas', and 'I of Christ'. And I ask sometimes with Paul, 'Is Christ divided?' Alas! this is the greatest of all our condemnation, that because the tongues are so confounded, the children of God do not understand each other now as once they did. But the Lord, the faithful Three-in-One covenant God, will Himself again once more arise to heal what is now so lamentably broken, and to gather together what is now so widely scattered. When? In His own time. 'Watchman, what of the night? The morning is come, and yet it is night' (Dutch translation). Come Lord, heal the breaches of Your people. O Lord Jesus! come quickly; redeem Israel from all her distresses. But God be thanked, for Jesus Christ's sake, His only and eternal Son, through the Holy Spirit, there are here, as in the days of the man of God, thousands who have

not bowed their knee to Baal. There are both preachers and people who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

"And—but what more shall I add? Already I have perhaps put your patience too much to the test, for this letter is already much longer than I intended when I began to write. Yet a few words more. Though we and our fathers have grievously sinned, and our sin and guilt, together with the guilt of the land and the church, press us sore, yet through the light which God the Holy Spirit, for Christ's sake, sheds abroad, we are at various moments deeply humbled, confess our guilt, and fall down into the dust; we mourn sore like doves, with this cry gushing out of the depth of the soul—'Pity us, O Lord! pity, and show mercy. To us belong shame and confusion of face, but righteousness belongs unto You. We have sinned. Do to us that which is good in Your eyes; only deliver us in our time, O Lord!' Surely the Lord does not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities. He is the Lord, merciful and gracious, patient, and abundant in goodness and truth, even to this day. Peace alone through the blood of the cross.

"Will you be so good, dear Sir, if the Lord will and give you time and inclination, as to send me a reply to my letter as early as possible. And may the Lord give you an understanding illuminated with divine light, that you may write such things as shall be suited to our necessities, and for the building up of our mourning Zion here upon her most holy faith. Tell me if a spiritual union has been formed between you and me; and do you feel disposed now and then, if the Lord will, to allow me the liberty of corresponding with you?

"I have procured, according to your request, some of your works which have been translated into Dutch, which I send to you through our friend. Send me word if they are all translated correctly and genuinely, and how you like the prefaces in Dutch which have been prefixed to some of your sermons; also if you are acquainted with the translators, and knew that so many had been translated.

"And now I have taken the liberty which you gave me in your letter to Mr. —, to write to you in Dutch, as I find that you are acquainted with that language, and I can express myself more readily in my mother tongue. If possible, write to me back in the same language; but if not, write to me in English.

Yours in the Lord,
G. T., Rotterdam, September 30, 1857."
(The preceding Letter was an answer to the above)

"Dear Sir,
Having long ago intended to write to you, I take the liberty to do so now. I have become acquainted with your name by reading one of your sermons, on Psalm 43:3—'Send forth Your light and Your truth'. This sermon I have translated into Dutch; and because I found so much excellent and precious truth in it, I have published it at a very low price, as I thought that in our

country just such sermons were needed. Not that we have not, even here in Holland, faithful watchmen. Oh, yes, thanks be to God, who continues to supply us with some! I say 'some', in comparison to the many who ought to be shepherds of the flock of Christ—and it is sad to say, they are wolves, trying to disperse the flock, and they do not practice the word of the prophet Isaiah—'Comfort, comfort My people, says your God'. Since then I have also published a few more of your sermons, and must tell you, Sir, that the people of God find food convenient for them therein. They say—'Oh give, give! supply us with the sermons of J. C. Philpot'. And now those sermons are among the most celebrated and extensively read in our country.

"I should feel infinitely obliged to you, Sir, if I might have all your sermons and other writings; and my request is that you will go on publishing sermons. May the Lord, who gives so great a blessing on these sermons, continue to make them serviceable to the extension of His kingdom; and that His poor people may long be fed with them, is my sincere wish. The Lord, who has His children everywhere, and makes the one a means of comfort to another, move your heart to send me a reply; for besides myself, there are a great many friends who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, who would feel honored to receive an answer to these lines.

Trusting to your kindness for sending me an answer very soon,
Your humble Servant and Brother in Christ Jesus,
H. B., October 16, 1857."

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1858 - 1859)

February 25, 1858

My dear Richard Healy—I was glad to receive a few lines from you, and still more pleased to learn that you were once more enabled to set up your Ebenezer to the love and faithfulness of a covenant God. Amid all our miserable departures and wanderings from the only real Object of our soul's desire, and amid all our temptations and trials, He remains still "the same yesterday, today, and forever." When we get into a low place, and think over our dreadful backslidings, we expect stroke after stroke of chastisement; but the Lord's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor His ways as our ways. Hart says—"I expected hell, he brought me heaven".

And so when the poor, guilty, self-condemned soul looks for a stripe—comes a kiss; and for a frown—a smile. But it is this undeserved mercy, this unlooked-for and almost un hoped-for grace, that so melts the soul into penitence, love, and obedience. Oh what poor nothings are we; how devoid of all power, and sometimes of all will, to look unto our best, our only Friend—the blessed Jesus, whom we do love with all our heart and soul, and yet can and do so basely and foully forsake! Oh how I have sinned against and before His blessed Majesty! It makes me weep sometimes to feel how I have sinned

in His holy and pure eyes; but all I can do, and that only by His grace, is to look again and again to His atoning blood—that precious blood which cleanses from all sin. I believe you, as Mr. Huntington says, have passed the line; you will no more taste the gall and wormwood of unpardoned sin, but will doubtless have your measure of trials, temptations, sorrows, and afflictions. Without these your soul would soon cleave to the dust, and would seek its home and happiness here in this world.

We were all much pleased to hear of your dear wife's safe deliverance. It is a most trying time for a husband. I can well enter into your trials and exercises about it. We know what we deserve, and feel if the Lord took away the wife, or sent a deformed child, we only have received what we fully merited. But He is better to us than all our fears; He deals not with us after our sins, nor rewards us according to our iniquities. May our desire be to live more to His praise and glory. I hope I am slowly mending, but only slowly. I feel the cross and the separation from the friends. So much illness is a heavy trial and depresses my mind, but I hope I am learning some lessons in the furnace.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 29, 1858

My dear Friend Mr. Tips,

I hope that the blessed Lord, who has called you by His distinguishing grace, who has planted His fear in your heart—a precious new covenant blessing (Jer. 32:40), who has convinced you of your lost and ruined state by nature, and given unto you to believe in the Son of His love (Phil. 1:29; Eph. 2:8), is also carrying on His divine work in your heart (Phil. 1:6), and making you fit for the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1:12). It is a most rich and unspeakable mercy, that those whom Jesus loves, He loves to the end, and that His sheep shall never perish, neither shall anyone pluck them out of His hand. This is the grand security of the saints of God; for their inherent sinfulness and weakness are so great; Satan is so crafty and so strong; sin so powerful and deceptive; and the world so entangling and alluring; that but for the special and unceasing grace of God, they must perish, and concerning faith make sure and awful shipwreck.

But the members of the mystical body, of which Jesus is the exalted Head (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18), can no more perish than He can, for they are united to Him by an act of sovereign grace, given them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4); and thus being constituted members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Eph. 5:30), the members can no more perish than their Head. Would you willingly allow the tip of your little finger to be cut off, or to perish of mortification? Would it be a complete body if any member were absent? The high priest under the law was to be "without blemish." He was to have no member deficient, and none superfluous (Lev. 21:17-21). So it is with the blessed Jesus, the great High Priest over the house of God (Heb. 10:21). His body is a perfect body, as set up in the mind of God, as the Holy Spirit describes in Psalm 139:16. Before an architect builds a house or any other structure, he has the plan carefully

drawn out in his mind, and then upon paper. While the building is going on, the bystanders have a very imperfect conception of the plan of the architect, and the beauty of the building; but he knows where every stone should be placed, and when the whole is completed, it is but the execution of his original design. So in grace; the church of God is compared to a building (1 Cor. 3:9; Heb. 3:6; 1 Peter 2:5). These stones of which this spiritual house consists are "living stones", that is, stones made alive unto God by His regenerating grace; and by their union and communion with the Lord and with each other, grow up into a holy temple in the Lord, being built together for a habitation of God through the Spirit (Eph. 2:21, 22).

Amid all the errors that abound, and all the declensions from the faith, experience, zeal, hope, and love of those great and godly men who once formed the bulwark and the glory of your country, it is a mercy that the Lord has yet a seed to serve Him in your native land. Those very universities and schools which were founded for the purpose of becoming fountains of truth, to spread their healing streams over the land, have now become springs of deadly poison and error. It is something like what is described of the star called Wormwood, which holy John saw fall from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and falling upon the rivers and fountains of waters, (Rev. 8:10, 11). When the springs are poisoned at the fountain-head, they must carry death and destruction wherever they flow.

But there is a precious promise given to the believing disciples of the blessed Lord, that if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them (Mark 16:18). Thus while the children of the wicked one greedily drink down the poisonous cup that is filled with the vine of Sodom, and the fields of Gomorrah, whose wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps (Deut. 32:33), the children of God reject the deadly draught, and can only drink the pure wine of His grape (Deut. 32:14). The wise mother of King Lemuel gave her son gracious directions, when she bade him to "give strong drink unto him who is ready to perish, and wine to those who are of heavy hearts" (Prov. 31:6). It is when we begin to feel the misery into which we have been cast by sin, and thus become ready to perish and of heavy hearts, that the pure wine of Gospel grace is suitable to our lost condition. As the holiness and justice of God are discovered to the conscience, and we are made to see and feel the depths of the Adam fall, we look out of ourselves for a salvation which we could not find in our fallen nature, or in our deeply corrupt and unbelieving heart. When then we obtain, by living faith, a view of the Son of God as a Mediator between God and men; when we see by the eye of faith the blood of the cross, and the full and complete atonement which He, as the Lamb of God, made for sin, then we heartily embrace Him as "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). We see and feel that there is salvation in Him and in no other (Acts 4:12); and as this salvation is seen to be worthy of God and suitable to us, as it answers all the demands of God's holy law, and glorifies it by rendering it an obedience as far excelling ours as heaven excels earth and God surpasses man, we embrace it as our justifying righteousness and covering robe, from the eyes of Him who, outside of Christ, is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29).

These doctrines, however they may be neglected or despised, are the doctrines according to godliness, which God has revealed in His Word of truth, and which He makes known by a divine power, to the hearts of those who fear His great and glorious name. Because men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, and supposing that gain is godliness (1 Tim. 6:5) have perverted the truth of God, their wicked and erroneous perversions do not at all impair divine revelation. They have not succeeded in polluting God's pure Word, or shutting it up from the people. They may, and do, deceive themselves, and their wretched disciples; but they never can, never will, deceive the elect of God (Matt. 24:24). All who are taught of God will escape their bewitching errors, for to them there is given an anointing from the Holy One, and they know all things. This anointing which they have received from the Lord abides in them; it teaches them of all things, and is truth and no lie, and the effect of it is to cause them to abide in Christ (1 John 2:20 27).

I hope that my dear friend feels more and more his weakness and helplessness, and is enabled to look more believingly and steadfastly to the Lord Jesus Christ. You will never find anything good in yourself, for the Apostle's own testimony is—"I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwells no good thing." . . . As my sermons are often read in congregations where there is no preacher, and as those who know and love the truth are for the most part poor and illiterate, I have to guard against using such words and expressions as are beyond the reach of uneducated people. Being myself an educated man, naturally fond of literature, and acquainted with both some of the ancient and modern languages, I find it difficult always to suit my expressions to my hearers. But I hope the Lord has given me a desire to "condescend to men of low estate", and made me willing and desirous to speak in that simple, clear language which suits all classes, being neither too high for the low, nor too low for the high.

My desire is to exalt the grace of God, to proclaim salvation alone through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; to declare the sinfulness, helplessness, and hopelessness of man in a state of nature, and to describe, as far as I am able, the living experience of the saints of God in their trials, temptations, and sorrows, and in their consolations and blessings. All this brings with it labor and trial; but I do not know what else we have to live for in this world but to advance, as far as we can, the kingdom of Christ, the glory of God, and the well-being of the saints of the Most High; and if the Lord has, in His providence and grace, called me to the distinguished honor of ministering in His holy name, it should even be my object, as I hope it really is, to proclaim His grace and glory, and to seek so to do it that it may be owned and blessed by God the Holy Spirit to the souls of the saints of God.

I never sought the position in which I find myself placed, and the thought of that is sometimes a comfort to me. My natural desire would be to lead a quiet, obscure life, as I know both the perils and the trials to which a more public and prominent situation exposes a man. Many eyes are upon him to watch his movements—some waiting for good, and some for evil; some as friends, and others as foes; some as "helpers of his joy", and others hinderers, and as far as permitted persecutors, because he preaches a Gospel which they hate.

The struggle between truth and error, free grace and free will, Christ and Belial, heaven and hell, is still going on in this country as in yours; the strong man armed is keeping his palace in many hearts, nor will he give way until one stronger than he comes upon him, takes away all his armor wherein he trusted, and divides the spoils. If we are on the side of Christ, we must expect much opposition from without and from within; many afflictions, trials, and temptations, to prove the reality and strength of our faith, as well as those communications of wisdom and strength out of His fullness, without which all our own strivings are worthless and useless.

It rejoices me to find that there is in Holland a poor and afflicted people who trust in the Lord, and know and love His truth. I have read with much pleasure and interest the prefaces prefixed to the various issues of my sermons, especially one by den Heer A. P. du Cloux, which has given me a greater insight into the character and condition of the people of God in your country, than anything else which I have seen on the subject. In spite of all the miserable Socinianism and infidelity which from Germany and France have flooded your unhappy land; notwithstanding the atheistic influences of the first French Revolution, from which we, as an insular nation, were in some degree preserved; notwithstanding the state of theology in the universities and schools, one cannot but think that a country which produced so many martyrs to the Spanish Inquisition in the time of the Reformation, and has since given birth to such gracious and eminent divines as Herman Witsius, Hoombeeck, &c., cannot be abandoned of God. Nothing can be sounder than your old Dutch confession of faith, or the articles of the Synod of Dort, and you as a nation are blessed with one of the most faithful and admirable translations of the Word of God from the original languages, that any Protestant nation has been favored with. The blessing that has rested upon our English translation is inexpressible; nor is it possible that so great a gift as the Scriptures in the Dutch language can have been given to you as a nation in vain. Though divine matters may be at a low ebb with you as regards spiritual experience and vital godliness, and though schools and universities, professors and preachers, may be enemies to Christ and His Gospel, yet you have as a nation, beyond almost any in Europe, the elements of a gracious revival. You have a large measure of civil liberty, toleration, a free press, an admirable translation of the Scriptures, and a sound confession of faith. You have the memory and example of godly ancestors, whom all the power of the Spanish monarchy could neither daunt nor crush; and you have as their descendants, a scattered people who know and love the Gospel.

How differently are you situated from the neighboring countries of Belgium and France; and though perhaps one is apt to attribute too much importance to one's own labors and productions, I cannot but hail the favorable reception and the large sale that my sermons have met with in Holland as a token for good. For I know who they are, for the most part in this country, who read them with interest, pleasure, and profit, and that they generally are those who know and love the truth of God as applied by the Holy Spirit to the soul. I come before my own countrymen as one known to them for more than twenty years, speaking in a language which is familiar to them; but I come before my friends and readers in Holland as a foreigner, unknown to them by name or character, and having the disadvantage of speaking in an idiom not altogether agreeing with their own. To what then am I, under the

blessing of God, to attribute their favorable reception, but to the force with which they commend themselves to men's consciences? I may perhaps here quote the words of Heer A. P. A. du Cloux—"Shall I recommend these sermons? No, they recommend themselves."

I was also struck with a remark in the same preface, that while the poor and afflicted family find the truth in other men's writings, they do not find their life in them, and that is just what they find in mine. My aim and desire have been to put into them, so to speak, the life of God, and the true experience of a living soul; and seeing that many of my readers in Holland have found that life in them, does it not show that they must have themselves divine life to find and feel it there? I also hail with great pleasure the fact that ministers of God's Word in your country have been found willing to translate and recommend the sermons. There is so much miserable jealousy in the human heart, that I cannot but think grace must have overcome their pride and prejudice against the writings of a stranger, and made them willing to listen to a voice from beyond the sea.

And now, my dear friend, accept my thanks for your affectionate and welcome letter and
 Believe me to be,
 Yours affectionately, in the bonds of the Gospel,
 J. C. P.

July 23rd, 1858

My dear friend,

I fear that you will almost think that I have forgotten you by not writing before; but you know how much I am usually engaged in writing until I have got the month's *Standard* off my hands. I take then the opportunity of a few days' quiet and rest down here in this retired spot, to send you a few lines to encourage you, I hope, to look unto and trust in the Lord above. I was reading this morning, at our family prayer, Psalm 51, and was struck with a few things in it, which seem so suitable to the needs and feelings of every sensible sinner; for it is not necessary to have committed David's sin to have a measure of David's repentance and confessions, and of David's desires, breathings, and supplications. "Have mercy upon me, O God", he says, "according to Your loving-kindness." To ask God to have mercy upon us is one of the first cries that a convinced sinner puts up to God. It was so with the tax-collector in the temple—and where it is sincere, God will certainly hear it "according to His loving-kindness", for He is full of love and kindness to poor mourning sinners.

How also he begs of the Lord to "blot out his transgressions according unto the multitude of His tender mercies." As our sins in thought, word, and deed are a countless multitude, of which every one deserves hell, we need "the multitude of His most tender mercies" to blot them out. We may see the stars in the sky, the sands on the sea-shore, the drops of dew on the grass, the waves rolling in upon the beach; but both our sins and God's tender mercies exceed them all. How He showed these tender mercies in giving His dear Son to suffer, bleed, and die for miserable sinners—and how we need all these

tender mercies to pity and pardon us and our transgressions. And how earnestly David begged, "Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." It is only the washing of God Himself that can wash us *clean*. If we could shed an ocean of tears, it would not wash away one sin—but the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. In order to make us feel this, the Lord shows us and makes us feel the guilt and burden of sin, and that we can do nothing to put it away. Pardon must be His own free gift, and that every sensible sinner is made to feel. But David says—"I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me." It is good to confess our sins, for there is a sweet and precious promise that, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

You may find it very difficult in your weak state of body to be able to kneel for any length at a time. But the Lord who searches the hearts knows all the real desire of the soul, and can and does listen to a sigh, a desire, a breath of supplication within. He knows our state both of body and soul, and is not a hard taskmaster to require what we cannot give, or lay upon us more than we can bear; but can and does give all that He desires from us. But very often He delays to appear, that He may teach us thereby we have no claim upon Him, and that anything granted is of His pure compassion and grace.

I hope you may be able to say—"It is good for me that I have been afflicted." You might have had everything that the carnal heart desires, and only been hardened thereby unto worldliness and ungodliness. But to be brought down in body and soul, to be weaned and separated from an ungodly world by affliction sanctified and made spiritually profitable; to be brought to feel your need of Christ, and that without an interest in His precious blood your soul must be forever lost—how much better it is really and truly to be laid upon a bed of affliction, with a hope in God's mercy, than to be left to your own carnality and thoughtlessness. Affliction of any kind is very hard to bear, and especially so when we begin to murmur and fret under the weight of the cross; but as I used to tell you when I sat by your bedside, when the Lord afflicts it is in good earnest; He means to make us feel it. Strong measures are required to bring us down, and affliction would not be affliction unless it were full of grief and sorrow. But when affliction makes us seek the Lord, with a deep feeling in the soul that none but Himself can save or bless, and we are enabled to look up unto Him with sincerity and earnestness, that He would manifest his love and mercy to our heart, He will appear sooner or later.

I do hope that the Lord in His own time and way will give you a blessed manifestation of His pardoning love, and fill your soul with sweet peace, so that, compared with it, all affliction will be found light indeed.

We called upon Dr. C. the other day at the hospital, and were with him for nearly an hour. He spoke of you with much interest and affection, and expressed the strongest faith about you that the Lord had begun His gracious work in your heart. You appear to have been laid upon his mind in a remarkable way, so that he feels quite a spiritual union with you. We hope to see him again before we leave town.

I think you would be pleased to see our congregations at Gower Street so large and so attentive. I hope it may please the Lord to bless the word to many poor souls who come to hear from various parts in town and country. The world may despise the Gospel and the people of God; but they are dear to the Lord, and He will one day make it manifest that they are His, when He comes to make up His jewels. May you and I, and those whom we love, be found among their number. Our united love to yourself, R., and the children.

**Yours most affectionately,
J. C. P.**

September 20, 1858

Dear Mr. Copcutt—I am much obliged to you for the interesting account which you have given of the removal from this valley of tears of both your parents, and hope the God of all grace will give you power to follow them as they followed Christ. Your deceased mother was one of the most remarkable women of whose experience I ever heard or read. I was much struck with one expression concerning her in a letter which I received from one of her family—"That she lived for no other object but the salvation of her soul." The Lord had separated her in a remarkable manner, not only from the profane world, but from the professing world. No doubt she saw the necessity of it, and that it was bearing the strongest testimony against it; but it did not diminish her affection for the real saints of God, or make her less kind and affectionate to her own family. And now your aged father is gone, as we hope, to join her in that blessed land where sin and sorrow are alike unknown, and where the Lord Himself wipes the tears from off all faces.

As you cannot hear the pure Gospel, and have no confidence in the ministers by whom you are surrounded, I think you do well to be separate from them, and follow out your mother's plan and read the Scriptures and the writings of sound authors. You cannot do better than read the writings of such gracious men as Bunyan, Rutherford, Erskine, and especially Mr. Huntington. These men had the Spirit of God, and were taught of Him to preach and write. They had tasted, felt, and handled what they wrote, and so far as we are taught by the same Spirit, we shall see eye to eye with them, and feel a dew, unction, and power attend their writings to our soul. It must be a very trying path for you to walk in, as it must bring down upon your head much reproach and misrepresentation. But if you are favored with the testimony of God in your own conscience, and have some manifestations of His presence, it will amply make up for any reproach that may assail you.

It is a great mercy to keep close to the oracles of God and to a throne of grace, to distrust our own wisdom and our own way, and to seek divine teaching. The great difficulty and snare in standing separate is, lest it should foster a self-righteous or censorious spirit, into which we may easily fall, unless preserved by the special grace of God. You will probably therefore have many deep discoveries of the evil of your heart, and many temptations spread in your path; that you may learn thereby that you are internally as sinful and as deeply fallen as any of those from whom you have felt compelled to separate. When separation is a necessity, as appears to have

been the case with your late mother and yourselves, the Lord will support you in it, and give you the testimony of His Spirit. Otherwise separation from the church of God is a great evil, and very much to be dreaded.

Being so imperfectly acquainted with the state of things in your country, I am not able to say how far I myself would walk in that path. It is my privilege and mercy to find here in this land saints of God with whom I can unite, and indeed feel that they are profitable companions, and such as I should wish to live and die with. But if my lot were cast in a land or in a spot where there were scarcely any of the manifested saints of God, I would desire to worship God in my own house, or where I could meet with two or three of the living family, with whom I might take sweet counsel in the things which belong to our eternal peace. It is not separation that will do us any good, unless we have good grounds for separating; and it will be tried over and over again how far our walk in this or that point is consistent with the will and Word of God. Our own conscience, our doubting mind, the word of truth, our great adversary, the opposition of enemies, the suspicion of saints, will all in various ways try those movements which seem different from the usual course of the Lord's family. And as you will have to die alone, and salvation is a personal matter, it will be well for you to consider how far you are influenced by the fear and grace of God, or how far you are acting merely out of respect to your mother's example. You must feel at times your isolated condition, and long for the ordinances of God's house, and especially for the Gospel as preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. I hope the Lord may guide your steps, and seal His own instruction upon your heart.

We hear in this country of what is called the great revival in the United States; but those who know the work of the Spirit have much difficulty in receiving it as the work of God, knowing how much of the flesh there is in these matters, and what error is maintained by those who are first and foremost in such revivals. It will do much if it spread a healthier tone of morality among those who profess to be converted by the grace of God, and lead them to exemplify in their life and conduct the precepts and the practice of the Gospel, which they profess to receive by the power of God. But if it be mere fleshly zeal, it will end as it began, or worse, according to the true proverb as quoted, 2 Peter 2:22.

I am much obliged to you for your kind invitation to visit your country; but there are two insuperable obstacles—(1) My health, which is very delicate, having a tender chest which could neither bear the winter nor the summer of your latitude; besides which, I am a most wretched sailor, and could not, unless compelled by the most powerful necessity, face the storms and waves of the wide Atlantic. (2) The second objection is my numerous engagements in this country, not only as the pastor of two churches, and as preaching to various congregations, but as conducting *The Gospel Standard*. But I am equally obliged to you for your kind invitation, and though personally unknown, respect and esteem you for your dear mother's sake, and your kind liberality to the saints of God. I am much interested in the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, as I believe it affords relief to many saints of God—some of them personally known to me, and others by report. I have received two contributions from Australia, so that even distant lands concur in

sending help to the saints of God in this country, as they did in Paul's time to the saints in Judea.

Please to present to your sisters my Christian regards and affectionate respects, for their parents' sake as well as their own, and accept the same from,
Your sincere and obliged friend,
J. C. P.

September 20, 1858

Dear friend,

For such I call you, though personally unknown; yet I trust we know by grace the same things, and therefore in that sense are known to each other in the things of God.

From your letter, you seem to have passed through a great deal of trial and temptation, but it has all been for the good of your soul—and I doubt not that you would not have one thing altered, when in your right mind, but can bless God for all your afflictions and trials, as well as your deliverances and manifestations. It is a great thing to know both sides of the question—both law and Gospel, misery and mercy, condemnation and salvation, trial and deliverance, the ups and downs, the ins and outs, of Christian experience; for "by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit" (Isa. 38:16). Without trials and afflictions, we soon settle upon our lees, and get at ease in Zion. The heart grows cold toward the Lord, prayer becomes a formal service or a wearisome task, the ministry of the Gospel is little prized, the Bible little read, and the company of God's tried people little sought.

On the other hand, if there is no sweetness in the things of God, no dew upon the branch, no heavenly light and life felt within, no access in prayer, and no visitations of the Lord's presence, religion becomes a very heavy burden, and the soul gets peevish, rebellious, and fretful, like a hungry child or a babe weaned from the mother's bosom.

I am, Yours in the best Bonds,
J. C. P.

November 20, 1858

My dear Mr. Parks—I am much obliged to you for your kindness and courtesy in sending me your pamphlet upon Chastisement. I like it very much, and think it is a very clear and faithful testimony against that error which I fear is making great and fearful progress.

Controversial writing is at times as needful for the church of God as that which is more purely doctrinal and experimental. Each has its distinct and peculiar advantages; for truth requires to be set forth in its purity, experience in its divine reality, and error and heresy laid bare in all their naked deformity. Most errors have in them a dash of truth. The potsherd

must be covered with silver dross, or its earthen nature would be discovered at once. But the grand deception is to draw natural inferences from Scriptural premises—which inferences are distinctly opposed to Scriptural conclusions. Thus, for instance, the carnal mind draws this inference from the blessed truth of salvation by grace—"Then the more I sin, the more will grace abound", which conclusion is the very logic of hell, and as distinct from that drawn by the spiritual mind as Belial from Christ. So, because the advocates of non-chastisement see in the Word that God has put away all the sins of the elect in and through the blood of Christ, they logically but erroneously infer that God sees in them no sin to chastise. Horrible conclusion!

Of course I cannot altogether sympathize with you in your present position; but I am glad to think there is any one in the Church of England who preaches truth and opposes error.

I am, dear Sir, yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

January 4, 1859

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—Since I last wrote to you I have been very unwell; indeed, I have been confined to my bed for the last ten days. . . .

One thing is certain, that all who are journeying heavenward are passing more or less through a path of trial, suffering, and exercise; and I need not tell you how the weak and coward flesh shrinks from the weight of so heavy a yoke. I find it often difficult to know what good I get from the cross; and you know there is such a thing as grinding a fool in a mortar. I hardly know at times whether I am that fool who has been so often ground, or whether I have learned anything to profit. But I think I can say this; if I ever have learned anything worth knowing, or got anything worth keeping, it has been through the furnace. That is the place where no self-righteousness, vain confidence, or fleshly faith can stand. They are like putting a piece of lead into the fire, which melts as soon as it feels the flame. But truth, salvation by grace, the blood of the Lamb, and the work of the blessed Spirit upon the heart, will stand the hottest flame, and shine all the brighter for it. I feel much convinced in my own mind that nine-tenths of what is considered to be religion is worth nothing; and I believe that you have come much to the same conclusion. How many forms, rites, and ceremonies, which are thought so highly of, sink into rottenness and death when they are viewed in the light of the Spirit; and perhaps an opposite temptation springs up, which is to think almost too little of the means.

My illness has very much thrown back my meditated publication upon the Sonship of Christ, and I hardly know when I shall be able to take it up again. A good part of the address was written in bed, and most of the sermon No. 22, which has just come out, was revised there also. I understand that they have an increasing sale, and that the publisher has been obliged frequently to reprint the back numbers.

Our friend — would tell you how many of the ministers who have been thought men of truth are entangled in the error of denying the eternal Sonship of the adorable Redeemer. How much we are sunk into the state which Mr. Huntington foresaw as coming upon the churches—and those who live will probably see matters get worse and worse. To deny vital fundamental truths is the first step to apostasy; for when men get indifferent to the truth of God, and view vital truths as mere opinions, the next step from this indifference is to depart from them; and as they go on, they get from bad to worse, until the truth is altogether given up, and error after error greedily drunk in.

**There are two things for which a child of God should cry most earnestly; one is to be kept from evil, and the other to be preserved from error. Some are more tempted to one, and some to the other; but both are equally dreadful traps of Satan, and indeed I hardly know which is the worse of the two; but how we see in the New Testament times the prevalence of both in the churches! See what characters there were as drawn by the pen of Jude, and again what erroneous men as depicted by the pencil of holy John. Now I believe we have just such characters in the churches, only they are covered over with a decent profession. What need we have to be ever upon the watch-tower, to be studying the Word of truth, and to be begging of the Lord to give us His Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, to make and keep our conscience alive and tender, and grant us everything which is comprised in the prayer of Jabez. With every kind wish for the New Year,
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

February 4, 1859

My dear friend, John Grace,

We shall be glad to see you if you can contrive to give us a look-in by the way; but should have been better pleased if you could have contrived to have given us a week evening at the chapel. I believe our friends love real experimental truth. In fact, what else can really satisfy a soul which has been made alive unto God? How many, alas! in our day seem to amuse themselves with religion; instead of its being their most weighty concern, to which all others must be subordinate. But the fact is, that the natural, legal conscience wants soothing into quiet like a fractious child; and religion in some shape or other is taken as a kind of tonic to quiet the uneasy babe. There are very many whose consciences would loudly remonstrate against having no religion, for as some are born poets, others musicians, others artists, so many are born religious; and these turn as naturally and as instinctively to religion as a person born with an ear to music takes to playing a musical instrument. It would be a great mistake to call such persons "hypocrites" in the strict sense of the word, as they are to a certain extent sincere and do not put on religion as a mask to deceive others. It is of these people that the great mass of hearers in all denominations is composed; and when, from various causes, such embrace doctrinally the truth, they take their standing among professors of the doctrines of grace. But all this while their heart and conscience are untouched by the finger of God; no spiritual life has been

communicated to their dead souls, nor has divine light penetrated into their consciences. In one sense they are the most hopeless of hearers, for they are accustomed so to hear everything which convicts or comforts the child of grace with an unfeeling heart, that they seem almost beyond all conviction.

How we are brought by everything that we see without, or feel within, to be deeply and firmly convinced that salvation, with everything which that term embraces or implies, is wholly of free and sovereign grace! The helplessness, the ignorance, the unbelief, the darkness, the carnality, and death of the heart of man, as sensibly and inwardly felt, preached to us in a way that no preacher can match our case and state by the Adam fall. And as the precious truth of God is opened up and applied to the heart by a divine power, there is a pulpit, and more than a pulpit, within, which proclaims the beauty and blessedness of salvation by grace, that touches every secret string of the conscience. Every minister who hopes to be made a blessing to the church of God must know something of Paul's experience, 2 Cor. 4:13. It is by possessing the same spirit of faith which dwelt in the bosom of David and of Paul, that any minister can be useful or acceptable to the Lord's family.

I am glad to find that the Lord continues to be with you at Brighton. I have always viewed it as a very important place, and we have reason to believe the Lord has many of His dear people there. Sussex has been for many years a highly favored county; but you justly observe that men may hear the truth preached in its purity for years, and yet if the Lord does not apply it to the heart, it has no real entrance, and men will readily turn away from it to error or empty sound.

I hope the Lord will be with you in your journeys.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 5, 1859

My dear Friend,—I was glad to receive a few lines from you, and to find that your poor body was so far strengthened as to be enabled to use your pen. When I saw you at R.'s so brought down in body, I hardly expected that the Lord would raise you up to your present state of health. But He kills and makes alive both body and soul, and can and does at His sovereign good pleasure both pull down and raise up.

You have known much of these dealings of the Lord, both with your afflicted body and your exercised soul; and I dare say have found that there is a blessing in both, and that each of them is a part of the Lord's sovereign work, and that the one is quite as needful as the other; indeed, that they are both so connected that they cannot be put asunder.

I am sure that every soul which knows and fears the Lord must be sensible how it wanders and departs from Him when He does not put forth His power and His grace to hold it up and hold it in. And I dare say that my dear friend finds that illness and weakness are not only very hard for the flesh to bear,

but that they give rise to many peevish, murmuring, and fretful feelings, all which very much tend to darken the mind, confuse the judgment, bring guilt upon the conscience, open a door for Satan's accusations, and cause the Lord to hide His face.

When the Lord puts a soul into the furnace it is to take away the dross and tin. But how can these be taken away unless they are first discovered and brought to light, and thus separated from the gold? It is very perplexing to the mind of a child of God to find so much of the old man at work under trial and temptations. On a sick bed he would gladly be spiritual, prayerful, and heavenly-minded, especially when he feels how soon life with him may come to a close. How full then he must be of self-condemnation to find so much sin still at work and so little grace. But here is the furnace which discovers the sin, and as it is hated and confessed there is a taking of it away; and when the Lord once more discovers Himself then the gold shines brighter than ever.

I wish for my dear friend much of the Lord's supporting presence, and that she may feel it is well with her, come what may, that she is safe in the Lord's hand for life and death, time and eternity.

Accept my best love.
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 18, 1859

My dear friend, John Grace,

It is a great pity that those who are opposed to 'believer's baptism' should have taken such high ground. It is very rarely that I feel my mind led to say anything upon the subject. Not that I do not hold it with a firm hand, but because my mind seems taken up in preaching with matters so much more important, and in which the life and power of godliness consist. The people of God, especially those who are tried and exercised, need some solid food for their souls, and many of them come very much cast down by temptation and sorrow. Such people need to hear something that may be as a blessed balm to their hearts, and everything but Christ and His blood in the blessed power and experience of them to their souls is viewed by them as worthless.

Ordinances are good in their place, but let them not occupy that pre-eminence which nothing can claim but the Savior and His finished work, and the teachings of the Holy Spirit by which He is made known.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

July 22, 1859

My dear afflicted friend Mrs. Peake—I sincerely desire to sympathize with you under your truly distressing bereavement, and hope that the Lord may support your soul in this season of grief and sorrow. When I saw your poor

dear husband in town, I could scarcely indulge a hope that his life would be spared. Still I could not have anticipated his removal from this valley of tears so suddenly as it has pleased the Lord to take his soul unto Himself.

I do not pretend to offer you any consolation in this most distressing hour, as I know that grief must and should have its way, and that nothing short of the immediate support of God can bear you up under your load of sorrow. You may say with Job—"The thing that I greatly feared has come upon me." And when I recollect what I have seen you to feel in the anticipation of the event, I hardly dare paint to myself your feelings under the dreadful reality. Still, all is not unmingled grief and sorrow. You have a sweet persuasion that he is safely landed in that happy spot where he has often longed to be. Our dear friend, Mrs. Keal, mentioned in her letter the words which he spoke to you in the night, and I hope that the sweet assurance which they conveyed may impart a balm to your troubled spirit. You did not indeed need any such testimony, as you knew well the ground of his hope. Yet it was a ray of parting light, and as his poor mind seemed to have been allowed to lose its balance, it was a great mercy that he was enabled to leave a dying testimony, to which you will be enabled sometimes to look, in sweet confidence that he entered the open heaven which then seemed revealed to his eyes and heart.

I do hope and pray that the Lord may support you under this most heavy trial, and make it a most gracious means of bringing you nearer to Himself—that He may be Himself your Husband, according to His promise.

Your most affectionate Friend,
J. C. P.

August 20, 1859

My dear bereaved Friend Mrs. Peake,—Nothing but extreme pressure of writing has prevented me dropping you a few lines of sympathy and affection. Pardon the unintentional neglect. The Review and Sermon have demanded much time, even to the suffering of health.

My intention is for the Obituary of your beloved husband, and my dear and valued friend, to go into the *body* of the *Gospel Standard*, and not on the wrapper. I hope it has intrinsic merit sufficient to justify its insertion there; but I would strain a point to place it there, from my esteem and affection for you both. Therefore dismiss from your mind any fear on the subject, as far as I am concerned in the matter.

You will long feel your loss, and probably more and more increasingly. A woman in losing her husband loses almost her earthly all, and you have lost a beloved spiritual companion, as well as a partner in life. But you have a sweet and blessed balm in the thought that he is only gone a little before, and thus you mourn not as those without hope. This, with the consolations of God to your own soul, will be your best cordial in this valley of tears. But grief must have its way, and it is desirable that it should flow and not be repressed too violently. I hope you may derive benefit from your sojourn at Y—, and I

think it was quite wise seeking a little change of scene and air, after so much fatigue, and anxiety, and grief.

I have been attended here with more than my usual congregation. Mr. Parry stabled yesterday forty-five horses, which had brought hearers from all parts.

Believe me to be yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 6, 1859

My dear friend, John Grace—I thank you for your kind letter and offer to take a number of copies of my meditated little work on *The Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ*.

I am sorry to say that my mind has been so much taken up with preaching and traveling, that I have not been able to give it that attention which it requires before I can send it forth. A subject of such importance requires great quietness of mind, seclusion, prayer, and meditation, which I cannot give it when wandering about on the King's errands. I must return to the quietness of my own home, and get my mind, with God's help and blessing, into a frame suitable to the subject, as I wish to enlarge what I have already written, to digest the materials more thoroughly, and to arrange them more orderly than I have yet done. Writing is not altogether like preaching. I often take my pen in my hand and cannot write a single line. The spring does not rise, and if this be not the case, the stream cannot flow. There is no use forcing the subject. It must come freely into the mind, and flow freely from the pen. Unless some savor or unction attends what is written, it will never touch the hearts of God's saints, and there will be a lack of freedom in the communication itself. On such sacred subjects, great caution and holy wisdom are needful, and a close adherence to the very words of inspired truth, or some expression may be dropped contrary to the mind of the Holy Spirit.

I was glad to learn that you had been so well heard in Berks and Oxon. There are many gracious people in that neighborhood, and I think that I had on the 28th, at Abingdon, one of the choicest congregations that met together anywhere that day, for we had a gathering of the Lord's people for many miles in all directions. I have been a long time from home, all July and August; have seen many people, and preached to large congregations. There certainly is a great spirit of hearing in many places, but I fear that vital godliness is, for the most part, at a low ebb. It is rather difficult to reconcile the two things, as a spirit of hearing is generally connected with life and feeling in the soul; and I cannot doubt that there are many saints of God up and down the land, though one finds few whose souls are much favored and blessed. . . .

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 3, 1859

My dear friend, William Brown—I desire sincerely to sympathize with you under your present heavy trial, especially as I have had myself some experience, both of bodily affliction, and also of being laid aside from the ministry. At the same time I cannot but concur in the prudence, and I might add, in the necessity, of the step which you have taken. Both you and Mrs. Brown have long suffered from the malaria of Godmanchester, and have clearly proved its injurious effects, by being so much better in health when removed from its noxious influence. It is not then a sudden whim or fancy, but unhappily a sad fact, against which you have struggled again and again with the same result.

Illness and weakness of body, we well know, are in themselves heavy afflictions, and when to them is added trials of mind, it is laying on a load at the very time when we are least able to bear it. At the same time, the very feeling of the people at Godmanchester shows a most sincere attachment to you. They could not bear to lose you, and were therefore angry, both with you and the assigned cause for your departure. The air which they had breathed from infancy might be health to them, but death to you. The very atmosphere (Southport, Lancashire) which you are now inhaling with pleasure, and I hope with advantage to recruit your health, would not at all suit me, as I found three years ago the northern air was too chilling for my chest. But I well know how apt we are to make our own feelings a standard for others.

But enough of this. I do most sincerely hope that you may soon be restored to your beloved work, for I am sure that you will feel being laid aside to be a heavier trial in reality than it appears in prospect. You will see the importance and the blessedness of the work, as you scarcely ever saw it before; the weight of the ministry will rest with heavier pressure upon your mind, and like Jeremiah, you will feel a fire shut up in your bones, which would gladly find vent. You must not expect to be favored with many such Lord's days as the first that you spent at Southport. Murmurings and fretfulness may arise in your mind at being laid aside, and when you look round and see the ministers of Satan full of health and strength, and you who would gladly speak in the name of the Lord laid aside, it may stir up many hard thoughts and unbelieving reasonings why it should be so. I do hope that the Lord may enable you to open your mouth, if not so fully or so widely as you could wish, yet with a sufficient testimony that He is with you in the work. There are, I believe, many little 'causes' in Lancashire where, when your health is recruited, you may speak. But the Lord knows best what to do with us.

The lines which you quote from Milton's sonnet, I have often thought of, for they are most expressive of the posture of a Christian. I have thought sometimes that ministers of Christ are too much engaged in spending without getting—and I am well convinced that so much preaching is not good for the soul, unless the Lord be in a very special manner with the preacher. We have to receive before we can give; and if there be no reading, meditation, prayer, waiting upon the Lord, and passing through trial, exercise, and temptation,

and being supported and blessed in and under them, there will be nothing, as it were, laid up in the heart to come out of the mouth. It is this lack of reading, meditation, and spiritual exercises which makes the ministry of the day so lean, and to wear out so soon, and become a mere irksome series of unprofitable repetition. I do hope that the blessed Lord will in this affliction be pouring into your soul the riches of His grace, that you may see more and more of the beauty and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, be led more and more into the fullness and depth of God's truth, so that when you come out of this furnace, it may be like gold purified in the fire. The friends both here and at Leicester testify to the sweetness and savor which attended your testimony in your last visit at both places. Oh, it is by these things that men live, and in all these things is the life of our spirit! Our coward flesh shrinks from afflictions, but they are our best friends, and we learn nothing truly profitable but in and through them.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 31, 1859

My dear friend, William Brown—I still desire to sympathize with you in your present painful trial, and if I can do so better than some others, it is because I have had some experience of it, both in body and in mind. I remember feeling once so much the cares and anxieties of the ministry, as to wish I had never opened my mouth in the Lord's name. But soon after this I was laid aside for some months by illness and great bodily weakness, and then I felt that the cares and burdens of the ministry were preferable to being laid aside from it; for if there were trials in it, there were also secret blessings. But in all these matters the Lord is a Sovereign, and does not consult our wishes or feelings, but His own glory, though at the same time, with all that wisdom and grace which shine forth so conspicuously in His blessed character, He overrules these trials to our eventual good. To use Mr. Newton's figure, the mower is not idle when he is sharpening his scythe, though he is not cutting down the grass; and so the Lord may be sharpening your scythe, though at present you are not mowing the field.

It is with the soul as with the body. When we are asleep, and even resting after dinner, we are only gathering up strength for renewed exertions; and we know that our success and power in the pulpit depend much upon what we are out of it. If there be no prayer, no reading, no meditation, no exercise of mind upon the things of God, there is nothing gathered up which may be drawn out of the heart and mouth when standing up before the people. A rainwater tub, a tank, a pond soon become exhausted; but a brook, a river, a springing well, ever keep flowing on. And so, where the life of God is in the heart of a minister, it will not run itself out, but like the well of water spoken of by the blessed Lord, will spring up into everlasting life.

You must not think then and I hope that Satan will not tempt you to believe, either that all your work is done, or that you are doing nothing by being laid aside, I sincerely hope only for awhile. As you sit upon the shore, looking out on the ever restless sea, and inhaling the breeze which you find so beneficial,

you may be secretly lifting up your heart to the God of all your mercies, and be deriving strength and consolation out of the fullness of the incarnate Son of God at the right hand of the Father. His eyes are ever upon the righteous, and His ears open to their cry; and He knows the way that you take. I need not recommend you to cast all your care upon Him, as He enables you to do, and beg of Him to do that which seems good in His sight. He can raise you up and strengthen your frame, which no doubt has been much debilitated by your long, long residence in the malaria of Godmanchester; and though the effects of the present change may be slow, they may not be less sure. I believe the damp air and soil of Stadham, where I was for nearly seven years in the Church of England, has affected my health up to the present hour, and therefore I know what injury a bad climate may work in undermining strength, or rather weakening the body so as to lay it open to the attack of other diseases.

I hope the Lord may guide you in this matter, and give you the wisdom which comes from above. I am, through mercy, pretty well, and still hobbling on in the work of the ministry.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 21, 1859

My dear Friend Mr. Parry,—I was intending to write to you soon, even if I had not received your kind and friendly letter, but I have been much occupied with the *Standard*, &c., and, indeed, have hardly been adequate for much mental exertion. I took cold at Oakham, and I rather neglected it, instead of sending for my medical attendant, who now knows pretty well the nature of my attacks. This has been rather more severe than usual. I was obliged to have a blister, which always much pulls me down, and I have been and still am very weak. But I hope, through mercy, that I am slowly recovering, but it is usually some time before I am able to bear exposure to the air, or the exertion of preaching. Last year I was wonderfully favored, not being laid aside a single Lord's-day; but with my tender chest I could hardly expect to be again so favored. Quite providentially Mr. Brown, of Godmanchester, has been in the neighborhood, and has been supplying for me the month of December; but I fear we shall be destitute for the coming month, at least at Oakham. The friends, however, are very considerate, and seem quite willing to 'read sermons' during the time that I am laid aside.

We cannot choose our own crosses, or I am sure I should not choose mine; but as we all must have our trials, and cannot choose what they shall be, it is our wisdom and mercy to submit to the will of God, and beg of Him to sanctify to our souls the troubles and afflictions which He himself lays on. I dare say you recollect that it was just about this time twenty-four years ago when I had a similar attack on my chest, and was unable to preach for some Lord's-days. Poor Mr. S— was called in, and, I believe, thought me very ill, but I have lived to see both him, and others as strong, laid in their graves. You had poor old Mr. Slade to preach for you, and I remember well my text when I got out to preach again was "Gird your sword upon your thigh," &c.;

but, instead of experiencing that sweet liberty which I anticipated on my first coming out, I was very much shut up, and had hardly anything to say. I have been but dark in my present illness. The poor body seems to sink under the weight, and the mind to sink with it.

It will be a very poor Address, I fear the worst which has appeared for some years. But I had to write a good part of it in bed, and being so weakened with the blister, &c., I felt quite unequal to any sustained mental exertion. People who read the Reviews and Addresses think, perhaps, that it is very easy to sit down and write them off; but they require an amount of thought and care that few persons are aware of. My desire and aim is to write something that shall be spiritual, experimental, edifying, and instructive to the Church of God. But very often I am not in a frame to write anything of the kind, and take up my pen, and can hardly write a single line.

Being also weak in body, much mental exertion wearies and fatigues me, and I am obliged after writing a few pages, to lay my pen down and rest. So altogether it is hard work. Still, I do not repine, nor do I wish to give up my work. No task or office can be so honorable as to write or preach for the glory of God, and the good of His people. I hope I can say with a clear conscience that this is my desire. There is something very precious in the truth of God, something very blessed in the person of Christ, His atoning blood, finished work, and dying love. There are no subjects of meditation so sweet, so blessed, or so profitable. My mind runs out after a thousand things, and thinks over a variety of subjects, but there is no real profit in anything but the blessed things of God. But to get at them, and still more, to get into them, we need much of a spirit of prayer, and, above all, a spirit of faith to be mixed with the word.

I am well convinced that carnality, sloth, and carelessness, will never do us any good. They are like the weeds that run over the garden or the farm, where the more they are neglected, the more they grow. But prayer, watchfulness, and meditation are means in the Lord's hands of keeping under these weeds, and keeping alive the crop of grace. You, as a farmer, have been, distinguished as a clean one. I could not but contrast the lands you lately occupied with those of your neighbor, when I was at Allington last year. I fully believe any one of common observation could see where one farm ended, and the other began. So it is in grace, the heart cannot grow a large crop of weeds, and a large crop of wheat.

I hope the Lord may be with you on the coming Lord's-day. *It is many years since it has been a merry Christmas to me, nor do I ever wish to spend one amid the mirth of fools.* Still, we wish you and yours everything that can be desirable to make it a happy Christmas, and if the Lord be pleased to sanctify it by His Spirit and grace, nothing will be needed to make it happy.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1860)

January 9, 1860

My dear Friend Mr. Brown,—I was glad to receive your kind and friendly letter, and to learn from it that you had safely arrived at Brighton, and were comfortably accommodated. To be released for a time from the strife of tongues is a sensible relief to the mind that is worn and jaded by struggling under a load of contention. It is to the mind almost like the pure breeze that blows over the wide expanse of the sea, and comes in a friendly guise to cool the heated brain, and brace the languid nerves. You need rest and quiet, and to get away from the depressing influence of Godmanchester air. You are almost like the poor weary London citizen who comes to Brighton, not only to inhale the sea air, and the buoyant atmosphere of its breezy downs, but also to get away from that load of care and business which is heavier than London air, and denser than London smoke.

I sincerely wish that the blessed Lord may enable you to leave in His hands all your trials, concerns, and cares; and if you could but calmly and quietly lay them at His feet it would be better for both your body and soul. I have no doubt that the anxiety, and agitation of your mind has had much to do with your illness. The Godmanchester air first depressed your body, and then your spirits; upon them thus weakened came your trials and troubles there, and all these acted upon your bodily and mental frame until they brought you down as low as you were before you left for Southport. I have no doubt that as your bodily frame gets strengthened and recruited, you will find your spirits and nerves strengthened in equal proportion; and as we are strangely constituted, if body and mind be in good measure invigorated, you will have more strength to bear up under your present load of trial. This view of things does not in the least interfere with or militate against that peculiar strength and blessed support which grace alone can give; and they are easily distinguished by a discerning mind; for whatever strength may be connected with returning health, deliverance from trial is as far off as ever unless the Lord specially blesses the soul with His manifested favor, and the consolations of His presence and Spirit. We have still the same need of prayer and watching for answers; the same patience, the same faith, the same hope and love. No one who knows anything of the blessing which makes rich can substitute for it any amount of natural comfort, mental confidence, or animal spirits. They are distinct things, but as we find by experience that temptations and afflictions act upon the mental and bodily frame in weakening and depressing it, so it is a favor when body and mind are strengthened to endure them.

If I am restored again to preach it will be to go again among a people who sympathize with me in my present affliction, and who will, I believe, generally hail my reappearance among them with pleasure and affection, and their chief trial at present is my being laid aside.

It is a mercy when our trials, of whatever nature they may be, lead us to cast our burdens on our only Burden-bearer. He is able in His own time and way to deliver and to support until deliverance comes. At Brighton you will have the comfort of Mr. Grace's society and conversation. We desire our love to yourself and Mrs. B—, and also to Mr. and Mrs. Grace.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 17, 1860

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I was very sorry to hear of Mrs. —'s alarming illness. I do hope that it may please the gracious Lord to raise her up, for she would be very much missed among you, from her kindness and liberality; but if such be not the will of God, I do hope that the Lord may be pleased to reveal a sense of His love and mercy to her soul. We have deep and daily proof that it is not a 'mere profession' which can save or bless the soul—and that there must be that 'divine work' upon the heart and conscience, whereby the soul passes experimentally from death unto life. It is not for us to decide how much or how little grace and faith are necessary for salvation, nor how clear and full a hope of confidence it may be blessed with. But we know that the Lord must communicate some sense of His goodness and mercy to take away the guilt of sin, and the doubts and fears that haunt the mind. It is a very great point to be made spiritually sincere before God; to be convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit; to have some experimental discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ to the soul, so as to raise up a living faith, hope, and love in Him. I think I know what true religion is or should be, and I think I can recognize it where the blessed Spirit has wrought it by His own divine power. There are those whom I know, of whose grace I have not the least doubt; and there are others of whom I dare not say that they do not possess the grace of God, but it has not been so manifested to my conscience as to remove all doubt about it.

You may depend upon it that when illness is very severe, the poor soul needs divine support, which often consists in keeping it simply to rest upon the faithfulness and mercy of God, without any of that earnestness and activity of spiritual feeling which many people look for. You have often been much and deeply exercised in your own soul about your state and standing before God, and have at times sunk very low through doubt and fear. But the Lord has from time to time been very gracious to you, and given you some manifestations of His love and mercy which have cheered and revived your cast-down spirit. This experience, both of judgment and mercy, makes you look for it in others who profess the truth, and has taught you the emptiness and worthlessness of a mere profession.

If the Lord has shown these things in any measure to our consciences, we cannot but contend for them. We may lament our own wretched coldness, deadness, and darkness in the things of God, and may see and feel ourselves very far from the enjoyment of the precious truths which we profess; but at the same time we cannot join hand in hand with those who we feel are out of the secret, and are satisfied with a name to live while dead. . . .

As we get older we may expect to see greater and greater changes. Old friends will drop off by death; we shall ourselves, if spared, begin to feel more and more of the infirmities produced by illness and old age.

We seem to live in very trying times, when we may expect great changes, and perhaps great calamities in the church and in the world. How grievous it is to see error so spreading, and minister after minister drinking it in. How few faithful experimental men of God there are, and in what a state for the most part are the churches of truth!

In the providence and grace of God, I have become fixed in a very important and responsible position, for which I need the continual supplies of His grace. I consider that *The Gospel Standard* is a very important work, as having so wide a circulation among the churches, and I could wish it filled with the life and power of God, so as to exercise a divine influence wherever it goes. Besides which, my sermons are much read and sought after, and these I wish to be impregnated with the life, and power, and grace of God, so as to reach men's hearts and consciences.

Time with us all here must be short, and we should do what we can to serve our day and generation; to live as far as we can to the glory of God and the good of His people, and not lead useless, selfish, unprofitable lives, as if money were our god. All Christians have their place in the mystical body, and their place to fill in the church of God. You have yours, as connected with the Cause of truth at Allington; to bear and forbear, and to manifest our love to the Lord and to His people in various ways, as I believe you do.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 24, 1860

My dear friend, Mr. Tips,

Trials and afflictions are the appointed lot of the family of God, and if we belong to that favored number, we shall certainly have our share of them. Some of these afflictions are of the body, others of the mind; some are connected with the family, others with our circumstances in life; some come from the temptations of Satan, and others from our own evil hearts.

The blessed Spirit in the Scripture compares these trials and afflictions to a furnace in which gold and silver are refined (Isa. 48:10; Zech. 13:9), the object of God being to try our faith (1 Pet. 1:7). The Lord therefore bids us buy of Him gold tried in the fire (Rev. 3:18), and compares Himself to a refiner and purifier of silver (Mal. 3:3). Now what is the first effect of the furnace when the impure metal is put into it? It begins to soften and melt by the application of the fire; smoke is seen gathering over the refining pot, scum and dross work up to the top. But where all the time is the pure metal? Out of sight, for it is hidden by the scum and foam; but when that is taken off the pure gold appears. Now nothing but the heat of the furnace could have separated the pure metal from the dross. So it is with the spiritual furnace. Nothing but the heat of the flame can separate true faith from false, and the

life of God in the soul from a mere fleshly religion. But when we are in the furnace, it is like what we see in the purifying of the gold. The dross and scum of our evil hearts at first alone appear; the pure gold of faith, hope, and love, which are God's gift, is hidden from view. But after a time, when the Lord is pleased to take away the dross, then the pure gold of faith shines more bright than ever.

I hope that my dear friend, to whom I am writing, is well convinced that all true religion is the gift and work of God, as we read—"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights" (James 1:17). God is too pure, just, and holy a Being to look with satisfaction upon our obedience, or anything done by the flesh. This He shows us by the teaching of His Holy Spirit; for we see light in His light, and it is by the shining in of divine light that all things are made manifest (Eph. 5:13). When Isaiah saw His glory in the temple, he cried out—"Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5). When Job saw God, he abhorred himself and repented in dust and ashes (Job 42:5, 6), and the loveliness of Daniel was turned in him unto corruption (Dan.10:8). Now these Scripture instances show us what the saints of God saw and felt concerning themselves, when they had a spiritual view of the glory and majesty of the Lord God Almighty.

It is plain therefore that men who think highly of their own goodness have never had such a view of the purity and holiness of God as His saints have as recorded in the Scriptures. Therefore they see no danger; they fear no ill; they have no sense of sin; nor can they have any repentance of it. But those who are taught of God have been made to see and feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin; they have fled for refuge from the wrath to come, unto Jesus the only Mediator between God and men. To His exalted Person at the right hand of God they look; before His throne of grace they bow; under His atoning blood and justifying righteousness they shelter themselves; and in Him they thus find rest and peace.

The ever varying, ever restless sea rolls between us; but if we have a living union with the Lord Jesus Christ, it may separate, but it cannot divide. We speak two different languages, but I hope we can also speak the one language of Canaan. We may read the Bible in two different versions, but it is the same holy inspired Scripture which speaks to us as by the mouth of God; and we trust we have one and the same Father, one and the same Elder Brother, and one and the same Spirit as our Guide, Teacher, and Comforter (Eph. 4:4, 6). The chief thing to press after is an experimental knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, to know the efficacy of His atoning blood, and to enjoy union and communion with Him. He is the Vine, we are the branches; without Him we can do nothing. But if we abide in Him, and He abides in us, then we shall bring forth much fruit. Our chief desire should be to know Him and the power of His resurrection, that we may be found in Him, not having our own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. 3:9, 10). To do this, we must cast aside our own righteousness, and be clothed in this which is perfect.

But we shall always find sin to be our worst enemy, and self our greatest foe. The carnal mind is enmity against God (Rom. 8:5), and not being subject to the will of God, it will be ever rebelling against Him. We need not fear anything but sin; nothing else can do us any real injury. But sin can and will make God hide His face, will grieve the blessed Spirit, will darken our evidences, and give room to the accusations of Satan. It will be our mercy if we are found often seeking the Lord's face, confessing our sins, reading His holy Word, and striving to obtain some manifestation of the Lord's mercy, goodness, and love. The Lord Jesus has promised to manifest Himself to those who love Him and keep His commandments (John 14:21), and it is by these manifestations that we come to know Him experimentally and savingly. The Lord Himself has told us what eternal life is, that it is to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 17:3). If we know by divine teaching the only true God, we shall fear and revere His holy name; and if we know Jesus Christ whom He has sent, we shall love Him with a pure heart fervently. You have the Holy Scripture in your hand, a treasure of which the blind Papists would willingly deprive the Church, and in that you can read the mind and will of God, and learn from it the way of salvation. The Lord Himself bids us search the Scriptures, and tells us that they testify of Him (John 5:39). You have a throne of grace which is ever open, and to which we are invited to come boldly, that we may find mercy and grace to help in time of need.

I was in hopes, from what you said to my young friend Mr. P., that you would visit England last autumn. I hope you may be induced to come over this summer, and to come to see me. I shall be pleased to have a letter from you when convenient. And now, dear friend, accept my Christian love for yourself and your dear wife, and all who love the Lord whom you know.

**Yours, in the Lord Jesus Christ,
J. C. P.**

January 25, 1860

My dear William Tiptaft—Many people think that illness is the best time for religion, and for being prayerful and spiritually-minded but this is a great mistake. When the illness is severe, it takes such possession of the whole mind, and at the same time so enfeebles it, that it has not power to act as in health. I have often found that, when the main force of the illness is over, and I am beginning to recover, that that is a good time, if the Lord is pleased to draw the soul upward to Himself, to read, pray, and meditate. But when illness is severe, the soul needs divine support, patience, submission, resignation, and to lie passive in the Lord's hands, believing He does all things well. It is then we need special support, so that the mind may not be distracted, but rest upon the Lord's goodness and mercy, and what we hope has been felt in times past. I remember what poor Thomas Copeland once said to me in his illness. "People", he said, "think that illness is a good time to seek God; but they will find, when they are very ill, that the illness itself occupies all their thoughts and feelings." At the same time, there are times and seasons in illness when the weight of bodily affliction seems partially

removed, and then, if the Lord be pleased to work by His Spirit and grace, there is a drawing-up of the soul unto Himself.

Certainly one thing trials and afflictions produce, if they are in any measure sanctified; they show us the impossibility of being saved, but by an act of free, distinguishing, sovereign grace; they make us cast ourselves wholly upon the blood and righteousness of the Son of God, and to rest satisfied with nothing short of its application. Sin also is seen to be exceedingly sinful, and the recollection of past sins grieves the conscience. Nothing has tried me more than the recollection of my sins and backslidings since I made a profession. These have been much more grievous in my eyes than any sins which I committed in the days of darkness and death. But I believe it is good for us to see and feel the weight and guilt of our sins and backslidings, so as to break to pieces our self-righteousness. A man does not know his own temptations so as to say, "I am not tempted with this or that propensity"; I may be wrong therefore, when I say that I am not much troubled with self-righteousness; for I see and feel in myself nothing but sin—and what is more trying still, my carnal mind is just as sinful, polluted, and corrupt as ever it was in my life. I do see the deep necessity for every child of God to walk much in godly fear. Sin and Satan are never off their watch, if we are. Sin is like a spring which can only be kept from expanding to its full length by continual pressure. Take away or relax the pressure, it expands in a moment to its full length. The fear of God in the heart is the pressure upon the spring; and if that relaxes or lets go, sin extends itself in a moment, and who can tell how far it will go? As Francis Spira said—"Man knows the beginning of sin, but who comprehends the outcomes thereof?" It is much easier to check sin in its first movement than when it has gained strength. If the egg be not crushed, it will break out into a viper. What would we do without free grace, the atoning blood of the Lamb, and the work of the Holy Spirit to make the Gospel precious to the soul?

I hope I have learned some of these lessons in my affliction. But how soon is all forgotten? Religion is a daily, one might say an hourly, work—and only He who began can keep alive His work upon the heart.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 1, 1860

My dear friend, William Brown—I am glad to find that, through the rich mercy of the Lord, you have derived benefit from your sojourn at Brighton, and I hope that it may be permanent when, in the providence of God, you shall have turned your back upon that bracing air. We are strange creatures, and body and mind have so close and intimate a connection, that the very blowing of the sea-breeze upon the face, not only cheers and braces the languid body, but acts in a corresponding way upon the burdened mind. Few things make cares sit more heavily than to stay at home by the fireside and nurse them. Not that relief is obtained from care and anxiety by any such natural means, but there seems more strength to endure them when the poor body is in some measure braced up.

I could wish that your path were more free from perplexity, anxiety, and care, but no doubt He who sees the end from the beginning, and all whose ways are ways of mercy and truth to those who fear His name, sees that these cares and perplexities are for your spiritual good. This world is proverbially "a valley of tears"; thorns and briars spring up on every side, because the very ground on which we tread is under the curse; and as followers of the Lord the Lamb, we may expect, not only the world's portion of sorrow, but the church's. And indeed, though our weak flesh often staggers and sinks under the load, yet as the blessing of God for the most part only comes in this way, we are made willing to endure the affliction, from the benefit connected with it.

I have no doubt, the longer we live, the more we shall find of trouble, anxiety, and sorrow, both to body and soul, so as to be made willing at last to lay down our poor, worn-out frames in the dust, as being only full of sin and corruption. This seems to be the conclusion to which the Lord usually brings all His redeemed people, to be willing to depart and be with Christ, as far better than continuing in a body of sin and death. We need something to wean us from life, and to deaden and mortify us to the charms of the world and the pleasures of sin, which are but for a moment. Christ is not to be found in the path of carnal ease and worldly joy. It is in tribulation and trouble alone, that He is really sought and really found. We cannot choose for ourselves what that trouble shall be; but its fruits and effects must be good, if they lead us up to the Lord Jesus Christ, or bring down any measure of blessing from Him.

There is so much of seeking and serving the Lord with half a heart; so much mingling of the flesh with the spirit, and trying to unite the manna of the wilderness with the flesh-pots of Egypt. But we may be certain that, when the taste is vitiated with the onions and the garlic, there is no relish for angel's food. This then is one of the benefits of sanctified affliction, that it purges the appetite from delighting in the foul food of Egypt, to give it a taste for the bread which came down from heaven, that a man should eat thereof and not die.

But what is most puzzling to a spiritual mind is, that the carnal mind still continues so base, so foul, so dark, and so dead, under any or every discipline. If I know anything of the life of God in the soul and of the operations of a living faith, I am also a witness to this solemn fact, that the carnal mind is still enmity against God, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. I am well convinced that there must be a measure of inward holiness communicated by the good Spirit of God, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." But I am equally sure that there is no sanctification of the body of sin and death, and that we only enjoy real sanctification of heart as the Lord is pleased to communicate it by His Spirit and grace.

I am glad that you felt yourself at home at Chichester. The Lord has a people scattered up and down this land, whom He loves and who love Him; and though the Church is sunk into a very low spot, yet the Lord has not left Himself without witness. He has still a people who fear His great name, and whom He will not allow to be overcome by the Antinomian spirit of the day;

for He causes His fear to work too deeply in their souls for them to be overcome by it.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 3, 1860

My dear William Tiptaft—I am very glad that you have felt led to render us some assistance in our time of need; I have no doubt that the friends both here and at Oakham will be much pleased to see and hear you again. Mr. Keal was here last evening, and brought over your last letter. What you say in it about despair, I can well go along with. To be abandoned to it, and that at the last, is more dreadful than tongue can express or heart can conceive; but I believe all must have some taste of it, to make them in earnest about their souls, and to flee to Christ's blood and righteousness as that which alone can save. Presumption and despair are indeed two wide extremes, and yet they touch so closely that as Hart says of two other extremes—"There's scarce a hair's-breadth between." And I suppose there is no living soul who has not been tempted with both, and that not once or twice, but many, many times in his Christian course; nor can one hardly tell which is the more distasteful to his soul, for if he hates the false joy of presumption, he also dreads the deep feelings of despair. I am sure that it is good for the soul to be exercised in the things of God, and except being carried away by the power of sin, there is no worse state for the soul than to be at carnal ease.

But how impossible it is for us to produce any right or spiritual feeling! All is a sovereign gift, even to read the Word with a believing heart or any softened feeling, or to lift up the soul even for a few moments to the Lord in real earnest desire for His presence and power to be felt, and His blood and love to be made experimentally known. To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is thought by many a very simple and easy thing, and so it is when the Lord moves by His Spirit and grace upon the heart; but to believe in spite of unbelief, infidelity, and the misgivings of a guilty conscience, is no such easy matter. . . .

What is there to be compared with a blessed manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ, to remove all guilty fears and to enable the soul to lie down in peace? I believe that the Lord, for the most part, will make His people thoroughly weary of this life before He takes them out of it. Sickness of body, trials in providence, afflictions in the family, and above all, the wearing conflict under a body of sin and death, with a blessed view of a glorious immortality, sooner or later will make them willing to depart and be with Christ, as far better than living in this vain world.

I hope the Lord may come with you.
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 6, 1860

Dear Friend, Mrs. Oylar—I am much obliged to you for your kind and affectionate letter, and the interest which you express in my health and welfare. I am thankful to say, through mercy, that the illness under which I was laboring has been very much subdued, and I hope, with God's blessing, I may after a little time be restored to my usual health. But at present I am suffering under weakness and debility produced by the length and severity of the illness. I have found it a furnace in which much dross has been discovered, but, I hope, a little of that precious faith which is as gold tried in the fire, and whereby alone the soul cleaves affectionately to the Lord Jesus Christ as its only help and hope. Almost all I have learned that has been for the good of my own soul, or for the profit of others, has been learned in the furnace of affliction. It is there that we learn the necessity as well as the nature of a religion which is wrought in the heart by the power of God. Divine realities are then needed—not shams or shows; and when the Lord is pleased to discover to us His own purity and holiness and our sinfulness and vileness, He makes us feel our need of atoning blood and justifying righteousness, and that these two rich blessings must be made known to the soul by a divine manifestation. As then He is pleased to reveal and make known the person and work of His dear Son, He raises up and draws forth a living faith in and upon Him which works by love and purifies the heart.

If, then, you have derived any benefit from what you have heard or read of mine, give God the glory. Compare it with the Scriptures, the experience of the saints, and what you have felt in your own soul. There is no teacher like the Lord, and no real blessing but what comes down from Him. Ever seek His face, and to know Jesus for yourself and the power of His resurrection.

I sincerely wish you and yours every new Covenant mercy, and am with kind love to your partner,
Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 7, 1860

My dear Friends,—I write to you both, for I feel that I must, with my own hand, acknowledge your most kind and liberal present; and I trust it has produced in my heart thankfulness to the God of all my mercies, as well as real gratitude and affection to yourselves. I am almost ashamed to confess it, and yet as your most unlooked-for present has come as a secret yet sweet reproof from the Lord, I feel I must acknowledge a little—and oh, but a little, of my poor unbelieving heart. I was then foolish enough, and worse than foolish, sinful enough, to begin to fret and murmur, not only at the length and severity of the affliction, but at the long doctor's bill which I would have to pay, and other expenses attending illness. I felt then when I received your kind present that the Lord was still mindful of me—that He was what He always has been, most kind and gracious, and as I write to acknowledge your kindness my heart is softened and my eye moistened with a sense of His goodness and mercy to me, a poor vile sinner. I do not wish you to think that

I could not have easily paid all these expenses to which I have alluded, but I see that the Lord knows all the secrets of our hearts, and is very pitiful, and is full of compassion to our inmost thoughts and wishes. I will (D.V.) in a few days, by the help of my dear amanuensis, to whose love and kindness in my late illness I owe so much, write more fully to my dear friend Mrs. —, but I could not forbear to write myself a few lines to both my dear friends, as an acknowledgment of their kindness and liberality.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

February 15, 1860

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—We have been both, and still are, in the furnace of affliction, and it is this whereby we learn to sympathize with those who are afflicted. The blessed Lord Himself, as the great High Priest over the house of God had to learn sympathy with His afflicted people by being Himself "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" and there is no other way whereby we can sympathize with Him and with each other.

Since I have read the letters which your late beloved husband addressed to you before and after your marriage, I can more see and feel what a bereavement you have had by losing him. Knowing how much in many things you outwardly differed, I did not know, or rather did not sufficiently bear in mind, how closely you were united in heart and affection naturally, or in mind and spirit spiritually. But his correspondence with you has shown it me as I never saw it before, and I must say I much admire the general tenor of his letters to you, and considering how you stood toward each other, and the strength of his natural affection, I have been struck with what I may call the *purity* which breathes through his letters, and the absence of much that might naturally have been expected in a correspondence of that kind. It has much raised my esteem of him as a man who lived and walked much in the fear of God. And considering how hastily many of them must have been written, and their number, I have been surprised at their variety and the uniform goodness of style and expression in one who had received so little education. No doubt I look upon it with a more favorable eye than would be the case with a stranger; but I do think when the work comes out it will be well received by the friends and valued as a memorial of their departed friend.

If I expressed my surprise at your being present at the meeting when the distribution was made, it was not that I felt any measure of disapproval. I was rather glad that you were able to be present, but feared you would be too much overcome to do so. No doubt, for a long time, perhaps even to your dying day, you will feel your loss, for there is something singularly "desolate" in the case of a widow from whom her earthly prop has been removed; but I have no doubt you will see mercy in the end. In reading the experiences of some of the most afflicted, and yet the most favored of the Lord's people, I have observed that many were widows. If I remember right, Lady Kenmure, to whom Rutherford was so much attached in the Lord, and to whom he wrote some of his choicest letters, was a widow. Writing to her in one of his

letters, Rutherford, who himself was a widower, has these words, "And albeit I must, out of some experience, say the mourning for the husband of your youth, be by God's own mouth the heaviest worldly sorrow (Joel 1:8), and though this be the weightiest burden that ever lay upon your back, yet you know if you shall wait upon Him, who hides His face for a while, that it lies upon God's honor and truth to fill the field and to be husband to the widow." I have used his words as being so much more forcible and expressive than my own; and it much corresponds with what you yourself have said about the void made by your bereavement, which you feel none but the Lord can fill. If you wish to read the whole letter you will find it Letter 19, Second Part.

I feel very grateful to my dear friends at Oakham who have borne so kindly and considerately with my absence from them, and not murmured at the lack of preaching. Here they have been more favored, as there has been only one preaching Lord's-day since my illness when they have been altogether without a minister.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 17, 1860

My dear Friend, Mrs. Pinnell—I was very sorry to hear through a letter, received today from Mr. Tiptaft, that my dear friend Mr. Pinnell did not improve in health so much as his friends could desire; but I was very much pleased to hear through the same channel that he is very happy in his mind, and bore his illness with much submission and patience, and was otherwise favored in his soul.

It must be a great trial to you to see him brought down so low, but at the same time a great consolation to find him in so happy a state. The long illness of poor dear John must have long weighed heavily upon his spirit, and the suddenness of his death, though not unexpected, must have been a very great shock. I do hope it may please the blessed Lord to spare him a little longer for your sake, and that of his family. Otherwise, there is not much here to live for, as each year would add more and more to his cares and anxieties. Should it please the Lord to take him to Himself it will be to you an irreparable loss; but hitherto you have seen His kind hand stretched forth in every time of need, and He has promised that as our day is, so our strength shall be.

Now that this winter has been so severe, and his dear father is laid on a bed of sickness, you will see the wisdom and mercy why poor dear John was removed at the time that he was. You have quite enough on your hands with Mr. Pinnell's illness, and how greatly would poor John's continuance have added to your anxiety and care. Had there been any hope of his life being spared it would have been different; but that being hopeless, his removal was only a question of time, and the sweet assurance that you have of his safety softened the blow and mingled mercy with it.

No real blessing is obtained but through trials and afflictions, not that they in themselves can do us any good; for, if not sanctified by the blessed Spirit, they only cause murmuring and fretfulness. Nor can we choose our own afflictions, and what are chosen for us seem to be the very last that we should have selected had the choice been left to us.

Few things can be more trying to an affectionate wife than to witness the illness of a beloved husband; and we know that when the master of the house, especially where there is business, is laid aside, there is little else but disorder and confusion. You say very justly that mothers are hardly fit to manage sons and daughters, especially when grown up. They rarely have the authority which a father naturally possesses, and their attempt to exercise it, instead of producing quiet submission, often rouses angry feeling. But even here, as in everything else, the Lord is all sufficient, and can give to weak mothers a strength and authority which they do not naturally possess. Every family should strive for the benefit of each other and the whole, for union is strength, and *few sights are more unseemly than to see division where there should be nothing but love and union.*

It is now many years since I first knew you both. Many trials have we seen since that day. You have had many family cares, and Mr. Pinnell has had his cares and anxieties in business, besides family afflictions common to you both, and, no doubt, at times painful spiritual trials and temptations. How good the Lord is to support the mind under the weight of trials and afflictions, and while He gives enough to make us sail steadily over the sea of life, yet He never lays upon us more than we can bear. By these trials and afflictions He stirs up a spirit of prayer in the heart, gives us to cease from all human help and hope, and teaches us to look wholly and solely to the Lord of life and glory for salvation and all. Here, I can truly say, I hang all my hope, and the more I feel the weight of affliction and trials the more I feel to hang upon the blessed Lord as upon a nail fixed in a sure place. We are so apt, when things go well with us in nature, to forget the Lord, and live to self. In order, therefore, to bring us near to Himself, He lays His chastening hand upon us, and by these means brings us out of self to rest more in Him. I am still an invalid, nor do I seem at present to gather up my strength. The severe weather has been much against me, as it keeps up the irritation in the chest; and until that is removed I cannot hope to make much progress. It is a mercy, however, that I am able to attend to my necessary writing, though I am laid aside for the present from the work of the ministry.

Please to give my sympathizing and Christian love to Mr. Pinnell, and my sincere desire that he may experience more and more of the blessing which makes rich. My love to Mrs. R. and all your family.

Accept the same from
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 21, 1860

My dear friend, William Brown,

The Lord has hitherto appeared for you in opening doors for you to preach, and giving you acceptance among His people. This must very much relieve your mind, and convince you that you are not yet thrown over the wall, like a weed plucked out of the bed of a garden, which is perhaps one of the most painful feelings that a minister, as a minister, can well feel. Sussex is a highly favored county. It will be twenty-two years next July since I preached for good old Mr. Pitcher, and slept at his house. He told me some of his temptations and experience, and I believe we felt a mutual union which has never been dissolved. I much admired his simplicity and godly sincerity, and am glad to hear that he still continues to bear fruit in old age. How faithful the Lord is to His people, and how those who sow in tears are sure to reap in joy! Those who fear God and pass through many mental exercises, trials, and temptations, mainly in consequence of that fear being rooted deeply in their heart, shine all the brighter when the Sun of Righteousness arises upon them with healing in His wings; while those who seem so full of confidence, often concerning faith make awful shipwreck.

The sovereignty of God is as much displayed in the experience of His people as in their original choice. I see more and more that, not only will the Lord have those whom He will, but He will have them in His own way. My desire is to be wholly and solely His, for Him to make me what He would have me to be, and work in me by His Holy Spirit everything which is pleasing in His sight. At present I do not seem much to improve in health; but what I chiefly feel is debility, and this, I think, will be the case until I can take more food and get into the open air.

What a world of sin, sorrow, and confusion this is! Satan, I see, is continually stirring up error and evil on every side. What need we have of grace every moment, and what poor, helpless creatures are we without it! I feel compelled to look more to the Lord than ever I did in my life, and to hang more and more all my hopes upon Him and Him only.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

March 21, 1860

Dear friend—You are no doubt expecting a line from me in reply to your last kind letter, wishing me to come over to B. some time in the summer, to obtain a collection for the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. I am sorry however to say that I cannot make any engagement of the kind, for it has pleased the Lord to lay upon me His afflicting hand, and to lay me aside from the work of the ministry. It has been a hot and trying furnace, but I hope I have reaped some good from it. The Lord has favored me with a spirit of grace and supplication at times to seek His face, and my heart has been much drawn up to the Lord of life and glory. I never had a greater insight into the nature and necessity of a spiritual religion, nor ever saw more of the emptiness of the general profession of the day. I have seen also much of the necessity, as well as of the blessedness, of walking much in the fear of God, and being kept

from evil by His mighty power. My sorrow is that I have not walked more in godly fear and kept more close to the Lord. Depend upon it, if a man be not blessed with godly fear in continual exercise, and is not kept by the mighty power of God, he will break out somewhere. A broken heart, a humble spirit, with contrition and godly sorrow for sin, and a living faith in Christ, is worth all the mere head-notions in the world.

I am glad to find that my attempts to point out error and to set forth truth, by the pen as well as by the word of mouth, are approved of by the churches; and I hope that the Lord may give me that wisdom from above in opening up that most blessed, yet mysterious subject, the eternal Sonship of Christ, which may enable me to write in such a way as may establish it more and more firmly in the hearts of his saints; for depend upon it, it is a doctrine according to godliness, and contains in it one of the most momentous truths of our most holy faith.

Wishing you and the friends the enjoyment of every needful blessing, I am,
Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

April 3, 1860

My Dear Friend, Mr. Godwin—Through mercy, I hope I can say I am progressing in health, and, for the first time since the end of November, went today out of my garden-gate, and took a turn up and down the Terrace. I feel also stronger in walking than I expected I would after my long confinement, and I hope now, with God's blessing, if I get no relapse that I may be restored once more to my pulpit and people. It has been a long and heavy trial to me, and I doubt not, I may add, in a measure to them; though the pulpits have been well supplied, especially here where there has been as much preaching as if I had not been laid aside at all.

I hope I may not lose the life and feeling which I have had for the most part through the affliction; but I have often found that as the body got stronger the soul got weaker, and that the sickness of the one was sometimes the health of the other. *I could wish that my soul was always alive unto God—with no darkness, deadness, coldness, unbelief, or worldly-mindedness. But alas! I find that I have still a body of sin and death which will make itself felt, and which seems to suffocate by its pressure all spiritual good. But the blessed Lord has said, "Because I live you shall live also;" so that wherever He has communicated life out of His own fullness He will maintain it in spite of sin, hell, and death. What a mercy this is for the living family of God.*

I hope the Lord may be with you in your visit to Leicester. You will preach to a large congregation, and we hope that there are among them some of the royal family.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 10, 1860

My dear friend, John Grace—I received your parcel quite safely, and much prize Miss V.'s kind present. Have the kindness, when you see her, to present her with my Christian regards and thanks. I have no doubt I shall find it very useful as a book of reference, and a good companion to his invaluable commentary. The advantage of such books is that they lead us to the Scriptures, the fountain-head of all truth, and pack together in a small compass the chief outlines on almost all subjects of divinity. I use such books, not as masters, but as servants; not as teachers, but as pointing out the road where I may get the true teaching; not as guides, but as direction posts.

It is a mercy to be taught of God the truth for ourselves, so as to know it by an inward testimony, and thus be able to exercise a spiritual judgment in the things of God (1 Cor. 2:9-12, 14-16; Heb. 5:14). For lack of this divine teaching, many men take up with the authority of some great writer, and without the least power to exercise any judgment of their own, become his disciples. This is the great danger of using commentators, or indeed adopting any one author as our guide. I love to read the Word of truth by and for itself, and to have it opened up to my heart and conscience with a divine power. Then it does me good, becomes my own, and its effects are gracious, spiritual, and experimental. But if I read the Scriptures only in the light of Dr. Gill or Mr. Huntington, I merely get my teaching at secondhand, which will neither benefit me, nor anyone through me. I believe that, if the Lord has a work for a man to do, either by tongue or pen, He will give him, not only a sufficiency of grace, but an original gift to set forth the truth; and by this, among other marks, the servants of God are distinguished from mere apes and imitators. God Himself asks Moses—"Who has made man's mouth?" And surely if the Lord sends a man on His errands, He will put a word into his mouth. It was so with the ancient prophets, whom the Lord always furnished with a word to speak to the people; and where this is not, we may doubt if the Lord has sent a man to preach in His name. Not but what I think that a gracious gift may be improved by exercise. The apostle bids Timothy, "not to neglect the gift that was in him, but to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine", or as the word should be rendered, "teaching." Yes, he bids him, "Give himself wholly to these things, that his profiting may appear to all".

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

June 26, 1860

My dear Mr. Tips—I am glad that the Lord was pleased to give you and your friend a favorable voyage home, and that you found your dear wife and family in the enjoyment of that greatest of all temporal mercies. It gives me pleasure also to learn from your friendly and affectionate letter, that you bear in remembrance the days which you spent at my house. There is no bond like a spiritual union, for that endures when all others sink and die. All

natural ties must end with this life, but spiritual ties are forever. Before your visit here, you only knew me by having read my sermons; but now you have seen me, conversed with me on the things of God, and have heard me preach the word of life. You will now read the sermons with more interest, and seem to hear me preach them. The sermon which you heard me preach in the morning is just published, and if I can, I will enclose it in this letter.

Through mercy, my health continues pretty much as it was when you were here; and I hope it may please the Lord to preserve it for my own sake and that of others. I am going tomorrow, if the Lord wills, from home for six weeks, half of which I am to be in London, and the other half in Wiltshire, one of our southern counties where there are a good number of the Lord's dear family. The work of the ministry is a great work to be engaged in, and none can be fit for it except the Lord is pleased to make him fit. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." "Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but it is God who gives the increase." The blessed Lord has said, "Without Me you can do nothing"; and this is what all His dear people are fully convinced of; for they find and feel that in them, that is in their flesh, dwells no good thing; for to will is present with them, but how to perform that which is good, they find not.

Yours in the Gospel,
J. C. P.

July 27, 1860

My dear friend, Mrs. Pinnell—I much regret that I shall not be able this time to accept your kind invitation to come to Westwell, as I must reach home by August 10th. I would otherwise have had much pleasure in once more visiting you all, and renewing our friendship and spiritual communion. The time of the year naturally reminds you of that solemn scene which I witnessed when poor John passed away from this valley of sickness and sorrow, to be at rest on that happy shore where sin no more defiles, and pain of body or mind are alike unknown. Viewing the peculiar severity of the past winter and spring, his poor dear father's long and trying illness, the incurable nature of John's disease, and the sweet hope you entertain of his eternal salvation, could you have wished him a longer stay here below? And as to the manner of his death, though solemn to the spectators, it was not painful to him, and was much more speedy, as well as easy, than a more lingering mode of departure. When faith can look through and beyond the dark cloud of sight and sense, it sees mercy and goodness in those things wherein the unbelieving heart does but murmur and rebel. But whose voice should we listen to? That of sense and nature, which always disbelieves and opposes the way, word, and will of God; or that of faith and grace, which believes, and submits, and speaks well of the Lord and His dealings?

With many trials, you and dear Mr. Pinnell have had many mercies. In fact, your very trials have been among your mercies, and if not, the very chief of them, have made a way for the choicest to be made manifest. "The Lord tries the righteous." Their trials are as much appointed them, as that righteousness in which they stand, and whereby they are justified. And if the

Lord Himself tries them, then the nature, season, duration, and all attending circumstances of all their trials, are determined for them, selected by infinite wisdom, decreed by unalterable purpose, guided by eternal love, and brought to pass by almighty power. To believe less than this is secret infidelity, and will always issue in murmuring, rebellion, self-righteousness, and self-pity. But with faith (at least when in exercise), there will be submission and resignation to the will of God, and clearing of Him, and so condemning ourselves.

Still, nature will feel and carnal reason will work, and then under their wretched influence, there will be a going over the same useless and miserable ground. "Why this, why that? Why was dear John not spared as a prop to the family? Why cut down like a flower, when other young men are going about in full health and strength?" So reasons, so murmurs nature, and then comes self-pity and that worldly sorrow which works death. May you and dear Mr. Pinnell be graciously delivered from all such subtle attempts of the flesh to wrest the scepter of sovereignty from the grasp of Jehovah, and to say to Him when He exercises it contrary to our fleshly will, "What are You doing?"

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

August 22, 1860

My dear Friend Mr. Tanner,—I have been glad that you have been able in some measure to overcome the restraint which you have felt, I think I may say without reason, in writing to or conversing with me. I am sure there is no reason why you should feel it, though I believe there may be something in my natural manner which prevents people whom I really esteem and love from speaking to me as freely as they do to others. *I have seen for many years so much profession in people and so little vital godliness that it has made me suspicious of nearly all, and I have received so many wounds from professing friends that it has made me very cautious in what I say, as I have found my words caught up and turned against me. The only thing that I want to see in persons who make a profession is the fear and grace of God; and though there are great differences in my feeling for and affection towards such, yet I hope I can say that I truly desire to esteem and love all who fear and love God.*

In the very first teachings which I had of the wisdom from above, the value and blessedness of the grace of God as a felt experimental reality were deeply impressed upon my heart; and as the necessary consequence of this the real emptiness of everything else. Thus I do not value people on account of what they may possess of natural gifts or abilities, but what they possess by the teaching of God in their soul. I cannot express in the limits of a letter what my feelings are upon this subject, and upon one very closely allied to it, that is, the indispensable qualifications of a minister of Christ; and what I must see in and feel towards a man before I can recognize him in my own conscience as a Christian or as a minister. From having read my writings in the *Gospel Standard* and elsewhere, you know more of my mind in these matters than I can know of yours; but I must say that all I have seen in or

heard of you has led me much to esteem you, and that I felt much union of spirit with you in the little conversation that we had the other day at Calne. .

..

Yours in the best bonds,
J. C. P.

August 31, 1860

My dear friend, John Grace—I am much obliged to Mr. — for his kind message. I have always held him in honor for his steadfast maintenance of sound doctrine. If we view religion as a body, may we not say that the doctrines of the Gospel are the bones, experience the flesh, and the blessed Spirit the life of both bones and flesh? The doctrines of the Gospel support all sound experience but at the same time are so clothed with it, that they are not visible except through the medium of the flesh. But in the body, the flesh could not stand without the support of the bones. So in religion, what would experience be unless supported by sound doctrine? But again, take the flesh from the bones and you have nothing but a dry skeleton. So take the experience of the truth from the doctrines of truth, and you have nothing but what Mr. Hart calls, "dry doctrine." Again, without the blessed Spirit, what is either doctrine or experience, but a lifeless lump? The dead Calvinists have the bones without the flesh; the Arminians have the flesh without the bones; the daily experimentalists, for such there are, and such there were even under Mr. Huntington, have bones and flesh without life. But the living family of God have bones and flesh and life, for they have truth in doctrine, truth in experience, and truth in life and power; and thus religion with them is a living body. Of course I use it merely as a figure, and figures are necessarily imperfect; and as I have dictated just what has occurred to my mind, it may not be able to bear the test of rigid examination. Therefore receive it as I send it, and if you do not accept the figure, I believe you will accept what I mean to represent by it.

One effect of this late controversy has been to show me the necessity of bringing forward into prominent view the grand leading truths of our most holy faith. I have been very surprised, I will not say at the ignorance of private Christians, but even of some who are accepted as servants of God, upon that great leading point of vital truth, the real Sonship of our adorable Lord. Some have said they had never heard of the doctrine before, and others have expressed their regret that I should trouble, as they call it, the church with it, and have called it my hobby. Is not such ignorance greatly astounding, when the true and proper Sonship of the blessed Redeemer, through the whole of the New Testament, illuminating its pages with a sacred light, forms not only the fundamental article of a believer's faith, but occupies nearly the whole of John's blessed Epistle?

I very much like your remark, that anything that sets forth clearly the eternal Sonship of our blessed Lord, creates a glow of love to His glorious Person. It is precisely what I have felt myself in reading such works written by men of God as set it forth. I think you have Dr. Hawker's works. If you possess Palmer's edition of them in ten volumes, published in 1831, you will

find at the end of Vol. 3 a blessed work of the good old Doctor entitled—*The Personal Testimony of God the Father to the Person, Godhead, and Sonship of God the Son*. I think it is one of the best works that ever fell from the Doctor's pen, and must convince anybody who is willing to be convinced, what his views were on that important point. Mr. —, in the *Earthen Vessel* for August, has made mention of this work, and quoted a number of passages from it which must fall, one would think, with crushing weight upon those who would deny that the Doctor held the truth of Christ's real Sonship.

There is one feature in the eternal Sonship of our blessed Lord, to which I think due prominence has hardly been given, that is, that without it you may have a Trinity, but not a unity in that Trinity. It is most true that we cannot comprehend the mystery of the subsistence of three Persons in one Godhead, but yet we see that the unity of Deity requires a mutual and eternal relationship between them, or else they would be three distinct Gods. We can see by faith, and I believe we have both felt far more than we could ever express, in seeing the blessed relationship which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have to each other, from this mutual intercommunion in the one undivided Essence.

There is a most unspeakable blessedness in beholding by faith the Father as the eternal Father, the Son as the eternal Son, and the Spirit as the eternal Spirit. This mutual relationship must be eternal, and independent of any acting of the Persons in the Godhead out of themselves toward man; and must therefore exist independent of any foreview or fore-ordination of the Son of God as Mediator. To my mind then, to make the eternal relationship of the three Persons in the sacred Godhead dependent upon any covenant act of grace is, if I may use the expression, to break up the most blessed Trinity; for it destroys the eternal relationship which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have to each other prior to, and independent of, any purposes of grace to man. According to their view, our blessed Lord would never have been the Son of God if man had neither birth nor being. What was He then in those eternal ages before man was formed out of the dust of the earth? Was He not then the Son of the Father in truth and love? How derogatory to the Son of God and to the Father, to deny that eternal and most blessed relationship which exists between them from all eternity, and to make the very name and nature of Son depend upon the actings of that grace which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit felt, as distinct from their mutual love and eternal intercommunion. But I forget that I am writing a letter and not a book, so please excuse the length of my thoughts on this most blessed subject.

I am now writing a very long letter to a Scotch minister upon the subject of the Law NOT being a rule of life to a believer. I did not wish to have any controversy on the subject, and kept silence as long as I possibly could, but he has plied me with letter after letter until I have been obliged at last to give him an answer. I shall keep a copy of it, and may perhaps put it in the *Standard*. Both Mr. Huntington and Mr. Gadsby have written most fully, clearly, and blessedly on the subject, but their works are not accessible to all who love the truth; and sometimes a short syllabus is useful to those who desire to have a Scriptural and experimental summary of the truth in a short and readable form. This was the reason why our Reformers in their time, drew up many Catechisms, that the people might be instructed in the truth in

a simple compendious way. Great ignorance prevails among our people in many places, for very few ministers are now able to set forth the truth with clearness, and thus, like children, they are tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 5, 1860

My dear friend, Joseph Tanner—You will not expect me to write you a long letter, but will be waiting to learn whether I object to preaching in the Temperance Hall, instead of your little chapel. As a rule I generally feel more comfortable when I speak to the people in their usual place of worship, as a strange place and a mixed congregation often seem to rob me of that life and liberty which I like to feel in the best of all services; but for two reasons I would prefer speaking in the Temperance Hall—(1) On the ground of its accommodating more people; and (2) as giving better ventilation; for small chapels, especially in the evening, when lighted with gas and crowded with people, much try my weak chest. I think therefore that, upon the whole, if the Temperance Hall be not too large or too hard to speak in, I would prefer preaching there.

My sincere desire is, that the blessed Lord may come with me, and anoint both my heart and lips with the unction of His grace. What we all need so much, is that anointing of which John speaks as teaching of all things; for I am very sure, without this blessed unction of the Holy Spirit, we are and have, know and feel nothing in the true sense of the word. There is a power in divine realities, when experimentally felt, beyond all description, and if we know anything of this in our own souls, all but it seems light indeed. A man may have much knowledge, great acquaintance with the Scriptures, and a sound creed as regards the letter of truth, and yet be utterly destitute of that kingdom of God which is not in word but in power. It is for this power in their own souls, and as resting upon their ministry, that the servants of God should especially strive with the God of all grace.

I am very sure, whatever people may think of me, that in myself I am nothing but sin, and filth, and folly. But I hope the Lord has given me, in His sovereign grace, a knowledge of and a love unto His blessed truth; and my desire is to live and die in the sweet enjoyment of it, to proclaim and defend it as far as I am enabled by tongue and pen, to live under its liberating, sanctifying influence in my own soul, and never say or do anything which may cause it to be evil spoken of. That is a most blessed promise—"You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free".

Yours in the hope of the Gospel,
J. C. P.

September 26, 1860

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—I need not tell you what a trial and exercise of mind this affliction has given me, and how sorry I have been to be obliged to disappoint the people at Bath and Leicester. . . . It would be a very gladdening sight to see men raised up by the power and grace of God, able to preach the Gospel with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. But the Lord knows best. He will carry on His own work in His own way, for His footsteps are in the deep waters; He will work, and none shall hinder it. I must be content if I can submit to be laid aside, at least for a time, for I do not see much prospect of being able to resume the ministry for the present. The Lord knows best how to deal with me, and what to do by me. My earnest desire is, that it may be for my soul's lasting profit, and for His own glory. The Lord will take care that no man shall glory in the flesh. It is very easy to say, as thousands do, "Yours is the power, and the kingdom, and the glory"; but how few there are who can submit that God should have what they tell Him belongs unto Him. He will however make all His people see that to Him belongs all power, by stripping them of all their own strength; that His is the kingdom, and that He will give it to whomsoever He will, and that His is the glory which He will not share with another.

But when the Lord is carrying into execution His secret counsels, they are so contrary to the will of the flesh, and so opposed to our thoughts and ways, that we can hardly see His hand in them. Our flesh murmurs and rebels under the heavy strokes. It wants ease, indulgence, and self-gratification—not to be mortified and crucified. If we were wholly left to ourselves, we would choose greedily and eagerly the way of destruction. It is a mercy then, that the Lord does not leave us wholly to ourselves, but brings down the heart with labor, so that we fall down and there is none to help.

People may talk about crying and praying to the Lord, but to be made to cry and pray really and truly, out of a believing heart, is one of the most trying spots into which the Lord can bring a soul that He has made honest before Him. It is not a little thing that will make us truly pray and cry to the Lord; and often when we do so, the Lord seems deaf to the voice of our supplications, and we can get no manifest answer to our petitions. We often have to keep praying and crying on, without any testimony that the Lord hears. This is very discouraging, and seems at times as if it would, if not stop, at least dampen all the prayer of the soul. But it will be our mercy if we still call upon His name and seek His face, and a greater mercy still, yes the greatest of all mercies, if He bows down His ear and gives a manifest answer. You and I have been at this work, at various times, for a good many years, and I hope we may prove that praying breath is not lost breath.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

September 28, 1860

My dear William Tiptaft—I have reason to hope that my illness last winter was blessed to me, and to others through me; for I certainly had more life and feeling in my soul, and I believe in my ministry, as the fruit of it.

But though we prize spiritual blessings above all others, yet our coward flesh shrinks from the trial of affliction through which the blessing comes. God however has joined them together, and they cannot be separated. I believe I can say, I never had a single spiritual blessing which did not come either in or through affliction or trial; and I also know that we are not fit for spiritual blessings, except by being made so through the furnace. There seems to be no real earnest cry, or longing desire for a blessing from the Lord Himself, except we are humbled and brought down into some pressing necessity. I have always found that this has been the spot where the most sincere and earnest cries and prayers are made to the Lord, and where the Lord Jesus Christ is made precious to the soul. These afflictions and trials strip, as it were, the world and worldly things off our backs, as well as all our own wisdom, and strength, and righteousness; and this makes us long for spiritual blessings, such as to be taught of the Lord Himself, to have His strength made perfect in our weakness, to be washed from all our sins in His atoning blood, and to be clothed with His glorious and perfect righteousness. And these prayers and desires are not mere words or formal expressions, but the real breathings and earnest desires of a soul which stands feelingly in need of them all. I know this has been my experience since I have been under my present affliction; and therefore I do not speak of things at a distance, but near at hand. Hezekiah, on his bed of sickness, could say—"By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."

I could wish, if it had been the Lord's will, to have spoken at Bath, Trowbridge, and Leicester, of some of those divine realities which I trust I have seen and known for myself. But it was not to be so; and it becomes me, if the Lord enables, to submit. I am sure I fully deserve to be entirely cast out of His hand, and never again to be made use of, either by tongue or pen; so that if I were to look to myself, I would not have far or long to search for the cause of my being laid aside, for I am sure I deserve nothing but the Lord's anger and displeasure, and that for evermore. Whatever ground others may stand upon, there is one on which I can never stand, no, not for a single moment—and that is my own righteousness. And if we are to have some standing-ground—or how else can we stand for time or eternity?—what rock can there be for our feet, but that which God laid in Zion? Being driven from every other standing-place by the law of God, the convictions of our own conscience, and a view of our dreadful sinful heart, we feel compelled to show to others, when called upon to do so, the peril of standing upon such a sandy foundation as SELF; and having seen and felt something of the blessedness and suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can hold Him up to others as a sure foundation, if the Lord be pleased to reveal it to their hearts.

We had a very good congregation at Abingdon on the Tuesday evening. I felt in a solemn frame of mind, and I hope we had something of the power and presence of the Lord. I think I never knew the Abingdon congregation to listen with so much stillness and attention as on that evening. On the Lord's day there is usually a good deal of crowding, and this sometimes takes off from the attention; but this year was the quietest and least excited congregation that I have known for several years. The Temperance Hall was well filled. It was thought about or over four hundred people, and I understand, if it had not been for a tea meeting among the Independents, we would have been overflowed. I hope I felt some life and liberty in speaking. It

is one of the nicest places to speak in (not a chapel) that I was ever in. There is no ceiling, but it is open to the roof, very much like the college halls at the university, which makes it very airy and pleasant, without draught. There is no pulpit, but a raised platform, like that at Birmingham, and a kind of sounding-board behind, which throws the voice well out, so that there is no need of exertion.

I hope the Lord will be with you and the people at Stamford next Lord's day.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 1, 1860

My dear friend, John Grace,

Trials, sufferings, afflictions, vexations, and disappointments are our appointed lot; and though grievous to the flesh, yet when they are sanctified to the soul's good, are made to be some of our choicest blessings. But when we are in the furnace, we rarely see what benefit it is producing, or what profit is likely to arise to ourselves or to others out of it. Our coward flesh shrinks from the cross, and until submission and resignation are wrought in us by a divine power, and the peaceable fruits of the Spirit begin to show themselves, we cannot bless the Lord for the trial and affliction. It is true that our trials vary as much as our outward circumstances or inward feelings, and each perhaps thinks his own trial the heaviest. But no doubt infinite wisdom appoints to each vessel of mercy, those peculiar trials in nature or degree which are required to work out God's hidden purposes. "What I do", said the Lord to Peter, "you know not now, but you shall know hereafter"; and thus time and larger measures of light and grace may show us the reason, as well as the needs-be, of many afflictive circumstances which, when we were passing through them, were to us an insoluble enigma. No, as out of the bosom of the darkest cloud the most vivid flash of lightning usually shines forth, so out of our darkest hours the brightest light sometimes gleams forth.

Those especially who stand up in the Lord's name, if they are to preach with any profit to the tried and exercised family of God, must themselves be well acquainted with the path of tribulation; for how else can they go before the people, or cast up the King's highway, or take up the stumbling stones? Levity, carelessness, and indifference, with a general hardness and deadness in the things of God, soon creep over the mind, unless it be well weighted with trials and afflictions; and when this spirit prevails in a man's mind, it will manifest itself in his ministry, to the deadening of all life and power in the preaching of the Word. In this way we become surrounded with a host of men whose judgments are informed in the letter of truth, but who know little or nothing of its life and power. Not that trials and afflictions have in themselves any power to produce spiritual life and feeling, as they rather work rebellion and death; but the gracious Lord condescends to work in and by them, and to communicate of His grace to the soul that lies at His feet, burdened and exercised.

What a mercy it is to have any divine life in the soul, any grace, or any marks of grace; to be made to see and feel the emptiness of the world, the sinfulness of sin, the evils of the heart, and above all, to see and feel the preciousness of Christ in His bleeding, dying love! There is a reality in the kingdom of God as set up in the heart; and there is a suitability and a preciousness in the Lord Jesus Christ which may be felt, but can never be adequately described. The Lord knows how to support the soul in trials and afflictions; how to draw forth faith, hope, and love upon His most gracious and glorious self, and to give us eventual victory over every foe.

I am, yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 23, 1860

Dear friend,

"Love is of God, and he who loves is born of God"; nor is there any sweeter feeling in a Christian's bosom than to love the Lord and the Lord's people, because they belong to Him, and because he sees the mind and image of Christ in them.

The Lord knows that I have many bitter enemies, therefore He has given me, by way of recompense, many warm and attached friends; and it is the desire of my heart, that I may never be left to give a feast to the former, or to grieve or distress the latter. I look upon it as one of the Lord's rich mercies, that He has put it into my heart, and given me power to send forth such testimonies for His truth, as have been, and still are, owned and blessed to the souls of His people. I can hardly explain myself the peculiar influence under which I was led to send forth those two sermons, '*The Heir of Heaven*' and '*Winter before Harvest*'; but I certainly was much helped at the time, both in preaching them, and afterwards writing them; and I have had remarkable testimonies how they have been blessed, and especially the latter, to the calling, delivering, and comforting of the Lord's people.

When we are passing through painful trials, and especially severe and distressing temptations, do we not see what the Lord is effecting thereby; how He is killing us to self-righteousness, stripping us out of an empty profession, and convincing us that nothing but His own divine work in our souls is of any value. I see so many resting upon the shallowest evidences, having apparently no doubt of their interest in the blessed Lord, when, could you see into the ground of their hope, it would be of the feeblest possible character, if indeed it were a good hope at all. The faith of most is but a 'doctrinal faith'—a faith merely in the letter of truth, without being wrought in their souls by the power of God. As this faith of theirs is never tried by law or conscience, by sin or Satan, by trial or temptation, and as God Himself does not try it, it appears in their eyes sound and good; and it is to be feared that hundreds go out of the world with no better faith than this, who are considered to have died in the Lord. Now we know by experience what this faith is. It has been weighed in the balance and found lacking, and this has made us look out for a better kind of faith—a faith that we feel convinced must be the gift and work of God.

Now if you look through all the way along which the Lord has led you these many years, you will find that you never got any real blessing but through trial and temptation; that your afflictions have been your best friends; that out of your darkness came your light; out of your death came your life; out of your distress came your joy; and out of your bondage came your deliverance.

Where we err is, that we want to be something, when we are nothing. We want in some way to recommend ourselves to God, and do or be something that we can be pleased with, and which we think will therefore please Him. It is very hard to learn the depth of our spiritual poverty, the greatness of our sin, and our thoroughly lost, ruined, and helpless condition. We believe in our judgments that salvation is all of rich, free, and sovereign grace, and may to a certain extent have felt, tasted, and enjoyed its blessed freeness. But when we get, so to speak, out of our depth in temptation, exercise, and trouble, when sin and guilt press hard upon our consciences, and we have a view by faith of the purity, greatness, majesty, and holiness of that great and glorious God with whom we have to do, and all our sins come trooping into view, with all the horrid evils of our dreadful hearts, then we lose sight of the freeness and fullness of divine grace, and it seems almost impossible that such a one can be saved. It is something like a little boy learning to swim. He can swim pretty well, after a time, where the water is shallow; but when he gets out of his depth, he loses all courage, and it seems as if he must be drowned; and indeed he would, unless he were plucked out by the very hair of his head.

Many think they are great Christians who have scarcely learned the A B C's of religion; believe they know much of the Lord, when they have scarcely seen the skirt of His garment; have a high opinion of their faith, when it would go down in the first real storm. As then we are taught these things in our own souls, we can see more clearly, not only where we ourselves are, but see also more plainly where others are. And while this separates us more completely from letter-men and letter-professors, it gives us a sweet and blessed union with the Lord's family, who are tried and exercised, and know things by divine teaching. When we begin, in the fullness of our heart and in the simplicity of our minds, to speak of these things, we find immediately that the greatest offence is given thereby to professors whom we cannot but condemn. They begin to hate us with cruel hatred; and the more our soul is sick with their mere notional religion, and craves for the inward teaching and testimony, the more bitter they are. We wonder at first what offence we have given; but the offence is, that we have taken away their gods, and what have they more?

May the Lord keep you very near to Himself, with much of His precious fear in your heart, and blessed fellowship with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit,
Yours affectionately for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

November 14, 1860

My dear friend, Joseph Tanner—I hope that by this time both you and your dear wife are in some measure reconciled to the departure of your dear son to a foreign shore, and are enabled in some measure to see the Lord's hand in it. Time has a wonderful effect in healing grief and soothing sorrow, at least where that sorrow does not arise from sin and guilt; for that is a wound which time can never heal.

You will be glad to hear that, through mercy, I am better than when I left you, and have been enabled to preach on the last two Lord's days. I still continue however weak and tender, and have my fears whether I shall be able to continue preaching throughout the winter. How various are the trials and afflictions of those who desire to fear God, and walk in His ways. But though they may differ in nature and degree, yet they are, for the most part, as much as they can well bear. The Lord indeed is very gracious in not laying upon them more than they can bear; but He will give them all enough to find and feel that this world is full of sin and sorrow; that their own hearts are full of evil; and that nothing but the pure, rich, free, superabounding grace of God can save or bless their souls.

It seems as if we needed day by day to be taught over and over again our own sinfulness, weakness, and helplessness, and that none but the blessed Lord can do us any real good. Religion is not like any art or science which, when once learned, is learned forever; but is a thing which we are ever forgetting, and ever learning over and over again. Nor can we make any use of our knowledge, experience, or faith. It is like a well that is of no use unless water is drawn out of it by the hand of another. We may have a certain knowledge, both of ourselves and the Lord Jesus, and have had raised up from time to time a living faith in Him; but we cannot make any use of our knowledge or our faith, at least so as to do us any sensible good.

The clay cannot mold itself into a vessel; it requires a potter's wheel and a potter's hand. So we are but the clay, and God must be our Potter; for we only are what is pleasing in His sight, as we are the work of His hand. It is a great lesson, and yet a painful one, to be made nothing; to feel one's self weaker than the weakest, and viler than the vilest; to be a pauper living upon daily alms, and to be made often to beg, and yet sensibly to get nothing.

People think sometimes how highly favored ministers are; they view them almost as if they were angels, and were possessed of a faith far beyond the generality of God's people. But if they could see them as they see and feel themselves, they would find that they were men of like passions with themselves, and often in their feelings sunk down lower than many of their hearers; more tried and exercised, more assailed with temptation, and but for God's grace, more prone to fall. In fact, it must be so. It is necessary that those who stand up to preach to the hearts of others, should have a deep acquaintance with their own; that those who have to preach trials and exercises, should be well acquainted with what they speak; and that those who set forth the Lord Jesus Christ, should know something experimentally of His beauty and blessedness, grace and glory. Unless ministers are well exercised in their own minds, they are pretty sure to drop into the spirit of

the world, and to depart in their feelings from the life and power of vital godliness. We must be *in* a thing, that we may speak feelingly *of* it.

You can now tell what a father feels when a son leaves his house for a foreign land; and those who have to pass through a similar experience will at once know that you were in it. So therefore, unless a minister be feelingly in the things of God by a daily experience, he cannot speak of them with any life, power, or freshness. The life of God must be kept up in his soul, or he cannot be a 'bosom of consolation' to the family of God. Now this sometimes makes us very rebellious, that we should have to go through so many trials and temptations, to be able to speak a word in season to others. We naturally love a smooth and easy path, and would almost sooner forego the blessing, than get it in God's way. But He gives us no choice in the matter; for He leads the blind by a way that they know not.

Your affectionate friend,
J. C. P.

November 21, 1860

My dear Mr. Tyrrell—I am obliged to you for your kind letter, and your liberal offer to take twenty copies of a sermon from Isaiah 17:10, 11, if I could bring it out in a similar way to *Winter before Harvest*. My time is so much occupied with *The Gospel Standard*, and a little work which I hope soon to bring out upon *The Eternal Sonship of our Blessed Lord*, that I almost fear whether I would be able to comply with your request. But as my sermons are frequently taken down here by a very excellent reporter, and published once a month, I may, with God's blessing, be perhaps enabled to preach again from the same text at my chapel here, when it could be taken down. But though I may take the text, I am utterly powerless to preach from it, except so far as the Lord is pleased to give me thoughts and words, and to communicate a divine influence to my heart and mouth. Before I preached from that text in London, I had spoken from it last year at Oakham; and I was particularly favored on that occasion, so that I think I spoke from it with more power and enlargement of heart and mouth than I did this year at Gower Street.

It is surprising, as all experimental ministers know, what a difference there is between the same man at different times; how sometimes he is so shut up that he has scarcely a thought in his heart, or a word on his tongue; and at others, has his soul filled with a sweet influence, which communicates a flow of spiritual ideas and suitable expressions, even to his own amazement. When I was in London I was very weak and poorly, and had, if I remember right, on that Lord's day a severe cold and cough. But the Lord was better to me than all my fears, and brought me through the day, and especially the evening, far beyond my expectation.

I do not usually care to have my sermons taken down, but there were two which I preached at Gower Street this year under a peculiar influence, one on the evening of Lord's day July 15th, from Acts 20:24, and the other on the last Tuesday evening, July 17th. Perhaps the congregation did not feel them

as I did; but they were the two sermons that I would much liked to have had taken down, for I was very much favored in delivering them. What I said on those two occasions has quite passed from my mind, nor can I now recall them; but I would have been glad to leave them as my living and dying testimony to God's truth.

It seems to me that we live in a very awful day, when the shadows of evening are being fast stretched out, and the sun has well-near gone down upon the prophets. This awful error of denying the true and essential Sonship of our blessed Lord has taken a deep root in the minds of many doctrinal ministers and churches, and I fear has penetrated more into experimental churches than is generally thought to be the case. How then can we expect that the Lord should bless those who deny His only begotten Son? But no doubt there is a purpose to be accomplished in all this. It will make a wider and more decided separation between the letter ministers, and those who know the truth by sweet experience; and as the latter are enabled more clearly and more experimentally to hold up the blessed Son of God as the object of the church's faith and hope, those who know and love His name will cleave with more affection to the men of truth, and be separated more widely from the men of error. All this brings down great hostility upon the head of those who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints—and I have had a large measure of it; but what is this compared with the testimony of a good conscience, and the conviction that one is laboring in the cause of God and truth?

I was pleased to hear the account that you gave of the good old woman who was blessed in reading *Winter before Harvest*. I have had many sweet testimonies of the Lord's having blessed that little work, both to the quickening of those dead in sin, and to the comfort and consolation of some in bondage and distress, through the guilt of sin and the power of temptation. Letter-men and presumptuous professors may fight against living experience, the reason being, for the most part, that it condemns them; but it will have a voice in the consciences of God's people; for it often meets their case, opens up mysteries which have often tried their minds, and casts a clear light upon the path in which the Lord is leading them.

May our desire be to know more of divine things by divine teaching; to see and feel more of our own weakness and helplessness; to have a stronger faith in the blessed Lord; and to have clearer and sweeter manifestations of His love, and blood, and grace. This will produce a separating influence from the world, will give more strength to fight against sin and Satan, and will eventually bring the soul off more than conqueror, through Him who has loved it with an everlasting love.

Yours in the best bonds,
J. C. P.

December 3, 1860

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—You will probably have seen by *The Gospel Standard* that I have been in some measure restored from my late illness; but

it is a great trial to me, and no doubt to the people also, that I should be so weak and tender; for it makes my preaching so uncertain, and has such a tendency to scatter the congregation. Were I in the full enjoyment of health and strength, and above all, were the Lord to favor me with His presence and blessing, I would not lack a congregation either here or at Oakham; and indeed I might say, if I were favored with the strength of body enjoyed by so many ministers, I would, as far as I can judge, find hearers in other places. But no doubt there are wise reasons why I should not be thus made use of; for we know, however dark and mysterious things may appear to our mind, the Lord cannot err in His dealings with His children. It is my earnest desire that my long affliction may be deeply blessed, not only to my own soul, but for the good also of others; and that will throw a blessed light upon the whole path from beginning to end.

You may depend upon it, that in my solitude—for I spend most of my time alone—many thoughts pass through my mind, with many exercises on various things. I have thought sometimes that there are few temptations, and especially inward temptations, that I have not experienced and been exercised by; and I have felt and found in them that none but the Lord Himself can deliver me out of them, or overrule them for my spiritual good. When we are passing through various temptations, we cannot well speak of them; but when we are in some good measure delivered from them, then we can trace them out and speak of them as things painfully known. I am well convinced that no man knows anything to any real profit, except what he is taught in his own soul. All true religion must be gotten from the Lord, and that only will stand which He Himself has wrought with a divine power in the heart. This, I trust, was shown me many years ago, and impressed upon my heart, so that I have never been able to take up for myself or preach to others, any religion but that which comes down from above, from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

And I believe also that true saving religion must be got in the furnace, and for the most part through trials, temptations, and afflictions. At any rate, I am sure that such a religion not only shines brightest, but wears best, and lasts longest. Nor indeed have I any union or communion with any other religion, though I could only wish I had more of it in my own soul.

I am sorry to hear so sad an account of poor Mrs. T. I do hope that the Lord may appear for her, and bless her with some manifestation of His pardoning love. It is a mercy that she is delivered from trusting in her own righteousness, and is enabled, however dimly, to look to the atoning blood, finished work, and glorious righteousness of the blessed Lord. I have often thought what sweet and blessed words those were which dropped from His sacred lips when upon earth, which I need not quote at length, for you will find them in John 3:14-16.

It is not our knowledge, or wisdom, or gifts, or abilities, or usefulness, or anything of the kind that can save us, but looking unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and being blessed with a living faith in Him. Many a poor creature who has scarcely been able to say anything during life, and been seemingly outshone by great professors of religion, has received that into his soul, dropped into his heart as it were from the mouth of God, which has saved him with an

everlasting salvation; while the other has sunk into eternity without hope. So I would encourage every poor, tried, tempted soul still to look, and still to long, still to seek, and still to knock until the Lord appears; for it is in this way that deliverance is obtained, Christ revealed, mercy manifested, and pardon sealed upon the heart.

Oh that I could be, both as a Christian and as a minister, what I see and feel a Christian should be; for I feel to come sadly short of even my own standard of one or the other! There is a general complaint of the low state of things in the church of God. But if ever there be a revival out of it, I am well convinced through what means, as an instrument, that revival must come. It must be through a pouring out of the blessed Spirit upon the ministers. It was so on the day of Pentecost; for the disciples were bidden to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high; and we find that it was through this power being then given them, that God wrought in the hearts of His people.

I was glad to hear that poor old Sarah Giddings is so favored. She is another testimony that your prayer under the apple tree was accepted. Surely we can both look back to my coming to Allington as a marked event in our lives, for we have known both the dead and the living to have testified that the blessing of God rested upon my testimony in the little chapel. It is not a little temporary excitement, or what is called hearing well, that proves a ministry to be owned of God; but that it abides in the heart, stretches through life, and reaches down to the very swellings of Jordan. I hope I can say, to the praise, honor, and glory of God, that some of those who have been blessed, either in hearing my voice or in reading my sermons, have borne upon a dying bed their testimony that God had blessed the word to their souls.

I am sure I feel in myself one of the most unworthy of all men, that the Lord should condescend to speak in, by, and through me to the hearts of His people; but I know that He will send by whom He will send, that He chooses His own instruments, works in His own way, and does His own will. Oh that He would bless and favor my soul with His manifested presence, keep me in His fear all the day long, sanctify to me all my trials and afflictions, bless me in life, be with me in death, and land me safe in a happy eternity!

I hope that those who follow you may never sell the truth out of the chapel, and that they would rather convert it into cottages than let error come within the doors.

My daughter is still at Leicester. I miss her, as I find her very useful as a secretary. I told her, when she accepted the office, that she would find it no easy task; and I believe she has proved my words to be true, though nothing can exceed her kindness and readiness to help me in my correspondence and occupation in carrying on the *Standard*. As a specimen of the work which she had to do, I dictated a letter to a Scotch minister, which filled six sheets of the largest-sized note paper. Several friends wish me to put it in *The Gospel Standard*, and I think I probably shall do so. It is on the subject of the law NOT being a believer's rule of life. Our friend William Tiptaft invited him to preach at Abingdon, and there he got into conversation with him and J. Kay upon the subject of the law; and the Scotchman was so shocked by the views

which were expressed by our friends on the subject, that he fairly took flight and would not preach, though engaged to do so. He wrote in consequence to Tiptaft upon the subject, but could get no answer from him. So at last he wrote to me several long letters, begging most earnestly for answers. So I was compelled to take up the subject, though I could scarcely afford the time. And when I had written it, it struck me it might do for *The Gospel Standard*; as many children of God who are sound in the truth, though they cannot explain their own views, and can understand them when they are put forth by others; and as those friends who saw the letter wished me to put it into the *Standard*, it seemed to concur with my own feelings, and therefore I probably shall do so.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1861)

January 2, 1861

My dear friend, John Grace,

The Address (*Gospel Standard*) too requires some thought and labor, as not only must it be in great degree original, that is to say, not a repetition of former addresses, but in some way adapted to the readers of the work. It is more easy to see how such things should be done, or to criticize them after they are done, than to do them. The difficulty is, to write with some sweet savor upon the spirit, and while all appearance of teaching is laid aside, yet to speak with that degree of authority and power, which becomes those who stand forward to instruct or admonish others. I have no doubt you understand my meaning, as it is so analogous to preaching. If a man cannot preach with some authority and savor, he seems little qualified for such an office; and yet the assumption of any undue authority would be felt by the people as unbecoming his position. But it is the Lord, and the Lord alone, who can commend, both what we speak and what we write, to the consciences of His people; and there is in truth, as applied to the heart by the power of God, a weight and an authority, which is not to be found in any assumption of the priestly office.

I am more and more convinced what error there is in the professing church, and how we seem fallen on those evil days when perilous times were to come. I used some years ago, in reading Mr. Huntington's writings, to wonder at two things—(1) The erroneous men that he had to deal with; (2) His severe language against them. But I can now see that we have just the same men in our day, and just the same errors; and though I would not use Mr. Huntington's language, because I have not his experience, his discernment, or his authority, yet I can see that such language was in a measure deserved, and that it was zeal for his Master and for the truth that made him so denounce error and erroneous men.

I preached here on Christmas day and did not suffer any injury, though the thermometer was lower than it has been for many years. I feel it to be a mercy not to be wholly laid aside, as it keeps the people together, and I trust is sometimes made profitable to their souls, as well as giving me the opportunity to preach what extends to a wider circle than my own congregation. How very differently the Lord, for He is the author of all good, deals with different instruments; and yet how His wisdom is displayed in the various circumstances of His all-wise arrangement. You, for instance, are favored with a good measure of health and strength, and have a regular and large congregation; while I am for the most part but a poor invalid shut up in a narrow corner of the land. And yet we hope we are both filling up the exact position which the Lord has designed; and so far as He is making use of us, are qualified to do the work which He has appointed us to do. It is a blessed thing when we can feel nothing in ourselves, but all in Him, and are blessed with a single eye to His glory, and His people's good.

We have just entered upon a new year, and who can tell whether we shall see its close? I wish for myself that I may live more to the Lord's praise during the year now present, if my life be spared, than I did through the year just passed. And yet I am very sure, if I am left to myself, I shall spend a worse year as regards living to the Lord, than I did during that now forever gone. We have seen in one sense the best of our days, for youth is departed from us; and though you enjoy a larger measure of health and strength than myself, yet every coming year will rob you more and more of both. I do earnestly desire for myself that my last days may be my best days, and that when my sun sets, it may not go down in a cloud, but shine the brighter before it passes altogether out of sight. But this, like every other gift, must be all of superabounding grace, for indeed nothing short of that can bless us in life or death.

I have read the sermon which Mr. — lately preached at your chapel. It is not marked by any great depth of experience, nor does it bear the stamp of great ability of mind; but there is something very sound, savory, and sweet in it, and in many points I could see with it very nicely eye to eye, and feel with it, I trust, heart to heart. Among the men of experimental truth, how few we have who are gifted with any great ability to set it forth. Sermons sometimes come across me which are preached by men ignorant experimentally of the truth, and scarcely sound indeed even in the letter; but as regards clearness and force of language, and ability in putting forth their views, they seem to me far to outshine the experimental ministers of our day. This cannot be because the subject of experience is not calculated for clear and vigorous expression, for where do we find more beautiful writing than in the works of Mr. Huntington and the poetry of Joseph Hart, not to mention *The Pilgrim* of the immortal tinker? With what power too our esteemed friend Mr. W. Gadsby used to preach! So that there is nothing in experimental preaching which is unsuitable to clearness of thought, vigor of language, and force of expression. Besides which, there is in it a sweet savor and a blessed unction, when God speaks through the lips, which is true eloquence; for it reaches the heart and produces an abiding effect upon the soul. It is true that God by the "foolishness of preaching saves those who believe"—but the Apostle does not mean that the preaching itself is foolish, but that the effect is so far beyond the cause, that it may be considered in that sense a foolish, because in itself a

weak, instrument. Please excuse my running on at this rate, but very often in dictating letters I think aloud instead of writing, and thus sometimes may burden my friends with unprofitable thoughts.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 9, 1861

Dear Friends . . . I am glad to find that you are enabled still to hang together as a few people that are united in the love and fear of the Lord; and though you may be despised of men, it is far better to have the witness of God in your heart, than to enjoy all the smiles of mortals. I consider it a favor that God is pleased to make use of my poor instrumentality to feed His people in various parts of the country; as there are many little places scattered up and down the land where they read, in the absence of ministers who preach the truth, the sermons which I have been enabled from time to time to send forth in His most blessed Name. And as I cannot doubt, from the many testimonies which I have received, that the Lord has condescended to bless them, I must thankfully acknowledge that His gracious hand is in it. He will work by whom He will work, for He is a mighty Sovereign, and has therefore power and will combined to execute His eternal purposes without consulting the will of man. And generally His ways are so in the deep waters, and His footsteps are so unknown to fleshly reason, that they are only seen by the event. This often tries the faith of the Lord's exercised family; for they would rather walk by sight than believe in the dark. But when the Lord is pleased to make darkness light and crooked things straight, then they can admire His divine sovereignty and see, feel, and gratefully acknowledge that He does all things well.

I hope the Lord will keep you together in a spirit of love and union, for without this all is misery and confusion. There is nothing worse than a root of bitterness springing up among those who love and fear God. The Lord preserve you from it, and knit your hearts together in love. I am, through mercy, pretty well, considering the severity of the weather. My love to all the friends.

Yours in the best bonds,
J. C. P.

January 11, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Parry—You will be desirous, I have no doubt, to hear how I am this severe weather. I may well call it severe, for we have not had a winter for some years during which the thermometer has been so low; and at present there does not seem much prospect of an alteration. I am thankful, then, to say, that though I feel the cold, yet I am quite as well as I could possibly expect, and, indeed, I may say, much better than when I saw you last at Cirencester. I preached last Lord's-day in the morning, and think that I could have stayed for the afternoon had I not made arrangements to come home. The weather was so extremely severe that we had not our usual congregation; still there were quite as many as could be expected,

considering that very many of our friends come out of the country, and no doubt they felt a little uncertainty whether I would be out to preach in consequence of the extreme severity of the weather. . . .

You know that for many years I have taken an interest in agricultural matters, not only as having friends among the tillers of the soil, but as feeling its general importance to the whole country. It has struck me, therefore, that this severe frost may be mercifully sent to dry and pulverize the hard clays after they have been so saturated with last year's continual dripping; so that if the Lord be pleased to give us a suitable spring, and a warm and dry summer, we may see the benefit of what now pinches our frames, chills our blood, and nips our fingers.

What a deep fund of unbelief and infidelity there is in the heart of man, ever ready to start up like a wild beast from its lair and seize hold of any coming forth of the life of God in the actings of faith! I have sometimes thought that it is scarcely possible for any among the living family of God to have a heart so full of unbelief and infidelity as I carry in my bosom. But I know this, that the grace of God, and the grace of God alone, is able to subdue it. My wonder is, not that all do not believe, but that any do; it is not the multitude of unbelievers which surprises me, for this I know all men are, but that any should, by the power of God, have their unbelief subdued and overthrown, and the grace of faith communicated and kept alive in their bosom.

We are entered upon another year. The last, as you will remember I said in the pulpit when I was at Allington, was an eventful one, and we do not know what circumstances lie hidden in the bosom of 1861 to make it even more eventful than 1860. We are no longer young. Our families are growing up around us; they are the generation that is pushing us out of our place, as a young healthy shoot pushes off and displaces a decaying one. We feel, and that more deeply and more sensibly every day, that we are passing away out of this time state; and when we look around, what is there abiding? for we all seem like the passengers by a railway, all of whom are journeying by the same means of conveyance, and though each drops off from the train at different stations, yet all eventually come to a terminus where they leave the line. As then we see and feel that all is passing away, what a mercy it is if we can look beyond this vain scene to that which abides forever and ever! "We have no abiding city here," is a lesson which the Lord writes upon the heart of all His pilgrims; and as it is more deeply engraved upon their bosom, and cut into more legible characters, they look up and out of themselves to that City which has foundations, of which the maker and builder is God.

You, no doubt, feel something of this from day to day, and so far as you do, it will keep you from looking forward too anxiously to, or thinking too much of, the house which they are building for you at Allington. It is very blessed when we can use the favors of God in providence without abusing them; can see His kind hand in the gift and not make an idol of it; can bless Him for His providential mercies, and yet feel that without Himself they are not only worthless but miserable. How many have lived all their lives in beautiful houses, have never known a day's hunger, have eaten of the fat and drunk of the sweet all the days of their life, have lain down at night in a luxurious bed,

where they have felt neither cold nor frost; and yet at last when their mortal existence has come to a close, have made their bed in hell!

When I say this, I may add that I sincerely hope that you may have a comfortable house, that your life may be spared long to live in it, and health be granted that neither house nor life may be a burden. But with all that, I wish for you, and I wish for myself, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, with which we may be clothed when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved and reduced to its native dust. Even the troubles and trials which we meet with in the way are so far made blessings as they become thorns to prevent us settling down in our nest and counting our days as the sand. How often the very circumstance on which we most set our heart is made to be the source of the keenest trial! And how many have built houses, and either not lived to go into them, or have soon yielded up their breath when they have taken possession of them.

Poor Mr. M—, no doubt, promised himself many years of enjoyment in his new house; but the Almighty Disposer of events had ordered it otherwise, and while He allows a Sally Durnford, and a Nanny Bengier to creep on to the extreme verge of life, mows down in the prime of his years the father of a family, and the possessor of the finest farm, perhaps, in your county. What lessons such things would teach us if our eyes were more open to see, our ears to hear, and our hearts to feel their solemn import! But I am well convinced that however enlightened our judgments may be, it must be the immediate power of God to lay these things with any real weight and profitable influence upon the heart.

I am sorry to hear so unfavorable an account of poor Mrs. T—. May the gracious Lord condescend to support her mind under her bodily affliction, and, above all, to give her a blessed token for good, and a sweet testimony of her interest in the love and blood of the Lamb. This may be delayed, as it was with poor Mrs. C—; but delays are not denials, and God is faithful to His promises, as well as to His own work of grace upon the heart. He will never despise the work of His own hands, but will graciously perfect that which concerns His people. And what can concern them so deeply as the salvation of their immortal soul? What are all concerns to this grand concern? If that be right, how can anything else be wrong? If that be wrong, how can anything else be right? She has lived to an advanced period of life, has no anxiety about leaving children behind her to battle with a rough, ungodly world; and her only earthly tie, besides the natural clinging to life which all have, is a kind and affectionate husband. So that if the Lord be but once pleased to smile upon her soul, and give her a testimony of His pardoning love, she may look up out of her affliction and say, "Lord, now let your your servant depart in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation."

You will find more and more, if your life be spared, that there will be a gradual dropping off of your members; and you may expect well-known faces gradually to disappear from the pews. But the Lord is able to give you fresh accessions, both of members and hearers, and thus fill up your number, and, it in yes be, put fresh life and feeling into your midst. May He do this if it be His will for His great name's sake.

In speaking about the future, I feel myself compelled to do so with a great degree of hesitation. Still, it is necessary, for the sake of others as well as one's self, to make arrangements for the coming summer. I think, then, if life be spared, and health be given, of going to London for the last three Lord's-days in June; and in that case I would like, if spared, to come on to Allington for the first three in July. I would be glad to give you four Lord's-days, but I fear I shall not be able, as having been so often laid aside, I feel it necessary not to be away so much from home.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 31, 1861

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner. . . I have sometimes wished that it had pleased the Lord to take me to Himself thirty years ago, when I was laid aside with a serious illness, from which indeed I have never fully recovered. How many sins and sorrows I would have been spared! But such was not God's will; and if He has been pleased to make any use of me by tongue or pen since that period, I have every reason to adore His inscrutable wisdom and His matchless mercy. I little thought then that I would have to occupy the position which the Lord seems to have assigned me in His providence and grace. I never sought it, and have only been maintained in it by a connection of circumstances which seem to have combined, not only to put, but to keep me in a position from which many a time I would have gladly escaped.

Some people seem naturally fond of pushing themselves before men, which makes quiet and obscurity to be their torment; and others appear animated with a spirit of strife and contention, so that, like a sea-gull, they never seem so happy as in a storm. But I can say for myself, that peace and quiet have always been to me naturally an object of greater desire, than to occupy any prominent position, or to be engaged in contention and strife. But the fact is, that if a man, from the dictates of an honest conscience, and from the teaching of the blessed Spirit in the heart, is led to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, he necessarily becomes a man of strife. This was just the case with the prophet Jeremiah. Because he was compelled to declare what God showed him, and what he knew to be true, he therefore became a man of strife to the whole earth. He did not seek war; but it was thrust upon him by those who hated him for the truth that was in him.

I hope, my dear friend, that the Lord has led both of us to know and to believe, as well as to love, His precious truth. Having therefore this knowledge, this faith in, this love to His truth, we cannot frame to ourselves the enmity which is felt by those who are ignorant of it in its power and preciousness. It is this which stirs up the enmity of their heart; and this being the case, need we wonder at the enmity manifested by them against all who know and love the truth, and in a more especial manner against those who proclaim it by tongue or pen? I ought to be by this time pretty well seasoned to the attacks of men who oppose the truth from an ignorance of its power as experimentally felt. I do not know whether you have seen any of the late pamphlets which have been written against me by the opponents of the true

and proper Sonship of our blessed Lord. As regards myself, I pay but little heed to them. The truth of God is far beyond and far above us all, whether we defend it, or whether we oppose it. The Son of God is like the natural sun, to which He is compared, as being called the Sun of Righteousness. The rays of the glorious orb of day are not impaired by the bats and owls, which hate it and flee from it into their dark caverns; nor are they heightened by the thousands of gladdened eyes to whom they are a guiding and a warning light.

In a few years, those who have advocated, and those who have opposed the highest title and most glorious name of our blessed Lord will alike have passed away; but He will still be what He ever was—the Son of the Father in truth and love. He does not need our advocacy to those who see Him by the eye of faith, any more than the literal sun needs our praise when, after a cloudy or inclement season, it shines forth brightly once more, as it has done this day. Yet are we glad, as opportunity serves, to set forth His worthy praise; and indeed cannot but do so when our heart is in any measure softened with His grace, and our lips touched with a live coal from off the altar. The tongue of mortals, and indeed of immortals, can but faintly show forth His praise; but it is our mercy to be on the side of His friends, and not be ranked among the number of His foes.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 1, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—I am sure that the friends at Oakham will have great pleasure in receiving the word of grace and truth from your lips, and may the God of all grace come with you there to bless your own soul, both out of the pulpit and in it, and to make the word a blessing to His people. There are remarkable instances sometimes of the Lord's special grace at such opportunities. Often a servant of God has gone in His providence to a strange place, and the Lord has directed a special word on such an occasion to someone's heart, who then either for the first time heard the truth, or, if not so in the letter, heard it for the first time then with power. Our dear friends Gadsby and Warburton were much blessed in this way, going as they did from place to place. A blessing often rests upon the servants of God in this way, of which they never hear. Indeed, the Lord in mercy often hides from them the good they do, lest they should be puffed up by it and think themselves something when they are nothing.

It would seem a great blessing if the Lord would raise up more ministers to feed the churches; for, indeed we may say "the harvest is great and the laborers few." Everything looks very dark and gloomy just now. This sad error has infected very many, and its advocates seem more and more bold and daring. But the Lord reigns. He can and will maintain His own truth. It has always met with the greatest opposition, and yet it has come out triumphant over all. Grace be with you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 12, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—We shall be happy to see you to dine with us, and I hope we may have the sweet presence of the Lord in our mutual communication. There is a meeting together for the better and a meeting together for the worse, and usually when it is not for the one it is for the other. There is such a thing as carnalising each other's mind, and with God's help and blessing there is also a spiritualising of it. Paul desired to come to Rome that he might impart unto the people a spiritual gift, not only to the end that they might be established, but that he also might be comforted together with them by the exercise of their mutual faith. Those who feared the Lord in ancient times "spoke often one to another;" and the Lord graciously heard and put them down in the book of His remembrance. There is very little real spiritual conversation in our day; and one would hardly think that people had heaven much in their hearts who have the things of heaven so little in their lips. It is a sad mark of the cold and lifeless state into which the Church of God has sunk, that while there is so much bitterness and strife there is so little real union and love. It is said of Naphtali that "he gives goodly words;" but why? Because he was "satisfied with favor and full with the blessing of the Lord;" for though many years separated the blessings pronounced upon him by Jacob and Moses, yet he was the same character in the eyes of each, as instructed and inspired by the Holy Spirit. I hope that you may come up from Brighton with Naphtali's experience as "a deer let loose," and may give goodly words both at Oakham and Grantham.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

February 6, 1861

Dear Mr. Jacob—I was sorry to learn from your letter that the Lord has been pleased to visit you and your family with such heavy strokes. [Mr. Jacob lost a son and two daughters by scarlet fever.] There are few things more heart-rending to a parent than to have his children torn from him by death; but we see that this was the appointed lot of some of God's most eminent saints. Look for instance at poor Jacob, whose grey hairs he felt would be brought down in sorrow to the grave by the loss of his beloved Joseph; for though he was not really dead, yet he was such as much in his father's feelings, as if he had actually seen his dead body torn to pieces. And look also at David. How deeply he felt the loss of Absalom, so that he would in his feelings gladly have died for him. There is only one way whereby one who fears God can be reconciled to such painful dispensations, and that is by submission to the sovereignty of Him who cannot err. This will not indeed heal the wound, but it will prevent it from rankling, and from what is worse than any affliction, that is, rebelling in our feelings against so kind and gracious a God as has watched over us with such care and tenderness for so many years.

It is a great mercy that the Lord has so constituted us that time has a great effect in softening the grief that is felt under family bereavements; and thus by degrees the heavy weight of the affliction passes off the mind. I hope that it has pleased the Lord, not only to give you submission, and your wife also,

under these afflicting strokes, but also to make them in some good measure a blessing to your soul. From whatever quarter affliction comes it has a voice; and if we have but ears to hear, we shall find God speaking in it. This is the grand difference between those who fear God and those who fear Him not, that the former see God in everything, and the latter see God in nothing. Thus affliction brings no benefit whatever to the one, but often yields the greatest blessing to the other; and even if the child of grace does feel at times much rebellion under the stroke, yet usually sooner or later, when the soul has been humbled thereby, the Lord appears and sanctifies the affliction.

I am glad to learn that you are so comfortable under Mr. Gunner's ministry, and hope that you may find more and more reason to bless God that you have been brought under it. There is nothing so precious to a believing heart as the truth, when applied to the soul by the power of God. The Lord ever will bless His own truth; but how can we expect Him to bless error, or that He will make a lie to be profitable?

I believe that the end will show that there will be no reason to regret the controversy which has been so warmly carried on about the Sonship of Christ, especially in the metropolis. The effect will be to draw a clearer and sharper line of distinction between the men who hold the truth, and those who have drunk in the error. You probably have heard or seen some of the pamphlets which have been launched against me on the subject. I have just looked at them, but no more, as I soon saw enough of their spirit to throw them aside. When men manifest such carnality and such bitterness, we need no other proof that they are not taught of God. They cannot see it themselves, nor can their admirers see it in them, but those who know the truth by divine teaching and by divine testimony see at a glance where such men are, and know that they are not under that holy anointing which teaches all things, and is truth and no lie. But as I have sent forth my little book on the subject, I shall not take the trouble to answer the various pamphlets that erroneous men may write against me.

My love to, and sympathy with, yourself and your wife under your afflictions and trials.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

May 3rd, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Tanner—I have no doubt that you have been expecting for some time an answer to your kind and affectionate letter. Indeed, my own conscience has not been slow in reminding me of my neglect. But in this, as in many other instances, to will has been present with me, but how to perform that which was good I found not. You are well aware how much occupied my time is, and what a hindrance in the way of work is a weak tabernacle. Thus the combination of these two things—much to do and little strength to do it, has a great tendency to throw one's work sadly into arrear.

I am sorry to say that just now I am laboring under one of my chest attacks which prevented me preaching here last Lord's-day, and will prevent me preaching on the one now approaching. Still, as I am mending, I hope it may

please the Lord soon to restore me to my former work. I sometimes think I will make no more engagements to go from home, as it is often a matter of uncertainty whether I shall be able to fulfill them. Still, hitherto, the Lord has helped me, and though occasionally I have been obliged to disappoint expecting friends, yet upon the whole I have been strengthened in my work far beyond all my expectations; and this encourages me not to give up until absolutely compelled. . . . I hope that our mind when we are under any sweet influence from above, is led up into higher and more blessed things than anything which time and sense can afford.

There is something very peculiar and very distinct in the operations of the blessed Spirit upon the heart. Those who know nothing of divine things by divine teaching are easily satisfied with a name to live and a mere form of godliness; but this will not and cannot satisfy any one who really possesses the life and power of God in his soul. But what different people we are—according to the influence of the flesh and the influence of the Spirit! and how we find these two principles ever opposing and conflicting one with another! But how totally different they are in their origin, nature, and end! *How I look around sometimes and see how people are lost and buried in the poor vanities of this earthly scene, without perhaps one desire heavenward! How they all seem to live as if man were but like a beast whose life was forever finished when death cut the thread! How totally thoughtless about their eternal state and their fitness to stand before a holy, just, and righteous God!*

On the other hand how exercised is a Christian, sometimes nearly all day long, with divine realities—sometimes up and sometimes down, sometimes full of unbelief, and sometimes able to believe with a loving heart; sometimes as dark as midnight, and sometimes favored with divine light in his soul; sometimes as dead and lifeless as though he were altogether dead in sin, and sometimes feeling the springing up of divine life like a brook. But there is one thing which I seem to see and feel, that is—how little any one, even the most highly favored, really sees or knows of the kingdom of God. No doubt in this time state very little can be really seen or known of it; but even so far as faith is privileged to enter into the things revealed in the word of truth, how little comparatively is seen, felt, and known. What deep mines of truth there are in the word of God which seem at present not broken up or brought to view, I mean so as to become coined into money for the enriching of the soul. And how we need the blessed Spirit to break up for us these rich mines, and thus to give us an inheritance of these deep treasures!

But I am sure that we require a spiritual mind to understand and enjoy the word of God, and that is the reason why it is so little prized, believed in, and loved. We need a subjection of mind to the word of truth, what the Scripture calls the "obedience of faith," that we may take it, in the simplicity of a childlike spirit, as our guide and rule, as our instruction and consolation, as bringing eternal realities near to our minds, and lifting us up into a vital apprehension of them. But as we attempt to do this, there ensues a conflict, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Unbelief, infidelity, reasoning objections, strong suspicions, subtle questionings, spring up in the mind; and sometimes rebellion, blasphemy, hardness of heart, and desperate enmity against what is revealed, so that in the dust of battle all believing views seem lost, and all the soul can say is, "I am full of confusion." My friend, I believe,

is no stranger to these conflicts, and no doubt finds them a maul upon the head of pride and self-righteousness, as well as giving him the tongue of the learned and enabling him to speak a word in season to him who is weary.

I do think that an unexercised minister is little else but a plague and a burden to the living family of God. The people want their exercises entered into and the work of the Spirit traced out upon their heart; and not only so, but with that life, power, and freshness which alone spring from the soul of the minister being kept alive in the path of trial and temptation. When we were together we used sometimes to exchange thoughts upon these subjects, and I believe we saw for the most part eye to eye upon them.

Illness has often been made a profitable season to my soul. The Lord knows best how to deal with us, what burdens to lay upon our back, and through what afflictions to lead us to His heavenly kingdom.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

May 15, 1861

My dear Tiptaft,—It is not often that you have been at Allington at this season of the year. I hope that these warm sunny days, and the green leaves spreading themselves over the trees, are emblems of a better season, and represent the springing up of life and feeling in your soul and in your ministry in Wilts. Winter is no pleasant season either for body or soul, and though I have written a sermon to prove that it comes before harvest, yet I cannot say that it is a season which I like, either in nature or in grace. But as in nature it is necessary to break the hard clods and prepare the earth for spring showers and May sunshine, so, I believe, it is necessary in grace to break to pieces the hard clods of the heart that there may be a suitable soil for the seed of life to spring up and grow. Few things are more mysterious to a Christian than the revivings of the work of grace upon his soul. Judging from myself at times all feeling religion seems lost and gone. At such seasons one wonders how the scene will end. But the Lord does from time to time revive and renew His work upon the heart, and there is a fresh acting of faith, hope, and love, with every other grace and fruit of the Spirit. I believe it to be a very good and a very needful thing to have the soul well and continually exercised on the things of God. I hope I can say for my part that eternal things are ever uppermost in my mind, either in a way of exercise or else in some actings of faith upon the blessed Lord.

You have, perhaps, heard that I was not able to preach for two Lord's-days; but, through mercy, I was permitted to get out again last Lord's-day. I preached twice, and administered the ordinance afterwards, and did not feel worse, except a little extra fatigue. I hope, therefore (D.V.), to go to Leicester on Friday. As I disappointed them last September I would have been sorry to be obliged again to fail in keeping my engagement. . . .

We live to see great changes, not only in men's affections but in men's opinions. It is good amid all changes, without or within, to have the heart established by grace, and not like children to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. It is a mercy to be in any way delivered from looking to man and to be enabled to look to the Lord as our all in all. I am very sure that I never got any good from looking to man, whether saint or sinner. If we expect much from our friends we are almost sure to be disappointed. In our greatest straits they can do us no good, for they cannot give us the light of God's countenance, or apply any sweet promise to the soul.

Thus, though I wish ever to walk in love and affection with my friends in the Lord, yet I never want to put them in the place of Christ or to look to them for what I know they cannot give me. And, as regards my enemies, I desire to bear all their attacks and their calumnies, knowing that it is my contending for the truth that stirs up their enmity.

I had a few lines the other day from my sister. She names in it that a minister, with whom you were preaching in Devon thirty years ago, was breaking up in constitution, and says of himself that he is looking for his 'great change'. She says that when she heard him preach last she felt convinced that if she were taught of the Spirit so was he, and she believed that it would be well with him when called away. . . . People look to us as leaders in the same way as the soldiers look to their officers. And if they see us wavering and undecided, what a discouragement it is to them, and what confusion it is likely to create! So, for my own comfort, and for the sake of others, I feel myself obliged to stand separate from many people who I dare not say are destitute of the life of God in their souls. It seems very plausible to be united to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and so, in fact, we internally are if we have any measure of His love in our heart. But as to walking in outward union with some, how is it possible to do so with any degree of consistency? But this they consider so narrow-minded, so bigoted, so exclusive, and to manifest such a proud and self-righteous spirit. Unless the trumpet gives a certain sound, who is to prepare himself for the battle?

I want no new doctrines, nor any new religion, as I want no fresh Bible and no new Lord; all I want is to live more daily in the sweet enjoyment of them, and to manifest more of their power in heart, lip, and life. We are no longer young; life is, as it were, slipping from under our feet; and, therefore, I desire to spend the rest of my days, be they few or many, in serving the Lord, walking in His fear, enjoying His presence, preaching His gospel, contending for His truth, and living to His glory. It is a poor life to live to sin, self, and the world; but it is a blessed life to live unto the Lord. I only wish that I could do so more and more; but I have to find that the good I would I do not, and the evil I would not that I do.

You will see the new house at Allington rising upon the ruins of that which you saw burning. I hope, when our dear friends move into it, it may be consecrated by the Lord's presence.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

June 17, 1861

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I think I never came to London weaker in body and soul than this time. I much dreaded yesterday, and would have almost written to Mr. Brown to take my place. But I never found the promise more true, "As your day, so shall your strength be," for I was brought through most comfortably in body and soul, and preached to a large and most attentive congregation with a strength of voice surprising to myself, and in the morning had sweet liberty of soul. On Saturday I could scarcely, from lumbago, walk round Mr. C—'s garden, and yet stood up for nearly three hours, at two periods yesterday, without much pain or inconvenience. As there were a great many strangers and friends from the country my non-appearance would have been a disappointment. "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

I hope you are enjoying not only the refreshing sea-breezes, but a sweet gale of heavenly grace from off the everlasting hills. Poor Mrs. — has much felt this painful dispensation. May it be sanctified to the sufferers. It is sad when the pruning knife gives the branch no fruitfulness. But we need all our afflictions. You are not the only sufferer among the family of God. 1 Tim. 5:5 well describes "a widow indeed."

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

June 20, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Tanner—Once more am I in this great metropolis, being, through infinite and most undeserved mercy, spared to proclaim again salvation by grace in Gower Street pulpit. It is about twenty-five years since I first opened my mouth in London, and I have but once or twice since then failed to come up every year; but I think I never in all those years so much felt my weakness in body and soul as on the present occasion. When the train which brought me up was passing through the last tunnel, I could have wished it was taking me out of London instead of bringing me to it. But the Lord was better to me than all my fears, for I was scarcely ever brought more comfortably through. "Strength made perfect in weakness" has long been my experience, and so I found it then.

I had been suffering for more than a week with an attack much as that I had at your house, so that I could scarcely walk a hundred yards without pain and labor; yet I was enabled to stand up in the pulpit, so that few would have seen that anything ailed me. Is not this wonderful? and to whom does the praise belong but to the Lord? *I never expect to be free from trial, temptation, pain, and suffering of one kind or another while in this valley of tears. It will be my mercy if these things are sanctified to my soul's eternal good, and the benefit of the Church of God. I cannot choose my own path, nor would I wish to do so, as I am sure it would be a wrong one. I desire to be led of the Lord Himself into the way of peace, and truth, and righteousness, to walk in His fear, live to His praise, and die in the sweet experience of His love. I have many enemies, but fear none so much as myself. O may I be kept from all evil and all*

error, and do the things which are pleasing in God's sight, walk in the light of His countenance, be blessed and be made a blessing. Our days are hastening away swifter than a runner; soon with us it will be time no longer, and therefore how we should desire to live to the Lord, and not to self!

My dear friend, I do not feel able to preach twice at Cirencester on July 25th, and should prefer 6:30 p.m., as I think we should have more people in the evening, and I rather prefer that time of day. The Lord's-day at Abingdon generally much tires me, and so do my labors at Allington; then there is (D.V.) the Calne anniversary on the 30th. I shall be pleased to stay at your house (D.V.) from the Tuesday until the Friday, and renew our friendly and affectionate communion.

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

August 19, 1861

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—Being as usual almost overwhelmed with work, I can only send you a few lines, in order to obviate any mistake about my engagement for Leicester. I have sent word to the *Standard* that I am engaged there for September 15th and 22nd, and that you will be here (D.V.) the first of those Lord's days (15th), and at Oakham on the 22nd. I would be glad if you could drop me a line, or else send word to the *Standard* if this arrangement is not correct.

I returned home on Thursday, leaving Abingdon in time to get to Stamford by 4 o'clock, so that I was enabled to preach here that evening. I left our kind friends at Allington on Tuesday, and spoke that evening at Abingdon, where we had a large congregation, though just in the middle of harvest. I thought our friend was looking pale and thin, though he seemed pretty well and cheerful. He buried at South Moreton, on Tuesday, a young farmer who had heard me when last at Abingdon. He made a good end. I think I never saw Allington Chapel so crammed as it was the last Lord's day I was there.

Mr. Joseph thought that, if spared to come another year, it would be better for the people if I could preach in his new cart shed. But that is a long time to look forward to. I must say, however, to the praise and glory of God, that I came home much better and stronger than when I went out; and I can hardly recollect having had upon the whole, a more pleasant journey, or been more favored with help in speaking. The weather for the most part has been very suitable to my health. We had three fine Lord's days at Allington, though some of the intervening ones were cold and wet. I left them just commencing harvest, with a good prospect of crops; indeed far better than any I have seen since I left Wilts. Our friend Mr. P. was but weak and poorly—more so, I think, than he was last year, and a good deal tried with various circumstances. I hope it may be proved that my visit was not in vain. I only wish that the Lord would give me a larger share of health and strength, and that I could labor more in His most blessed service.

I go (D.V.) to Nottingham tomorrow, returning here on Friday, and going next day to Oakham. Our united love to Mrs. Godwin and yourself.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 12, 1861

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner. . . I certainly have been much favored this summer with a measure of health and strength in going about to preach the Gospel; and I have found not only natural strength given according to my day, but I trust also my spiritual needs supplied, both for myself and the people, out of the fullness that is in Christ. But now I seem drooping, not being so well in body, and but lean and barren in soul, so that I am somewhat like the poor harvest laborer, who has had strength given him to cut down and gather in the corn, but feels wearied with so much harvest work.

Ministers are laborers, and according to the Lord's own figure, harvest laborers; for he bade His disciples pray that the Lord of the harvest would send laborers into the harvest. But in the spiritual as in the natural field, *laborers* not *loiterers* are needed; and when the crop is heavy, the sun hot, and the day long, the laborer must needs feel weary and worn. But as he will not grudge his labors if they have gathered the corn well in, and he has received his harvest wages; so the spiritual laborers must not repine, if their labors are blessed to the gathering in of immortal souls, and they receive the rewarding testimony of the Lord's approbation in their own bosom.

As a nation we have been highly favored this harvest. You will recollect your drive one evening to hear poor Mr. Shorter, when you had to pass through flooded lanes, and saw the corn drenched with water in the fields. But had I come among you this year, all your crops would long ago have been safely secured before the anniversary of my former visit. Many hearts were trembling, and many anxious eyes were scanning the appearance of the clouds of heaven when I was in Wilts, as all bore in remembrance the harvest of 1860, and would have sunk at the recurrence of such a calamitous season.

It is often so in grace as in nature. The trials and afflictions of the past make us dread a recurrence of them. Our coward flesh shrinks from the cross, and though we cannot deny that we have received benefit from the suffering, yet we dread to be put again into the same furnace. Besides our usual trials, we had heavy ones last year—I in my affliction under your roof, and you shortly afterwards in Seymour's leaving you for a foreign shore. Could we wish to have a recurrence of these trials, even though we hope they were in a measure overruled and sanctified to our soul's good, and perhaps to the good of others? But the Lord does not consult us, either as to the nature or the time of those trials and afflictions which He is pleased, in sovereign wisdom, to lay upon us. It is our mercy when we can see His hand, not only bringing them on, but supporting us under them, and carrying us through them. If we had no personal trials, temptations, or afflictions, we would not do to stand up before the Lord's people, for they for the most part are painfully tried, and many of them severely afflicted. It would be therefore impossible for us

to enter with any feeling into their tried cases, unless we ourselves knew something experimentally of the path of tribulation.

It is a great mercy if the Lord be pleased by His dealings with us in providence or in grace to keep our souls, not only alive, but lively. There is such a tendency in us to slide down into a state of carnality and ease, to get away, as it were, from the burden of the cross, and as Job speaks, to swallow down our spittle—alluding, I presume, to the difference between doing so at ease in the cool shade, and having a throat parched with traveling through the hot wilderness. How needful it is, with the Lord's help and blessing, to have our loins girt about and our lights burning! How soon we sink down into carnality and death, and like a rower plying against the stream, at once fall down with the current when we cease to ply our oars. These oars are prayer, reading, meditation, and heart examination, and without them, too soon we slip away from the harbor to which we hope we are bending our course. And yet we daily find that we cannot use these oars to purpose, except the Lord be pleased to put strength into us. We may indeed attempt to use them, and should not cease to do so. But alas! of how little avail are they, unless He who teaches the hands to war and the fingers to fight, teach us also their use, and give us power to use them in His strength, not our own. . . .
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 19, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Crake—The obituary, concerning which you have written to me in your usual kind and affectionate way, has just been forwarded to me. When I first cast my eye over it I thought it would do for the wrapper, but when I came to examine it a little more carefully, and especially when I read the closing scene, I felt that the body of the work was a more fitting place. Most of our readers much prefer a good obituary to be placed in the body of the work than put upon the wrapper, as the type being smaller and the paper less clear, there is often some difficulty in reading it; besides which, the wrappers are lost when the work is bound. But if placed in the body of the work some delay must occur before it can appear. Perhaps you will explain this to the aunt of the deceased, intimating at the same time that we shall hope to insert it as soon as our space admits.

I would be very sorry if you thought that the union in heart and spirit which, I trust, has existed between us for so many years, were weakened by time or distance. There are not many, speaking comparatively, with whom I have a real union of spirit; but where it has been once formed, it is not with me lightly broken. Of course lack of communion will to a certain extent diminish, but it never will break asunder a union which the Spirit has once created, and at my time of life new friends are not easily made, nor new friendships entered into. I hope, among the evidences which I possess of being a partaker of the grace of God, is love to those who love the Lord, and, opposed as I am by so many enemies, I feel to cleave all the more earnestly to real friends. I have long felt that, with all the minor differences which often divide the living family of God, that their union is far deeper than any circumstances which can arise to cause disunion. No doubt Satan is

continually at work to separate even chief friends by working upon the corruptions of our nature, and filling the mind either with suspicions or stirring up miserable jealousies. May we have grace to resist Satan in this matter, and to cleave in affection to those with whom we have felt any spiritual union, or with whose religion we have found any inward satisfaction!

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 29, 1861

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—It is a good thing that spiritual union does not depend upon letter-writing, though one is always glad to receive a few lines from those with whom we are united in heart and spirit. It is some time since I have either heard from or written to you, but our union remains the same, as being, I trust, based upon a better foundation than pen and ink. Holy John was glad sometimes to avail himself of this means of communion with the elect lady, whom he loved in the Lord, but he preferred to commune with her face to face. Indeed, there are many things which we cannot altogether communicate by pen and ink, and which only can be unfolded when we are brought together in person as well as in heart.

You will be glad to hear that I continue, through undeserved mercy, still pretty well in health, and am enabled at present to take my daily walks and attend to the labors of the ministry. I feel it to be a mercy that I have been enabled this year to fulfill all my engagements from home, and I trust I have, in some measure, felt the power and presence of the Lord in them. I had a much more pleasant and comfortable visit to Leicester this autumn than in the spring. Then I was much bound and shut up in soul, but enjoyed more life and liberty in my late visit. We had a crowded house, and I hope some of the friends were blessed in hearing. I dined with Mr. H. at Belgrave, and had a good deal of conversation with him; not indeed very close, but still very comfortable. I endeavored to show a kind and friendly spirit towards him, and I think he met me in a similar way. He is, I believe, a good man, though he has a great deal to learn, especially of himself. He has never been much rolled in Job's ditch, nor been in the furnace of affliction, or passed through deep trials and cutting temptations. The lack of this experience makes him to the exercised family of God but a dry bosom. But if he lives, and if the Lord exercises him well with afflictions and trials, breaks up the depths within, and leads him down more into the valley, he will preach with more acceptance to the flock of slaughter.

A friend of mine, a man of very good discernment in the things of God, said, after hearing him, that he was sure of one thing that, whatever he might be, he had not yet taken the lowest room; and as before honor is humility, and the Lord never exalts any man who is not abased, he will have to go a deal lower before he can rise in the estimation of those who know the plague of their heart and who are chastened every morning. I wish him well however, with all my heart, and would be glad if the Lord were to lead him into those

things which, when preached with unction and power, are made acceptable to the saints of God. He was, I understand, not very fully attended at Allington, which he named to our friend; but I believe he was well heard by the people there.

I am glad to tell you that our friends here heard you with much sweetness and power during your last visit. I don't think I ever heard the Stamford friends speak more warmly of your ministry than this last time. I have not felt, I must say, very comfortable here since I came back; but I cannot now enter into all the reasons. In one instance I acted under a wrong impression, which caused some little painful feeling in the church; but as I explained it and expressed my sorrow for having acted under a wrong impression, I trust the unpleasant feeling has passed away. I am sure that, except the breaking out of error or of evil in a church, there is nothing to be so much dreaded as a party spirit. It is the death of all that is good; it sours the mind, hardens the heart, embitters the spirit, defiles the conscience, and brings with it nothing but misery, confusion, and death. It hardly seems much to matter which side is, in the first instance, right or wrong; for as the party spirit goes on, it inflames both sides alike, until each is full of bitterness and enmity. How Satan does rejoice in separating chief friends, and what darkness and death are brought into the soul under his suggestions! It seems at times almost to shut both my heart and mouth, and to put into my hand rather a rod than to fill my soul with the spirit of meekness.

I hope you find yourself pretty comfortable, both in the parlour and in the pulpit, where your lot is now cast. You have never been at any place since I have known you where you have not had trials, and I expect that you will have them at Godmanchester.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 22, 1861

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner,

Our coward flesh shrinks from every affliction and trial, and even though we may have proved in times past that there has been a blessing couched in them, yet our heart murmurs and frets under the weight of the cross. But the Lord, like a wise parent, does not consult us as to where, when, or how He may lay on the chastising stroke. It is best therefore to fall into His hands, and to lie at His feet begging that He will sanctify to us every afflicting stroke, not lay upon us more than we can bear, and remove the trial when it has done its appointed work.

Of one thing I am very sure, that it is far better to suffer from the Lord, than to sin against the Lord. There is no evil which we need really fear except sin; and though the Lord in tender mercy forgives His erring wandering children, yet He makes them all deeply feel that indeed it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against Him. I myself have no opinion of that religion, let it be called by what name it may, which does not make the conscience alive and tender in the fear of God. The blessed Lord gave Himself for our sins that He might

deliver us from this present evil world; and the fountain which was opened in His bleeding hands, and feet, and side was to wash away not only guilt and filth from the conscience, but to sanctify the soul. Holy John saw blood and water gush from the Redeemer's side when it was pierced with the Roman spear; and thus blood to wash away sin, and water to purify the heart, lip, and life, flowed together from the wounds of the pure humanity of the Son of God. I only wish that I could live more in the enjoyment of those two rich and unspeakable blessings—salvation and sanctification.

But we shall always find it to be a fight of faith, a struggle against the power of temptation and corruption, a conflict between the spirit and the flesh, and one in which by strength no man can prevail; for the weak take the prey, and the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. In myself I can truly say I have neither help nor hope, but am obliged every day of my life to look outside of myself to the blessed Lord, that He would manifest Himself to my soul, and shed abroad His love in my heart by the Holy Spirit. I am not one bit stronger in myself with all my long profession and, I hope, possession of the life of God; but on the contrary have a more sensible feeling of my weakness, sinfulness, and helplessness than ever I had before. At the same time I hope I have learned more deeply and thoroughly whence all my strength, wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification are to come, and thus to look more to the Lord and less to self.

I hope you find the Lord with you in your attempts to exalt His worthy name, and that you find yourself encouraged in the work. Sometimes it is most going on when we see it least, and when we feel most desponding as to any good being done, that is often the very season when the Lord is most at work. To be blessed with signs following, is the greatest encouragement that a minister can have.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 26, 1861

Dear Friend, Mr. Hoadley—I am glad that you still bear in affectionate remembrance, and I trust in some measure in soul profit, what I was enabled to deliver in your hearing at Gower Street Chapel. I always think that it is a sign of hearing to profit when there is an abiding of the word in the heart. Our blessed Lord says, "Abide in me and I in you;" and again, "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you," John 15. Now this shows that there is no real fruit unless there be an abiding in Christ, as His words abide in us. It is this abiding of the word in the heart which makes it take root downwards and bear fruit upward. It is indeed very blessed when, as the apostle speaks, "The word of Christ dwells in us richly in all wisdom," Col. 3:16; for it is through His word applied with power to the heart that Christ makes Himself known and precious.

I wish I could give you any information or any counsel concerning which you have written to me. Mr. W— is quite a stranger to me both personally and by report, and therefore I am not able to say one word about him, good or bad. But this I know, that the true servants of God are very scarce, and that it is

very easy for a man to profess a certain line of truth, just to serve a purpose of his own, when he is not acquainted with it experimentally, or indeed may be secretly opposed to the power of those very truths which he professes to hold. Nor do I know any servant of the Lord whom I could recommend. Perhaps, however, Mr. Brown, an old friend of mine, formerly of Godmanchester, but now residing at Brighton, might be enabled to come for a Lord's-day or so, as he has no fixed place at present, and supplies sometimes at Pell Green and the Lower Dicker.

I do not see that you need condemn yourself for taking a part in the service of God when you have no preaching. Somebody must do so, who fears the Lord and who can in public call upon His name. As long as you do this with a single eye to the glory of God, and with a desire for your own soul's profit and that of the people, there can be no just ground of accusation against you; and if you find reading the sermons profitable to your own soul, and the people feel the same, I would not advise you to give it up, but go on with it, as the Lord gives you grace and strength. I cannot now add more. The Lord guide and keep you.

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

November 27, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Crake—I am much obliged to you for the very interesting letter of Mr. M— which you have kindly sent me. I have read it with much pleasure and interest, and would much like to insert it in the *Gospel Standard*, if Mr. M— has no objection.

I have not yet been able to look over the obituary sent me at the same time, but shall hope to do so when I can get a little quiet leisure. I believe Mr. Gadsby intends to enlarge the *Gospel Standard* wrapper in the coming year; and in that case there will be more room for various things which seem hardly worth a place in the body of the work. I find it to be a matter of great difficulty, and one that requires both much grace and much judgment, how to carry on the *Gospel Standard* most for the glory of God and the profit of His people. I am well convinced that its influence has been great, and I have no doubt for much good. It has opened a way for bringing before the Church of God much that otherwise would have been altogether lost. Many sweet and savory letters of departed saints, and many obituaries of those who lived and died in the fear and love of God, have been preserved and brought before the saints of God; and we may well hope that the blessing of God has rested upon such testimonies. It affords also a kind of rallying point for the scattered saints of God throughout the land, who from time to time find their experience described and their views of truth which have been taught them by the Holy Spirit sweetly confirmed. We live, too, in a day full of error and evil, so that we need some one to lift up the voice for truth in its purity and power. I feel myself indeed very unfit and very unworthy to conduct such a work; but, as hitherto the Lord I trust has helped me and given me strength according to my day, I hope to go on still in His name if the Lord spare my life and give me the needful grace and strength.

I desire to sympathize with you and your wife in all your troubles and afflictions. You have found the benefit of them and a blessing in them, and I trust are still realizing the power of God to support you under them and the grace and presence of the Lord to bless you in them.

**Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.**

November 27, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—My time this evening is limited, and I can therefore only send you a few lines to express my affectionate sympathy with you in your trials and afflictions, and my hope that at evening time there will be light. It is indeed truly distressing to see those who are near and dear to us fading like a leaf, and to have daily before the eyes such a sad and solemn testimony to the Adam fall. What but the grace of God which brings salvation can gild with light the pillow of death, and cast a ray through the dark valley of that shadow through which all must pass! I hope it may please the Lord to give you some token that poor Lydia's soul is safe before she is called to resign her last breath. O how vain and fleeting are all things here below! What is the pride and fashion and all the worldly gaiety of that town in which the Lord has fixed your abode, when viewed in the solemn light of a dying hour?

What a description has the Holy Spirit given to us of God's view of these matters in Isaiah 2, 3, and how His hand is put forth in anger against all who are found exalting themselves against Him. May our lot, living and dying, be with the saints of God whom He has redeemed with the precious blood of His dear Son, whom He has called and quickened by His grace, and to whom He has made known the blessed mysteries of His kingdom as set up in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. Time and life are fast passing away with us; but we hope that through distinguishing grace we have not lived altogether to sin and self, but have endeavored, very weakly, indeed, and imperfectly, yet in the main sincerely, to serve God in our day and generation, to seek the good of His people, to be blessed and be made a blessing. To live a life of faith upon the Son of God is indeed a blessing beyond all price; and such a life here will prepare for a life of eternal and unalloyed enjoyment hereafter.

I was glad to learn that upon the whole you enjoyed your visit at Leicester. I had a few lines the other day from our friend Mrs. S—, who speaks warmly and affectionately of your visit. She is one of those who are looking for the power, the dew, the unction, and savor of truth in the heart, and she is not satisfied as hundreds are with the bare letter.

I can only now add our united love and sympathy to Mrs. Grace and yourself.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

November 29, 1861

My dear Friend, William Brown. . . I think that your obituary of Mr. Crouch will be read with much pleasure and interest in the forthcoming *Standard*. When I was younger in years and more favored in health, I used sometimes to preach for him at Pell Green, but we never had much conversation upon the things of God. I have indeed rarely met with a gracious man and minister who seemed more bound up in conversation. It was not from lack of divine matter in his heart, and probably arose either from natural shyness, or from being at the time much bound in spirit. Ministers are sometimes afraid of one another, as I have often felt myself; and where this feeling prevails, it shuts up that free communication in the things of God which is so sweet and refreshing. At the time, I took the fault more to myself than ascribed it to him; but I have since heard from our friend Mr. Grace that he was often bound up in spirit, or at least had not that door of utterance with which some are favored. But he was a man deeply led into a knowledge of self, and when he took his pen was able to express himself with a freedom as well as an originality of thought and language which seemed to be denied him in conversation. My going down to Pell Green arose from my connection with one of his deacons, old Mr. Walter, who was in the habit of coming up to London to hear me on my annual visit to the metropolis. I do not think that I have often met in my life with a man so deeply and continually exercised about his state and standing as good old Mr. Walter. He has at various times much opened his mind to me, and I believe was blessed on one or two occasions under my ministry.

One of the most painful, and I might almost say alarming features of the present day, is the removal of the servants of God, and that so few are raised up in their place. On every side error seems to prevail, and were we to believe their own testimony, there is no lack of ministers of the Gospel. But where are those to be found who preach it with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven? Where are those who can set forth the truth with the sweet savor, unction, and dew of the blessed Spirit attending it to the hearts of the hearers? I would be glad indeed to see the Lord raising up men after His own heart, pastors who can feed the church of God, and ministers who need not to be ashamed, as rightly dividing the word of truth. But I much fear that things will go on from worse to worse, and though the Lord will always have a seed to serve Him, and servants of His own equipping and sending forth, yet their number may be very scanty, and their gifts and graces very limited. What makes the matter to my mind more perplexing is that there is a spirit of hearing in the churches, if there were ministers raised up to feed the people with sound Gospel food. Our race will soon be run; may it be our earnest desire to spend the rest of our appointed days here below to the glory of God and the good of His people. This world has done little for us, and must every day do less and less. We owe it no thanks, and desire to live separate from it, and heed neither its smiles nor its favors. The Lord make us faithful unto death, that we may inherit a crown of life. I hope that, as long as the Lord gives me a tongue to speak or a pen to write, I may use both to His glory.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

November 30, 1861

My dear Friend, Mr. Godwin—I just drop you a line before I start for Oakham, as you will perhaps want to make your arrangements (D.V.) for the coming year. If the Lord gives me health and strength I am likely to be out from home a good deal next year. . . .

I received a letter the other day from the deacon of a church at —, giving a dreadful account of the conduct of a minister there. He wrote to me to ask my advice whether he should withdraw from his ministry, and my advice was that he had better do so under the circumstances, and had better meet together with a few friends by themselves for reading the word and prayer, than stand a deacon and lead the singing under such error and such evil as had come to light. I have received letters from other places expressing how the poor children of God are robbed and spoiled under these letter ministers, and bidding me still to go on to lift up my voice and pen against them. My own conviction is that very few of them have had the fear of God planted in their hearts, or know anything of Jesus Christ by any personal discovery of His person and work to their consciences. They are, for the most part, bitter enemies of experimental truth, and hate those who contend for it with a great hatred.

The letter, which I will send you some day, mentions the wrath of these men against the *Gospel Standard* and the editor. But I hope I can say that none of these things move me. I see where the men are, that they have a name to live when they are dead, a form of godliness while they deny the power thereof; and many of them I firmly believe are held fast in some sin, either covetousness or drunkenness, or something worse, not to speak of their enmity and malice against the saints and servants of God. It is a mercy of mercies to be separate, not only in person but in heart and conscience, from such men, and to cleave in love and affection to the real saints of God, and to all who know divine realities by divine teaching and divine testimony. I only wish that I could live more in the sweet enjoyment of the truth of God, and make it more manifest by my lips and by my life that I am in vital and unctuous possession of that truth which indeed makes free.

But I have to lament a body of sin and death which is ever striving for the mastery, and the painful recollection of many departings from the Lord makes the chariot wheels run heavily. But still I struggle on as I best can, looking up to the Lord for continual supplies of grace and strength, and having no hope nor help but in His mercy and love as made known to the soul by the power of God.

We have just lost Mrs. C., one of my hearers ever since I have been at Stamford. I did not know much of her, but Mrs. B—, was very intimate with her, and has no doubt of her safety.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 9, 1861

My dear friend, Mr. Tips—I am truly sorry to hear from your kind and affectionate letter that you have been and still are sick. The Lord, my dear friend, has seen good to take this way of afflicting you, and to lay upon you His chastising rod. It must have been a very great trial both for yourself and your dear wife; but I am truly glad to find that the affliction is working in you the peaceful fruits of righteousness. Good King Hezekiah was laid upon a sick bed, and, as it appeared, a bed of death. But he cried unto the Lord; the Lord heard his prayer and, by giving him a blessed manifestation of pardoning love, cast all his sins behind his back, and thus healed his soul as well as his body. This made the good old king say—"O Lord! by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit—so will you recover me, and make me to live" (Isa. 38:16). Illness is often made use of by the Lord as a furnace in which He tries the faith of His children. Job could say when he was tried—"I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). And I hope that my dear friend will find it so. The refiner of gold does not keep the metal in the furnace longer than is absolutely necessary. He knows exactly when the dross is separated, and when it is time to remove the pure metal out of the fire. So, I trust, the Lord will deal with you.

You will find it good to be much engaged in prayer and supplication at a throne of grace; to read, study, and meditate over God's holy Word; and to examine His gracious dealings with your soul. It is a great blessing to be spiritually-minded, for that indeed is life and peace. When a Christian man is taken aside from his worldly business, and has to spend much of his time in the quiet solitude of a sick room, it separates him in heart and spirit, as well as in body, from the world. He meditates on the solemn realities of eternity—the salvation of his soul is felt to be his chief concern; and if the Lord is graciously pleased to draw him near unto Himself, and to commune with him from off the mercy-seat, he has a sacred pleasure which none can know but those who have experienced it. He sees and feels how time is passing away, how soon he must stand before the bar of his righteous Judge; and this makes him feel that nothing is worthy of a moment's comparison with being saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation. It is in these seasons that we learn lessons which we have never learned before, or at least not so deeply or effectually. It is a good thing to see and feel how short we come of being what we should be, and how little we really know of the grace and glory, love and blood, beauty and blessedness, suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. "He is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man comes unto the Father but by Him" (John 14:6). "He is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). But we cannot believe in Him to the saving of our soul, nor receive Him into our heart and affections, unless the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and reveals them unto us. We should therefore be ever praying to the Lord to send forth His Holy Spirit into our hearts, that He may reveal Christ in us, intercede in and for us, and enable us to cry, "Abba, Father".

**Your affectionate Friend in the Gospel,
J. C. P.**

December 20, 1861

My dear Friend—An unknown friend in Australia has sent me a little money to distribute among the poor and needy of the Lord's family; and as you have come upon my mind, I send you herewith a P.O. order for £2 as a part of the spoil.

The difficulty with me is how to distribute the money in the best possible way; for I know so many of the Lord's people to whom a little help would be acceptable, that the difficulty is to make the selection. But you, my dear friend, certainly seem to have some claim upon me, both from the length and peculiar nature of your distressing affliction, and because I feel that you are indeed through grace a member of the mystical body of the Lord the Lamb. It is but a small part of the afflictions of a saint of God which money can alleviate; and yet the lack of it much adds to the weight of their other trials.

Yours has been a life of dependence upon the Lord, both as a God in providence and as a God in grace; and no doubt often seeing His kind hand in the former, has much strengthened your faith in the latter. To have had all your temporal needs supplied for so many years, has no doubt often raised up a sweet feeling of gratitude in your bosom. It has given you a gracious conviction that the Lord thinks upon you, and cares for you; and where this faith is given, it often blends itself, at it were, with that faith which deals with the love and goodness of God as manifested in the face of Jesus Christ.

Yours has been indeed a path of tribulation; but through it you have already entered into that kingdom of God which is present as well as future, which is a kingdom of present grace, as well as of future glory. Every day of affliction, and every night of pain and restlessness, shorten the number of your appointed days. You have nothing to live for but to glorify God by submission to His will in doing and suffering.

Our dear friends at Oakham are much as usual. As regards myself, I am at present favored with sufficient health and strength to fulfill my ministerial labors. With every desire that the blessing of God may rest upon you, I am, my dear friend,

**Yours affectionately in the bonds of the Gospel,
J. C. P.**

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1862)

January 10, 1862

My dear Friend, John Grace—I sincerely desire to sympathize with you and Mrs. Grace in the trying affliction and painful bereavement which you have just sustained, in the removal of your beloved daughter. From what you have named of her experience, particularly toward the last, I think there is every ground for a good hope that she was among the number of those favored

souls who were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and made alive unto God by regenerating grace. Considering her age, mode of bringing up, and natural disposition, there was hardly reason to expect a very marked and conspicuous work of grace upon her soul. We hardly know how feeble and faint may be the measure of saving grace in a truly quickened soul, especially if there be great fears of making an insincere profession. It was not as if she had the way of truth to learn for the first time; or any self-righteous profession which had to be pulled down with a strong hand. There could hardly be therefore that clear, marked, and decided work which we see in people who have been brought out of the world by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; nor was there, so to speak, that necessity of being taught terrible things in righteousness, which in some cases seem to be almost necessary to burn up the wood, hay, and stubble of a legal righteousness. She was evidently sensible of her danger, had often heard the way of salvation pointed out, and the blessed Lord ever held up as the only hope and help for the people of God. We cannot say then how secretly or mysteriously the Lord might have begun or carried on the work of grace upon her soul.

Last evening I happened to open the Bible in the chapel upon Mark 4:26, and following. I just glanced my eye over the parable, and as I saw something sweet and experimental in it, I expounded it before prayer and preaching. While doing so, I was struck with the expression of "a man sleeping and rising night and day, and the seed springing and growing up he knows not how." Whether "a man" be a minister, the sower who sows the seed, or whether he be a believer in general, it seems plain that the lesson which the Lord meant to teach was that man had nothing to do with the matter, and that whether he slept or whether he awoke, he could not contribute one atom to the germination of the seed or the growth of the plant. The earth, by which I presume is meant the heart of man, or rather the new heart promised, brings forth fruit of itself, independent of the care of man, but wholly dependent upon the rain and sun which come from God. But the blessed Lord goes on to tell us that the work of grace upon the heart resembles the growth of wheat in having first the tender blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear.

Now I am not going to give you a sermon upon that text, or even to say what I understand by it, but the parable strikes my mind as having some bearing upon poor Lydia's case. You could hardly tell when the seed was first sown in her heart. Most probably it was sown by your own hand. But you slept, and you rose night and day, and the seed sprang and grew up you knew not how. You might and did supplicate the Lord on her behalf, and many others did the same; but neither you nor they could contribute one mite to the germination of the seed, or the growth of the plant. Her heart, made honest and sincere, we hope by the grace of God, brought forth fruit of itself. You were watching to see the seed spring up and grow, and in due time you saw a little tender blade, which grew up you knew not how. I much love tenderness in the things of God. Josiah's heart was tender, and the Lord took blessed notice of it.

From all I have heard about poor Lydia, there was a tenderness in her religious feelings. She was afraid of presumption, hypocrisy, and making a profession without the power. All this looked well as far as it went. But as

long as there is only the blade, you can scarcely tell a wheat field from a grass field. Something more is needed to prove it to be corn, and not grass. There is the ear, which seems to be some formation of Christ in the heart; for as in the literal figure, the corn is formed in the ear, though still green and milky, so in grace, when the blessed Lord is in any measure revealed to the soul and embraced by faith, He is then in substance all He ever will be. It is true the corn has to be ripened, but this has little to do with the shape of the grain.

So I trust your poor dear girl had a sufficient discovery of the Lord Jesus Christ to give her a saving faith in His blood and obedience, and a love to His name. I like what she said to her mother about the passage from Micah, and we would hope that as the Lord "delights in mercy", and she "delighted in mercy" too, her will was melted into the Lord's, and that being joined to Him, through faith in the promise, she was one spirit. I think also that the words which were made sweet to her at the beginning of her illness were very suitable, and we know if they came from the Lord He will be faithful to His own word of promise. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 22, 1862

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry. . . I believe that the Address (*Gospel Standard*) is generally very well liked. If I may be a judge of my own composition, I have written better and worse; I therefore consider it about an average; but if I may say so, I think it is written in a good spirit. One thing I am very sure of—that whether it be preaching or writing, I have no power to do either to any purpose, except as I am specially enabled by God. It is surprising what a difference I feel in the power of conceiving gracious thoughts, or giving them spiritual utterance by tongue or pen. It is easy enough to use words, but what are words if the life-giving power of the Spirit be not in them? There is almost as much difference between a living man and a corpse, as between words animated by the Spirit and words in which there is only the breath of man.

But in this, as in everything else, the Lord is a sovereign, not only as to those on whom He bestows the unction of His Spirit, but also as to the times and seasons when He grants it. Private Christians know this from the difference of their feelings in prayer, hearing, reading the Scriptures, meditation, and Christian conversation; and if called upon to pray in public, they know it also from the different way in which they are enabled to exercise their spiritual gift. I have often thought and said that, though from education and long practice I may be able to speak or write so as not to be altogether confounded, yet as regards liberty, life, power, or feeling—I am as dependent upon the Lord in the exercise of my ministry as any of my poorer and less educated brethren. Indeed, sometimes every gracious thought and feeling, with every good word and work, seem utterly gone, just as if I had never known any one divine truth, or as if the Bible had never come before my eyes or with any power into my heart.

I think you have done well upon the whole in establishing a prayer meeting; but like most other things, it is easier to begin than to go on. I was very much struck with an expression made by a gracious friend of mine some time ago. Speaking of a minister whom you do not know, but who stands high in the professing church, he said—"He has no prayer in him." Well, it struck me in a moment—"Where or what must a man be if there be no prayer in him!" I almost fear that his judgment was correct, for he had often heard him pray and preach, and judged him from the feelings of his own soul. So I would say of those who pray at a prayer meeting, if there be no prayer in them it will be but a poor dead lifeless service, but if there be prayer in them it will come out of them, to their own refreshment and to that of the hearers. But you well know, my dear friend, that the Holy Spirit alone can bestow the spirit of grace and of supplication, and that this blessed Intercessor intercedes in and for the saints with groanings which cannot be uttered. Mr. Huntington was against prayer meetings, I suppose from seeing how they became preaching nurseries; but surely if prayer be good in private, it should be good in public, and there is no more reason why a gracious man should not pray spiritually in the pew, as well as a godly preacher in the pulpit.

We have been spared to see the beginning of another year; the Lord knows whether we shall be permitted to see its close. This time thirty-one years ago, I was staying under the roof of our friend William Tiptaft, then Vicar of Sutton Courtney, and so weak and poorly was I at that time, that I did not go out of doors for the months of December and January. Most probably those who knew me then did not think that my life would be prolonged up to this time. Poor Mrs. C., for one, used to think that I was doomed to an early grave; but I have lived to see her, and her sister too, taken away before me. Truly could David say—"My times are in Your hand." The blessed Lord holds the keys of death and hell; and as He has thus far preserved my life, He can, if He will, prolong it still. My desire is, whether it be long or short, that I may walk in His fear and live to His praise, enjoy in my own soul His manifested favor, and be made a blessing to the church of God. I have had many persecutions and many enemies, but here I stand at this day, unharmed by them and much more afraid of myself than I am of them. It is a mercy that, though I have never been strong in body, and now begin to feel the infirmities of advancing years, my mental faculties have been preserved. I cannot indeed study and read as I once did, but am still enabled to get through the work that lies before me, both in preaching and writing.

I am glad that the testimony of poor Edward Wild was well received in your parts. I think it has been generally liked as a simple narrative of the Lord's work, and one stamped with sincerity, if not with any great depth.

No doubt you and yours, in common with us all, have sympathized with our poor afflicted Queen. You know that I have always been what is called a loyal subject, having no sympathy with radicals and republicans, but I believe that the whole country has felt for her, from the palace to the cottage. What a mercy it would be for her if the grace of God would but sanctify the afflicting stroke to her soul's immortal good!

I continue, through mercy, much as usual, though this last frost has rather pinched me. I preached however twice on Lord's day. Time is advancing with

us all. O that when it shall be said to us, "Time no longer", it may bear us into a blessed eternity!

I am, yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 14, 1862

My dear Friend and Brother in one Common Hope, Mr. Leigh—I would be very glad if I could give you any counsel upon the point concerning which you have written to me; but I have no doubt that you have long proved, as I have had to do, that in all matters connected with the things of God, "vain is the help of man." Nor do I know, for the most part, a more difficult point as regards acting in the fear and love of the Lord, than how and when to join one's self to the visible church of Christ. Not that I mean that to my mind there is any difficulty as to what a church of Christ is, for according to my view, that is clearly laid down in the New Testament; the difficulty is in forming a personal connection with a church. For there are so many things to consider, even when the question is fully settled in one's own mind as to what a Gospel church is.

There is, first, the consideration whether it be the will of God that I should join a church at all. Some of the best Christians whom I ever knew either did not see the ordinance of baptism, or did not see their way to be baptized. Then, secondly, one has to consider the church which presents itself to our view, upon which the question arises—do I feel a spiritual union and communion with the members of it? Then, thirdly, there is the ministry in that church, which might not altogether be commended to my conscience, or be made a blessing to my soul. Then, fourthly, there is the question whether I am of such a natural temper and disposition, or whether grace has so subdued my carnal mind, that I am fit to be a member of a Gospel church.

I know at this present moment, several people, both male and female, undoubtedly partakers of grace, and some of them well taught in the things of God, who from infirmity of temper or a contentious spirit, are not fit to be members of any church. I once saw a church torn to pieces and almost broken up by one member, but in a remarkable way the Lord appeared, and the member resigned. Since then they have had peace, and it is a church as much favored with the power and presence of God as any that I know. Now all these things have to be well considered, to be spread before the Lord, and not taken up except as He is pleased to guide and lead. The privilege of being a member of a Gospel church is great indeed. It is a high honor to make a public profession of the name of Christ, to sit down at His table, and to be joined in fellowship with those who fear God and walk before Him in the light of His countenance. But in proportion to the greatness of the privilege is the necessity of being led every step by the Lord Himself. Nothing is more easy than to be baptized and join a church. It is done by hundreds, the whole of whose religion stands in the flesh. But a spiritual man cannot move forward in such a carnal way, for if he does, he will find afterwards nothing but bondage and condemnation.

You will think, and that justly, that I have given you very little help in this matter. And the reason is, because I wish you to be led by the Lord alone. From what I have said in the former part of this letter, some might think that I consider it a matter of indifference what a church of Christ is, or whether it be right in a Christian to become a member of it. But to think so would be a great misapprehension of my meaning. Indeed it lies just the other way. It is because I have such a view of what a church is, and of the blessedness of being a member of it under divine teaching, that I have written as I have done. It is not from indifference, but from seeing the spiritual character of the whole matter, that so many difficulties arise in my mind. As a proof of this, in my ministry I scarcely ever touch upon baptism or a Gospel church; not that I do not hold both with as firm a hand as those ministers who are always bringing it forward, but because I wish for the Lord Himself to lead His people to see it for themselves, and to be persuaded by His own sweet and invincible power. . . .

The Gospel Standard is not what I could wish it to be. Like its editor, it falls very short of his own standard of real vital godliness. But his desire and aim are the glory of God and the good of His people, and that the sweet and sacred unction of the Holy Spirit may spread itself through what is written and what is inserted. It is quite a fight of faith, for there are many adversaries, but the Lord still holds up my hands. . . . It is a mercy that the Lord did not allow your foes to triumph. The Lord will fight for His redeemed. I was reading this morning 2 Kings 9, and could not but see from it what a dreadful thing it is to sin against God.

I am pretty well, through mercy, in health, but not likely again to visit Liverpool. I thank you however for your kind invitation.
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

March 4, 1862

Dear Friend, Mr. Hoadley—Amid all my labors for the profit of the church of God, the various trials and temptations with which I am exercised, and the numerous enemies, internal and external, against whom I have to contend, it is a sweet satisfaction to find that the Lord is pleased to bless to any of His people what I send forth in His holy name. However the Lord's people may differ from each other in station, education, abilities, and other mere natural circumstances, yet are they all blessedly united in one Spirit to the Son of God. Therefore they love the same truth, feel the same power, live the same life of faith, and eventually die to enjoy in substance what they have tasted in shadow. In writing the Address for this year, (*Gospel Standard*) my desire was to edify and profit the church of the living God. This I knew could only be done by the power of God resting upon my pen; for in myself I am a poor, blind, ignorant, destitute, and unfeeling wretch, who cannot even think a good thought, much less write a good word or perform a good action. It is a mercy then that, not only you, but others also, have felt a measure of sweetness and savor in what then dropped from my pen. To the Lord be ascribed all the glory.

I was sure that you would find Mr. Brown an honest, gracious, and experimental man. In giving him out to preach here, or speaking of him, I have called him sometimes "Good Mr. Brown." He has gone through a good deal of trial and trouble, and this, by the grace of God, has softened and meekened his spirit.

I have often thought that those who are placed at the head of a little Cause in the country are put into a very trying situation, when they are brought to see the emptiness of all profession and preaching which do not stand in the power of God. It is to me a grievous sign in the present day, that there are so few men raised up who preach the Gospel with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. There is no lack of ministers, such as they are, and men too who hold the truth, at least in the letter. But some hold it merely in the head, and others, it is to be feared, in unrighteousness. But oh, how few are enabled to preach it feelingly and experimentally under the savor and blessed unction of God the Holy Spirit. The Lord seems taking away His servants. You have lost within about a year four in your own county—Mr. Vinall, Mr. Crouch, Mr. Cowper, and poor old Mr. Pitcher. Oh that the Lord would raise up men who know the truth, love the truth, preach the truth, and live the truth! . . . The Lord bless you and keep you.

Yours in Gospel bonds,
J. C. P.

March 19, 1862

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry. . . I am glad to find that in your illness you have not been altogether left of the gracious Lord. It is but rarely that we can see at the time itself, what benefit there is to spring out of sickness and affliction. Our coward flesh cries out for ease, we want to get better, and dread being worse; and as illness usually fluctuates, we are raised up or depressed according to circumstances. But indeed it is an unspeakable mercy when the affliction is truly sanctified to our soul's good, when we can submit to the Lord's will, lie passive in His hand, and know no will but His. When too, a little measure of meekness and softness is communicated, with faith and hope in exercise upon the blessed Lord, it seems to reconcile the mind to the affliction. When too we can read the Word of truth with sweetness and pleasure, are enabled to call upon the Lord with a believing heart, and are in any way blessed with that spirituality of mind which is life and peace, then we can say—"It is good for me to have been afflicted".

All the saints of God have ever acknowledged that it was in the furnace of affliction that they learned their deepest lessons, and got their greatest blessings. Some, if not many, of the usual trials of the Lord's people, you are in good measure exempt from; but as each must bear his cross, yours, and I may add mine also, has been bodily affliction. People who are healthy and strong may think lightly of it; but those who know what it is by painful experience, feel that it is no small an affliction, especially when it is more or less permanent. It is a good thing however, to be thus daily reminded of our latter end, and as the Apostle says, thus to die daily. It has a good effect in loosening the heart and affections from the poor perishing things of time and sense, and impressing deeply upon our minds that this polluted world is not

our rest or home. We take much to uproot us, for our carnal heart strikes deep root into earthly objects—much deeper than we are aware of, until we find how closely we cleave to things which we thought had scarcely any hold upon us. James gives good advice where he says—"Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray." You will find it a great mercy if you are enabled in your affliction to call upon the Lord; for though He may seem to hide His face and delay to answer, yet He puts the tears of His saints in His bottle, and writes their prayers in His book.

The operation of truth upon the heart is like the light of day, gradual and yet effective; or like dew and rain, which soften and fertilize the ground, we can scarcely tell how. So divine truth in the lips, or written by the pen of a servant of God, often has a very gradual influence upon the mind; but this influence, though imperceptible, is not less real, for it is due not to the man but to the truth which he proclaims, and which the blessed Spirit seals with power upon the conscience. The Lord has placed me in a position which I never sought or desired; but being in it, I do not see my way to retire from it as long as I have grace and strength to execute it. It costs me at times a great deal of mental labor, as you would see from the writing which I have monthly to produce for the Gospel Standard, and all this in addition to my ministerial labors. I wonder sometimes that my poor brain can sustain so much work, for sometimes on the Lord's day, after two laborious services, I write a good part of the evening. Still, as strength is given me, I go on, desiring not to live to myself, but to the glory of God and the good of His people. I only wish that I could enjoy more myself of the precious truth of God, and feel more of its liberating, sanctifying influence upon my own heart, lip, and life.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

May 23, 1862

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry. . . Mr. Godwin would tell you how I am as regards the poor body—just helped through day by day, without any reserve of strength to fall back upon, like the balance of a rich man at his banker's. He would also tell you of the congregations which we had at Godmanchester. There certainly is an increased spirit of hearing in that place and neighborhood, which I have now known for some years past; and I trust from what I saw and heard, that our friend Thomas Godwin is where the Lord would have him to be, and is blessing his labors among the people. I suppose such a congregation was never before seen in the chapel. Some said there were 1,000 people present, and others 1,300. It took more than half an hour in the afternoon to get them seated. It is a large commodious chapel, without galleries, and very easy to speak in. I cannot say that I felt much at liberty on the Lord's day, but on the Tuesday evening was more indulged, and I hope we had a profitable time.

The period is rapidly drawing near when I shall be leaving home (D.V.) for what I call my London campaign. Hitherto I have found the promise good—"As your day is, so shall your strength be." I trust therefore that once more I may be enabled to raise up my Ebenezer. Most probably I shall have large congregations, and I shall need all the bodily strength which the Lord may

give me. But this, though most desirable, falls very short of being blessed in my soul, and blessed also to the souls of others. Next to the salvation and sanctification of one's own soul, there can hardly be a greater blessing than being made an instrument of good to the Lord's family. But oh how we need the special power and blessing of the Spirit, that any good may be effected by the words of our mouth! What strongholds of Satan we have to pull down; what arrows of conviction to launch; what balm of consolation to administer; what strong hearts to break; what broken hearts to bind up! And who is sufficient for these things? How the whole, first and last, is of the Lord! So that if the least good be done, or the least blessing imparted, the praise and honor of it must all be freely given to the God of all grace.

I was never more convinced of this in all my life than I now am. Ever since you have known me you can bear witness that I never gave any strength to the creature, but ascribed the whole of our salvation, first and last, to the God of all our mercies; and the longer I live, the more I know of myself, and the more I see of others, the more am I convinced that the Lord must have the glory of the whole. Indeed I do see so much of the fall of man, and what I am as a poor, vile, filthy, guilty, and helpless sinner, that I am too glad and too willing to be saved wholly by sovereign grace, and wonder sometimes whether that amazing grace can ever indeed have reached my bosom. At one time of our lives we may, perhaps, think that it is very easy to be saved; but when we have been well drilled in the school of temptation, then we begin to see that it is the hardest thing in the world, so hard indeed, that nothing short of a miracle of free grace can work in us that religion which shall save the soul.

When I have, with God's help and blessing, finished my London labors, I hope to set my face towards Wilts, taking in my way Abingdon and Cirencester. Should the Lord permit me once more to come into Wilts I hope it may be under the teaching and testimony, work and witness, of His most blessed Spirit. If I think of myself, and myself alone, I could not dare to entertain such a hope; but in spite of all my weakness and worthlessness, we have now had the experience of nearly twenty-seven years to afford us some little testimony that the Lord has condescended to meet with us in our attempts to worship Him in spirit and in truth, as well as to preach and fear His holy Word. We know that there are those now dead, of whom we have no doubt that they were blessed in the house of prayer, and who will be raised up one day out of their lowly tomb in which they rest in hope, so that your little graveyard will send forth a company of glorified bodies when the great trumpet sounds.

As then you pass by their sleeping dust and look upon their graves with affectionate remembrance, it gives you to hope that they have not borne away all the blessings, but that there are living souls yet who come in for a share too of the same grace which was richly bestowed upon them. How often you pass by the graves of poor old Farmer Wild, our dear friend Dredge, the two sisters, poor Ed Wild, and others, of whom you have a well-grounded hope that their souls have passed into rest and peace. And we too, my dear friend, must one day follow them and be laid as low in the grave as they are now. Oh that the Lord would smile upon our souls and bless us with a sweet manifestation of His love, that when our time comes, we may lay down our

head in peace, with a blessed testimony that the Lord is our God. It sometimes seems as if it were too great a blessing to expect. How base have been our backslidings—at least I may say so of my own! How little we have lived to the glory and honor of God! And still how weak our faith, and hope, and love! How many years have I preached and written, and I may say, considering my health and strength, how much have I labored! And yet how little, how poor, how insignificant it all seems. And yet I hope at times I have not labored in vain nor spent my strength for nothing.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

May 29, 1862

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner. . . How time slips away with rapid wing! Revolving months have brought me against the eve of my summer campaign, when I leave my quiet home, my wife, family, and my books, to sojourn for a while in the busy metropolis, and then turn my face towards the swelling hills and green downs of Wilts. But before I once more (D.V.) see their broad backs and undulating line, I hope to visit that ancient town where He who fixes the bounds of our habitation has cast your earthly lot, and there, with the Lord's help and blessing, renew those ties of friendship and affection, all laid, we trust, beforehand on a right basis, and cemented during that eventful season which I spent under your roof in the autumn of 1860. In our day, there is but little union or communion between those who profess the same truths and who preach the same Gospel. The reason of this is that there is so little union and communion with the blessed Lord; for wherever there is union and communion with Him, there must be the same with His people. Where too humility is lacking, and where pride, ambition, or covetousness prevail, there cannot be real union and communion, for that monster Self steps in between to intercept it.

But when we are made willing to take the lowest place, and to esteem others better than ourselves, there seems to be some foundation laid for Christian union. Such is, I trust, my feeling wherever I see real grace. Gifts may be useful in their way; but it is grace, and grace alone, which unites the soul to Christ, and to those who are Christ's. If ministers, instead of seeking after gifts and popularity, were hungering and thirsting after larger communications of grace for their own souls' present and future benefit, and for their people's, there would be more union among them. But we are poor, fallen creatures, and I have no right to censure others where I am so deficient myself.

I cannot at present fix the exact day when I shall hope to see you, but most probably it will be either Tuesday, July 22nd, or Wednesday, July 23rd, if the Lord grant me health and strength to carry out my London and Abingdon engagements. I should not object to speaking on the evening of the Thursday in the same hall as before, if you think there would be a sufficient congregation to warrant our meeting there instead of the chapel. I still carry about with me a weak tabernacle, having often much cough to try both body and mind. Still, hitherto I have found strength equal to my day, and been helped through my labors so as not to break down, though often very weak

before, and in, and after them. No doubt I need all the ballast I carry, to steady my ship, for there is no safe sailing without it.

You too have your cares and trials; bodily cares, family anxieties, business perplexities, ministerial troubles, and no doubt besides, and beyond all these, that most pressing and most present of all—the heavy weight of a body of sin and death hampering and clogging every movement of the soul Godwards and heavenward. Under the pressure of all these trials and temptations, what a poor empty thing does the world appear, how transitory and vain our present earthly life; and indeed all things within and without with which we are surrounded. Sin and death seem visibly stamped upon them all. But though we thus seem to get sick of earth, sin, and self, yet we feel the need of divine communications of life, light, liberty, and love, to raise up the heart and draw the affections heavenward. Hunger is not food, weariness not rest, and sickness not cure.

How we need the blessed Lord to appear for us, and in us, that we may find in Him that rest and peace, that happiness and consolation, which none but He can bestow. How poor, how empty, how needy am I without His grace; how unable to think, say, or do any one good thing! How dark my mind, how cold my heart, how earthly my affections, unless He is pleased to move and stir my soul toward Himself. Thus I daily find and feel that, without Him I can do nothing, and that He must be my All in all. In private, in public, whatever I do or wherever I am, from Him is all my fruit found. Among the professors of the day how few know and love the truth, and among the preachers how few preach it from any sweet experience of its power! I am afraid of myself, and I am afraid of others; so powerful is unbelief, and so deceitful the heart, so strong is Satan, and so mighty is sin. May the Lord Himself teach and guide us, bless us, and hold us up, for then, and then only, shall we be safe.

I have written a sad stupid letter, but it will show you how dark, barren, and unprofitable I am without the Lord's especial help.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

September 11, 1862

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I need not tell you how disappointed I was at not being able to come to Oakham for last Lord's-day, especially after so long an absence, but my voice was almost wholly gone, and therefore even if I had come and got into the pulpit I could not have made myself heard by the congregation. How true it is that disappointment and vexation attend all our earthly steps. I have not been better in health I think for many years than during my absence from home, and have labored harder in the ministry than since the year 1847. Just then, as I was hoping to give my friends at home a little of my renewed strength, this stroke has come upon me which seems to bring back all my old feelings of tenderness and weakness. . . . I feel very unworthy that any of the dear family of God should be looking to me for instruction and edification when I need so much for myself, and daily feel my own deficiency in everything spiritually good. Still, if the Lord be pleased in

any way to make use of me for the building up of the Church on its most holy faith, to Him must be ascribed all the praise, for I cannot take an atom of it to myself.

I return you Mr. Grace's letter. You probably know that we met in Wilts at the Calne anniversary, and that I got him to preach there to the satisfaction of a large number of spiritual hearers. As I expected to find him much pulled down by his illness he did not seem to me to be looking at all more poorly than I expected to see him. He had come that morning more than twenty miles in an open vehicle, had risen at four o'clock, and had not slept all night. But in spite of all this he seemed to be strengthened in body, soul, and spirit, to preach to a very large and attentive congregation, and did not seem to suffer much afterwards.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

September 15, 1862

My dear Friend, Mrs. Tanner—I desire very sincerely to sympathize with you and your family in the heavy trial through which you are all now passing, in the severe illness which it has pleased the Lord to lay upon my dear friend Mr. Tanner. I truly hope that the persuasion which you have that he will be still spared to yourself, his family, and the church, will be realized; but after so severe and prolonged an attack, recovery, if the Lord be graciously pleased to grant it, must be slow. I am sure that he has the desires and prayers of all who know him in the Lord, that he may be spared. Prayer is a powerful weapon in the hands of the Lord's family, and thus we hope that it may please the Lord to hear prayer on his and your behalf, and to spare his valuable life.

We felt it very kind in Mary giving us so accurate and detailed an account, keeping back nothing, and yet at the same time giving us some good ground of hope that he might still be raised up from his bed of sickness and affliction. There seems now some reason why you should have been lately so much favored. The Lord saw the trial which was coming upon you, and He therefore prepared you for it. I am sure that you must need all the faith that He may have given you, and all the support which may be granted for both body and soul. It must indeed be a most anxious time with you all, and you no doubt see now the mercy of your son's return. Thus you see mercy mingled with judgment, and strength and support graciously given when most needed. We all have to learn that it is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom. Trial after trial, like wave after wave, rolls over the family of God; and the more that the Lord favors and blesses them in His grace, the deeper and heavier for the most part do their trials become. The day of adversity is ever set against the day of prosperity; and wisely so, that we may learn our dependence upon the Lord and know more of His goodness and grace.

**I shall be very anxious to have fresh news how your dear husband really is. May the gracious Lord of His infinite mercy spare my dear friend's life, support and bless his soul under the affliction, and comfort and support your heart. My love to him if he can receive the message. Two years ago, just at this time, I was under your kind and hospitable roof. Had it been this year, what an additional load it would have been to your mind. How wisely, how kindly does the Lord dispose all events!
Believe me to be, my dear Friend,
Yours with much sympathy and affection,
J. C. P.**

October 29, 1862

My dear Friend, William Brown—I was sorry to hear that you were suffering from the effects of your painful gouty arthritis, and had not the free use of your lower limbs. You must feel it much, being so often called from home, and having to travel by such various conveyances. We must all have our daily cross. My tender chest has long been one to me, and deprivation of the free use of your hands and feet has been and is still one to you. But we trust that this cross has not been without its profit. The Lord saw that we could not be trusted with health. Like an unbroken steed, full of high courage and spirits, it might have run away with us had we been placed upon its back; and what might have been the consequence? A broken neck or a fractured limb.

I was sitting some time ago by the bedside of a woman who has been more or less confined to her bed for thirty years. I said to her, "You don't know what sins you have been kept from by being confined here." The thought seemed to strike her as one with which she had not been conversant, and she named it afterwards as an unseen benefit of her affliction. So lame feet may keep a man from running into evil, and make him walk, if not more easily and comfortably, more in the strait and narrow path.

Our unseen mercies may be greater than our seen mercies. The prophet's servant did not see the horses and chariots of fire round about the mountain; but they were there, though he saw them not. We need many trials, and a long course of them, to meeken our spirit and give us patience; for tribulation works patience, as patience works an experience of the mercy and goodness of the Lord, and as an experience of past and present support works a hope of support for the future. Trial of some kind or other is indispensable to a Christian, and especially to a Christian minister. The Lord's people are a tried people, and therefore need a tried experimental ministry.

I feel much for the appalling distress in Lancashire, and look forward to the coming winter with great apprehension, knowing the general sequel of previous famines. I have been apprehensive from the very first, lest there should be a breaking out of fever, which now seems to be the case at Preston. I traveled from Leicester to Oakham with Dr. S., and I put the question to him whether such a fear might not be justly entertained. He was clearly of that opinion; and I would not be surprised if we had a repetition, at least on a

smaller scale, of the Irish Famine in 1847. I am doing what I can to help the brethren, and obtained at Oakham a collection of £41 when I was last there. But my lack of local knowledge is a hindrance to my satisfactory distribution of the money sent me or collected by my own exertions. I am therefore obliged to let Mr. Gadsby take that part of the good work upon himself. You would probably hear from Mr. Grace his account of his northern visit, but a mere passing view cannot give an adequate idea of the depth and extent of the calamity. Its physical evils are and will be increasingly dreadful, but I much fear that its moral evils will be even greater and more permanent. It has already reduced to the same level the provident and the improvident, the industrious and the indolent. This is one moral bank already swept away; and if it pauperizes Lancashire, it may next sweep away that other noble bank—the stout-hearted independence of Lancashire men.

Still He who sits upon the waterflood can keep back the waves; and He whose prerogative it is to bring good out of evil can make even this calamity a blessing. The two greatest public calamities which we have known, the Irish Famine and the Indian Mutiny, have been made of the most signal service to both those countries. We may add to this perhaps, that other third calamity, the Crimean War, which swept away a whole host of abuses. We may hope therefore that a blessing will come out of this cotton famine; and indeed I understand a more dreadful crash, if possible, must soon have come from over-production, had the present cause of suffering not intervened. I greatly fear, from all I have seen and heard, that the northern churches are at a very low ebb in vital godliness. Who knows but that this heavy affliction may be a means of stirring up the suffering people of God in the north. . . .
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

December 17, 1862

Dear Madam—I am sorry to find from your letter that your friend has suffered so much in mind from that most unhappy circumstance which you have mentioned—the suicide of a minister who she believes was made instrumental for the good of her soul. I am not surprised that she has been, and still continues to be, much exercised upon that point; but I hope that the Lord, in due time, may give relief.

I admit that it is a mysterious circumstance; but I cannot say how far the Lord does not make use of the ministry of men who themselves are not partakers of His grace. Balaam preached precious Gospel truths; and no doubt some of the truths which he preached, as recorded in the Book of Numbers, have at various times been blessed to the souls of God's people. Caiaphas, when high priest, prophesied grand Gospel truths (John 11:49-52). So we see the Lord may make use of unconverted men to lead His people into truth; though they themselves may not be partakers of it.

I know at this present moment a very gracious woman—one who has been at times much favored of the Lord, who sat for some years under the ministry of a man who, after a long profession, unhappily committed suicide. I have not spoken with her on the subject since, as I did not wish to bring to her

mind so painful a circumstance; but I have not the least doubt of her state before God, and that she would say, if she were asked, that the poor man's ministry had been made useful to her.

I think perhaps we might make a distinction of this kind. A ministry might be made useful in opening up the Scriptures or leading the mind to see the truth, where it was not blessed in the same way as the ministry of the Lord's sent servants, that is, to bring liberty and love into the soul. Besides which, it is often very hard to distinguish, especially in early days, between light in the understanding and gracious power in the soul.

But I trust your friend will not be left to cast away her hope, nor yield to the suggestions of despair. Let her still, as far as she can, look to the Lord, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him; and she will not look in vain. The Lord can deliver her out of all her temptations, and her being exercised with them shows that she has a tender conscience and a fear of the Lord's great and glorious name.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours very sincerely for the truth's sake,

J. C. P.

December 19, 1862

My dear Friend, Mr. Tanner—I have often thought of you during your long and heavy affliction, and have endeavored to put up my poor prayers on your behalf, that the Lord would be pleased to spare your valuable life for the sake of your dear wife and family, and the Church of God. And I do trust that the Lord will go on to strengthen your poor weak body until He restores you to a good measure of your former health. I can well sympathize with you, for I know full well what a deep and heavy trial bodily affliction is. But what a rich and unspeakable mercy it is when the affliction, though so painful and trying to the flesh, is sanctified to the soul's profit. We need something powerful to pull us out of our carnal besetments. It is not a little thing which will bring down our proud heart; and heavy and repeated blows seem needful to knock us down and keep us down. But, oh, how kindly and graciously does the Lord make the bed in all time of sickness—not laying upon us more than He gives us strength to bear; and, as we have proved, surrounding our bed with the kindest and tenderest of nurses, and providing every earthly means of relieving the poor body. Mary was kind enough to tell me of a sweet view which you had of the adorable Lord at the right hand of the Father, ready as it were to receive your ransomed spirit had it been His holy will to have called you unto Himself. It is these views of Jesus by faith which raise up the tried and exercised soul to see Him as all its salvation and all its desire; and such gracious visitations of His presence, and such believing views of His person and glory, have a most blessed and sanctifying effect upon the soul and make most durable impressions.

Should the Lord, as I hope and trust, restore you again to the work of the ministry, it will give a power and a force to your testimony on behalf of the crucified, risen, and glorified Son of God. Oh, may we believe in Him more firmly, love Him more strongly, and cleave to Him more closely.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1863 - 1864)

January 6, 1863

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner—I am sorry to learn that you are still suffering from your old illness. I greatly fear that you will never be free from it, and that it is one of those crosses which the Lord sometimes binds fast round the shoulders of His people, that they may carry it to their dying day. My best wish is that it may be richly blessed and truly sanctified to your soul's good, and that you may reap the peaceable fruit of this painful affliction as one who is exercised thereby. But feeling some sympathy with you in your affliction, and some moving of affectionate desire toward you under it, it has come into my mind to drop you a few lines, which you will take as a token of my love, if there be nothing in them worthy of your perusal.

We would, if we could, spare our friends the trials and afflictions under which we know they groan, being burdened, and yet we are well aware that it is the will of the Lord that they should be thus afflicted that they might become partakers of His holiness. But our coward flesh shrinks from suffering, whether it be in our own persons or those of our friends.

So Peter, if he could have had his fleshly will, would have prevented the redemption of the church by the blood of the Son of God. That his dear Lord and Master, the Son of God, in whom he believed by a special revelation of His divine Sonship, that He, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, should be nailed to a cross and there die in shame and agony—Peter could not endure. He therefore put forth his feeble hand to stop the work which the Father had given the Son to do, and by so doing was actually, though unwittingly, an accomplice of Satan. So we would spare our friends from the nails of crucifixion, not seeing that by so doing, we would, if we could succeed, rob them of that suffering with Christ which is necessary, that they should be glorified together. I will not therefore do you the injury of wishing your sufferings less, but would desire instead that, as the sufferings abound, so also may the consolations. What no doubt, you chiefly feel, next to the pain of personal suffering, is the hindrance which it is to the work of the ministry. Still, even there the Lord can blessedly overrule it for your good and the good of the people; and even if you preach less you may preach with more savor, unction, and power.

We are entered, my dear friend, upon a new year, and while I wish the best blessings to rest upon you and yours during the year, yet no doubt we shall find it, if we are spared, full of trials and temptations; and it will be our rich mercy if deliverances and manifestations of the Lord's goodness and mercy at all keep pace with them. You and I are going down the hill of life. We shall no longer possess the health and strength of years gone by, even in that

minor measure which was allotted us, compared with many of our brethren in the ministry. It is my desire, when at all favored with a sense of the Lord's presence, to walk more in His fear, and to live more to His praise, than I have ever yet done. I feel it to be a mercy that my mental faculties are preserved to me without much sensible diminishing or decay; and as, without my seeking, the Lord has placed me in a position to speak far and wide to His people, my desire and prayer are that He would give me His grace, not only to keep me from evil that it may not grieve me, but to feed the church of God, as far as He enables me, with such savory food as their soul loves. I feel, I hope, an increasing desire to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, to live myself in the enjoyment of the power of God's truth upon my own soul, and to bring before the people such divine realities as are made known to my heart and conscience. As you know, I have no one to help me in this lawful strife but the Lord. Indeed, perhaps I could not bear a partner in the firm, and therefore find it best to work alone. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

January 29, 1863

My dear Friend, Jacob Blake—Not having heard of you or from you for so long a period, and having forgotten your address, I hardly knew whether you were still a sojourner in this valley of tears. This was the reason why I put the notice on the wrapper of the *Gospel Standard*, and I am very glad to find that you are still spared to be a witness for truth in this dark and cloudy day, when the sun seems much to have gone down upon the prophets. It is a mercy, therefore, that you are still spared to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. The Lord has graciously promised, "That a seed shall serve Him"; and though the Lord's people are too often like two or three berries on the top of the uppermost bough, yet His promise still holds good.

I was much pleased and encouraged by the testimony contained in your letter, that the Lord graciously condescends to make use of my sermons and writings for the good of His dear people. Many of the Lord's people walk in great darkness, the reason often being that the way to the heavenly city is not clearly cast up. When, therefore, they can see that the path in which they are walking is the strait and narrow way which leads to life eternal, they gather up a sweet hope that the Lord Himself has put their feet into it, and will never leave them or forsake them, but will bring them off more than conquerors through the blood of the Lamb. I was much struck with what you said about the effects of my sermon at Langport, for I must confess that my mind that evening felt very much confused. But the Lord is a sovereign, for you were not the only one blessed that evening; Mr. D. had a special blessing. It has happened to me sometimes, in my experience as a minister, that the Lord has in a very particular manner attended the word with a divine power from my lips.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

February 6, 1863

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner—One of the most painful effects of protracted illness is the exhaustion of mental power, especially when the mind is naturally active and has been long accustomed to expend its energies without sensible fatigue. This exhaustion of mental energy you seem much to have experienced, and it may be some time before you recover the free use and easy exercise of all your mental powers. But it is an inestimable mercy when, in the absence or suspension of mental energy, the soul can quietly and softly repose on the bosom of mercy. And indeed this is one of the choicest blessings of the covenant of grace, that it gives rest and peace, quietness and stillness, in the assurance that the work of Christ is a finished work, that nothing remains to be done, and that all is secured in the person of the Son of God, in whom the Father is ever well pleased. If we had to work out our own salvation where could we begin and where could we end? What could we do on a bed of sickness, amid racking pain, restless nights, and wearisome days? How blessed then is a salvation without money and without price, which meets the soul in all its wants and woes and sustains it by the mighty power of God.

My dear friend, you have been deeply afflicted in body, have suffered greatly, and been brought down to the very chambers of death—and yet what goodness and mercy have been displayed on your bed of languishing! What kind, tender, watchful, and unwearied nurses you had to anticipate all your needs, and smooth, as far as it lay in their power, your restless pillow. Nothing has been lacking which the thoughtful heart or loving hand could supply; and all that medical skill could do to alleviate your symptoms, check the disease, and restore you to health has been done. You name the great kindness which has been manifested on all sides in sending you grapes and other things often very acceptable in a sick-room.

In answer to prayer, as we hope and trust, the Lord has thus far raised you up; but all this is the least display of the tender mercies of the God of your salvation. The sweet assurance which He gave you of His everlasting love, when you were first compelled to take to your bed, is the greatest blessing of all, and well worth all the sickness and suffering which followed. But now you must expect to find and feel more than ever the workings of that corrupt nature which is indeed the seat of every foul abomination, and which, to our shame and sorrow, is uncured and incurable. No amount of past mercy or sweet enjoyment of the goodness of the Lord can heal that corrupt fountain, which is ever manifesting itself in some evil thought, base desire, or corrupt imagination. And sometimes Satan takes advantage of bodily weakness to stir up peevishness, fretfulness, self-pity, rebellion, and discontent—evils which seem to lie in the marshy lowlands of our nature as distinct from the higher grounds of pride and self-righteousness, which Satan chooses for his stronger fortifications.

You will find many things opened up to you in a clearer light than you ever saw them before; when at least you get a little respite from the workings of self, and can as it were sit before the Lord with solemnity of mind, viewing His dealings in providence and grace with an enlightened eye. You will also

find a clearer, broader, and brighter light shining upon the Word of truth; will sometimes wonder that you never saw the things of God so plainly before; and will think that if you were enabled to stand again before the people of God, you would preach to them almost in a new way, and urge truth upon their consciences as you think you have never done before. You will also have clearer light and deeper views of those two grand subjects for thought and meditation—the depth of the fall, and the height of the recovery. You will see also more of man's dreadful condition by nature with all his miserable sinfulness and helplessness; and you will see more of the beauty and blessedness, grace and glory of the Son of God. You will also see more of the wretched profession of the day; how low the church is sunk; how torn with strife and confusion; how weak in faith, and hope, and love; and how woefully deficient in all those fruits of righteousness which by Jesus Christ are to the glory of God.

You have already seen how feeble is the ministry of the present day, what little work is really going on, and how few the Lord seems raising up to preach the Gospel. But with all these things, you will feel a greater love to the truth, and to the dear people of God for the truth's sake, than you ever seemed to have felt before; and will be firmly convinced that, in spite of all their weaknesses and infirmities, they are the excellent of the earth in whom is all your delight. . . .

I am, my dear Friend,
Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

March 18, 1863

My dear Friend, John Grace. . . I believe that the truth is never really known, valued, or prized, except as we feel the desperate state into which sin has cast us, and feel something of the liberating, comforting, sanctifying power and influence of truth upon the heart. Every truth connected with the Person and work, love and blood, grace and truth, power and glory of our blessed Lord, becomes sweet and precious as it is really believed in and experimentally realized to be spirit and life. It seems as if we were sometimes obliged to hang upon the Lord's words as a matter of life and death, as if the soul would bear its whole weight upon His words, to see and try if they are sufficient to sustain the weight; almost as a man struggling in a deep swamp, which seems as if it would engulf him, will fling himself upon a dry tussock that he may stand upon it firm.

Temptations are most trying to the soul, and I think there are few which I have not in some measure tasted of; but their effect is, when the storm has passed, to establish and endear the truth of God more to the heart. This, I suppose, is the reason why James bids us count it all joy when we fall into diverse temptations, and why Peter tells us that the trial of our faith is much more precious than of gold, though it be tried with fire. As a matter of experience and observation, we find very few of the Lord's people exempt from trials and temptations, and those who are, are generally as unsavory as the white of an egg. All must have their daily cross. You have yours and I

have mine; and though we find it hard to carry, galling to the shoulder, and depressing to the spirit, yet we know what we would be without it. . . .

I quite agree with you in your comparison between Goodwin and Hart. At the same time I think that Goodwin's "Mediator", though it may be the deepest, is not the most unctuous of his works. I prefer some of his shorter pieces, and his "Exposition of Ephesians." But to read him requires almost as much attention as a mathematical problem. His writings are too deep, too labored, and too prolix for the present age. I have been reading lately Huntington's "Rule and Riddle", and have felt it very instructive and edifying. You have perhaps heard that Mrs. L., who gave me Bensley's edition of Huntington's works, is dead. She was confined to her bed with paralysis for many months, but made, I understand, a good end.

It is rather more than three years ago (March 6th) since you, Mr. Tiptaft, Mr. Pickering, and Mr. Brown met in my room. You then said that most probably we would never meet all again together. How rapidly have these three years fled. On that very day poor Mr. Isbell breathed his last. We still are spared. Oh may we be blessed and made a blessing! This sums up all.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

April 23, 1863

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I take it very kind of you sending me some account of Mr. Grace's sermon and of your visit to our two afflicted friends. I hope it may please the Lord to bless the word which Mr. G. was enabled to speak. I fully believe that he loves the Lord, His truth, His people, and His ways; and what he speaks, he speaks out of an exercised heart. The Lord will bless by whom He will bless, and He has His own time and His own way of blessing.

I—'s illness, and its fatal nature, have come upon us quite suddenly. I highly esteem him and believe him to be a man taught and blessed of God, and right as well as ripe for eternity. If I am spared to come among you again I shall miss no hearer so much as him, as he was so attentive to all that was said; ever sitting in the same spot, and a pillar of the truth. I shall, indeed, miss him very much. He would often come into the vestry when he had heard well to greet me with his friendly smile and his cordial shake of the hand. He has been a hearer of mine ever since I came into these parts, and we have always been much united in spirit, if not always in judgment.

I am sorry that I cannot give you a very encouraging account of myself, though, through mercy, I am somewhat better. But my medical attendant says that it will be at least a fortnight before I shall be able to go out of doors, and at least a month before I shall be strong enough to preach. Indeed, he says I ought to have two or three months' rest, as this last attack has so much pulled me down. We cannot foresee things, but I can now see that it was very rash and imprudent in me to come to Oakham the last time. The exposure to

the cold, and the exertion of preaching, fixed the attack upon the lung which was going off previously.

I felt what you said about the love which exists between the members of the mystical body of Christ. I hope I feel it. To be laid aside is to me a very heavy trial in more ways than I can now mention; but to have it sanctified to my soul's good would be worth all the suffering. Love to all the friends.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 30, 1863

My dear Friend, Mr. Crake—As I send this from a sick bed, to which I am almost wholly confined, by a severe attack of one of my usual chest illness, and am forbidden much exertion of mind or body, I can only acknowledge very briefly your kind communication and its enclosure. I have the pleasure of personally knowing Mr. L., as some years ago, when I was at Brighton, he wished to be introduced to me, having, I believe, been favored in reading some of my writings. I did not see much of him, but my own observation, and Mr. Grace's testimony of him, much agreed with the account that you have given of him. Indeed, the narrative speaks for itself, and is fully commended to my conscience as a simple, truthful, unexaggerated, at the same time sweet, savory, and unctuous account of a very special blessing. I particularly felt it, as since my affliction I have had very much of the same fervent spirit of prayer and supplication of which Mr. L. speaks; and I hope it may be the forerunner of a similar blessing, for I find more and more that nothing short of direct blessings from the Lord's own mouth can satisfy my soul. When put into the furnace it makes us examine matters from beginning to end; as Mr. Hart says, and I find it true, "Afflictions make us see, what else would escape our sight."

What a view does the furnace give of the sins of which we have been guilty. As Mr. L. says, "Our whole life since a profession seems one great sin." With this comes confession and a seeking unto the blood of sprinkling with a desire that the conscience might not only be purged thereby from guilt, filth, and dead works, but also made alive and tender in the fear of God.

I shall have great pleasure in inserting Mr. L.'s narrative in the *Gospel Standard*, and believe it will be commended to the consciences of many who truly fear God.

As reports are apt to get about magnifying sometimes attacks of illness, I think it right to say that my doctor fully believes the attack will go off; but I expect it will be some time before I shall be able again to preach, as I am much brought down and scarcely hope to be able to fulfill my London engagement.

I am, yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

May 11, 1863

My dear afflicted Friend, Mrs. Pinnell—I desire to sympathize both with yourself and your bereaved children in the great and irreparable loss which you have sustained in the removal of your beloved and lamented husband, and their most tender, thoughtful and affectionate father. Nor should I have delayed to write to you immediately on the receipt of the distressing intelligence, had I not been so very unwell as to be prohibited from exertion of mind or body. I have been suffering under inflammation of the chest, which has been very obstinate, and though, I trust, now giving way, yet still not removed.

How well I remember poor dear Mr. Pinnell coming with yourself and dear John, then a babe, to Newington House in 1835. Then it was that I first came really to know and value him, though it was not my first introduction to him; and ever since that period I have been pleased to renew my acquaintance, and I hope, I may add, real, sincere, Christian friendship with him. He was not a man who talked much; but in all he said there was a sincerity which much commended itself to my conscience and won my affections. Indeed, I do not know that we ever had the slightest difference or coolness, though from circumstances we did not see much of one another. For many years he used to come to Abingdon with the late Mr. Godwin to hear me on my annual visit; and when he could not do so, as of late years, I have been privileged to renew our friendly communion by visiting him at his own house. I was fully purposing to do the same this year, if health and strength allowed; and had fixed in my own mind the very time, which was to be at the expiration of my London engagement. But, alas! his lamented decease has concurred, with my illness, to defeat my plans. How deeply will you and your family miss his wise and affectionate counsel and protection. But I trust that the Lord will appear on your behalf and theirs. The anxiety of sorrow which he sustained through poor John's illness and death, humanly speaking, brought him to his end. Dr. C. told me that Mr. S's. heavy trial was doubtless the cause of his affliction and death. So poor Mr. P. almost seems to have lost his life with his beloved son's.

I have only just left myself room to sympathize with your daughters and sons. May the Lord be a father to them and a husband to you.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

May 16, 1863

My dear Friend, Mr. Tanner—I am much obliged to you for your kind and affectionate inquiries about my health, and though I am forbidden to dictate too much, I cannot forbear sending you a few lines just to tell you how I am. We can sympathize with each other in these heavy trials, though you have been a greater sufferer in body than I. But we know not only the weight of bodily affliction but also of being laid aside from the ministry.

I truly rejoice that you have been restored to your beloved work; and though you may not see in yourself the effects of the furnace, it may be visible to your people. In reading your letter this thought came over my mind, that we must be brought down in soul before there can be any union and communion with the Lord or with His people. It is only in the valley of humiliation that there is any sensible communion with the Man of sorrows or His broken-hearted contrite people. And all other union is not worth a straw.

The Lord seems cutting Israel short. We have almost in a fortnight lost three of our most esteemed members; but they all made a good end, and departed full of faith, and hope, and love.

**Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.**

May 29, 1863

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—As I am sure you will be very desirous to know how I am progressing, I will send you a few hasty lines, and am happy to say, then, that with the blessing of God I am much better. My medical man much wishes me to go somewhere for change of air; but I cannot at present see my way to do so. If all had been well, I would this day have reached London. I cannot but feel the trial being laid aside so long, and sometimes it makes me fear that the Lord has a controversy with me. I feel, indeed, quite to deserve His displeasure from many, many acts of disobedience, and am fully sensible that if He would utterly cast me aside as a vessel in which He has no pleasure, I would have my just desert. I am very sensible of all the sin and imperfection which has cleaved to me, both as a man and as a minister; and I am very confident that nothing but rich free and sovereign grace can superabound over these abounding sins. Still I hope that in His own time and way the Lord will restore me to the work of the ministry, though at present I cannot say when.

I am sure you will all feel much concerned that our dear friend Tiptaft should be obliged to take rest from his beloved work. I feel that we cannot ask, or indeed allow him, to fulfill his engagement in July, though I hope that he will come on a visit to Wharflands, where he would enjoy quiet and rest.

How everything serves to remind us that we are all passing away. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom. We cannot choose our own trials, nor our own afflictions; all are appointed in fixed weight and measure, and the promise is that all things shall work together for good to those who love God.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

June 9, 1863

My dear Friends,—I cannot forbear sending you a few lines written in my own hand to acknowledge your most unexpected and undeserved kindness and liberality. I am afraid, however, of saying too much or too little; but let me assure you I much feel your kindness and the Christian love and affection which I am sure prompted it. I do not often speak of the Lord's providential dealings with me, but I have seen them in a remarkable manner. He enabled me, many years ago, to give up all my prospects in life, and has most blessedly fulfilled a promise which once He made sweet to my soul (Mark 10:29, 30). I left all I had in possession or in prospect, and have I not received "houses?"—I live in one of my own; "and brethren?"—have I not many? "and sisters?"—are not you and many others? "and mothers?"—yes, mothers in Israel; "and children?"—literally and spiritually; "and lands?"—for even that I have; "with persecutions?"—and have I not had them? and now the last and best is still to come—"eternal life."

And you, dear friends, how you, too, have seen the Lord's providential hand. He has given you beyond all you hoped and expected during your former days of trial, and has given with it what is far better still, a free liberal spirit to minister most unweariedly to the necessities of the saints.

I am thankful to say I am much better, and walked nearly to Tinwell without fatigue, and enjoyed the beautiful fresh air. How good the Lord is to those who desire to fear His great name, and live to His glory. I begin much to feel my absence from the courts of the Lord's house, and hope next Lord's-day (D.V.) to meet with the people, even if I take no part in the service. . .

**Your very affectionate and obliged Brother and Friend,
J. C. P.**

July 2, 1863

My dear Friend, Mr. Brown—Various circumstances have prevented my answering your kind and affectionate letter at an earlier period. My time, you know, is generally much occupied, and I have had of late the additional hindrance of illness and bodily weakness. I cannot, however, leave home without sending you a few lines just to keep up our friendly and brotherly communion, which is apt to drop if all correspondence be suspended. You will perhaps be surprised to hear that I am going to London (D.V.) tomorrow to supply at Gower Street for July. I go there very unwillingly, and I almost fear unwisely, as I am by no means fully recovered from my late attack of bronchitis, but trusting that the Lord will make His strength perfect in my weakness. . . . Time is rapidly passing away with us all, and I would be sorry to depart this life divided from any who, I hope, truly fear God.

I fear, from all I hear, that you are still a cripple, and can scarcely move from place to place without the aid of crutches. Thus it seems to be the will of God to afflict us both in our earthly tabernacle, though in such different ways. But no doubt He who is all-wise has selected for us both that peculiar way which He knows is best for our good—a way by which our pride may be effectually humbled, and our helplessness best taught us, and yet mercy

mingled with the dispensation. Thus, like the psalmist, we have to sing of mercy and judgment, and such, no doubt, has been the character of our experience for many years, as it is the general character of the Lord's dealings with all who fear His great name.

Some time ago I was conversing with a dear saint of God, Elizabeth Holloway, of Devizes, who has been, if not quite confined to her bed, yet quite a cripple from an injured spine for nearly thirty years. I almost casually made the remark that perhaps she scarcely knew from what evils she had been kept by her long affliction. She paused for a moment, and seemed struck with the thought. As she afterwards told me, it was never presented to her mind before—at least, not so clearly, and she saw in it fresh proof of the mercy and wisdom of God. Thus you can hardly tell from what evils you have been preserved by your affliction. Nor again can we always or often see what sympathy and affection, as well as prayer and supplication from the God of all our mercies, are drawn forth on our behalf from the family of God, who witness the various afflictions with which the Lord is pleased to visit us. Thus, besides the more visible blessings which spring out of our afflictions and trials, there may be others less manifest, but not less real or less important. Time with us is fast passing away, one or another of our friends keeps dropping off, and we who survive for a time may soon be numbered with the dead. It will be our mercy to be found with our loins girt about, and our lamps burning, and we waiting like good servants our Master's return. There is a blessed promise to those found so watching and waiting.

I trust that you find the Lord present with you in the work of the ministry, and that you have continued proof that you are where He would have you to be.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

July 3, 1863

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—Will you kindly thank Mr. L— for his donation of £1 for publishing works of truth in Holland, as I have not time to write to him. I have just heard from Mr. Los, Gz. He tells me that through the aid of the donations of English friends he is bringing out a cheap edition of Huntington's "History of Little Faith," and intends from time to time, if the Lord enables, to bring out other works of the immortal coalheaver; I would think his "Bank of Faith," or his "Posthumous Letters," would be very suitable. He seems to be a man of a warm heart, and an earnest contender for the faith once delivered to the saints.

I am glad to find that your health is so much restored. It is indeed a precious gift of God, but, like most others, never really prized until lost. Of all men ministers seem most to need strong bodily health, having so much labor to perform of body and mind. But the Lord knows best how to deal with us both in body and soul.

I go to London in great weakness, but have often found the Lord's strength made perfect in it. I preached twice at Oakham last Lord's-day to one of the largest congregations I ever saw in the chapel—as large, I believe, as you saw there. I was comfortably brought through, and afterwards administered the ordinance. We all seem much to feel the loss of those members who have been taken out of our midst. I never seemed to realize their loss before. As they were aged, experienced men, we shall much miss their counsel and their prayers. I would gladly see more of the young raised up to fill up the place of those who are passing off the stage of life.

We had a pleasant visit at Leamington; I spoke there on the Lord's-day, in a lecture-room, to about fifty people.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

August 3, 1863

My dear Friend, John Grace—I reached here last Friday evening after a month's sojourn in London, where I had a very comfortable, and I hope profitable visit. I was with my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Clowes, whom the more I know, the more I value. I was favored for the most part with liberty in the pulpit, and my health, instead of suffering, was improved up to the end. Indeed, London air at this time of the year always suits my chest. There is a warmth and dryness about it which exactly suits my breathing apparatus; and I have almost reason to believe that London, as a residence, except perhaps at the foggy portion of the year, might suit me better than our northern exposure. Your air would be too keen, and too loaded with moist saline particles. We had yesterday our usual attendance, almost as Hart says: "Gathered from all quarters", and I hope the Lord was with us.

Tomorrow is Calne anniversary, where, if spared to go, I shall meet one of the largest gatherings of the seed royal that is well known. You may have something like it in Sussex, but we have nothing like it in Lincolnshire or Leicestershire. I hope that we may have the Lord's presence and power in our midst. It is not often that you have shaken hands in one day with so many honest palms. I have said sometimes that it has almost made my hand ache after it has been grasped so much, and often so warmly, by hands hardened, not like a reprobate's conscience by God's judgments, but by honest labor. Hard hands and tender hearts are far better than soft palms, or smooth tongues, and seared consciences.

I find a great difference in my preaching here and in London; not that there is any change in doctrine or experience, but a rustic population requires a more simple and almost familiar mode of utterance than suits a London congregation. It is not that I study my style, or seek to adapt it to different classes of people; but the thing comes, as no doubt you have felt, almost intuitively, without study or forecast. It is like sitting down to converse with my old almshouse woman and Mr. Smart of Welwyn. We naturally necessarily drop into that style of speech which adapts itself to the person we converse with. And I am well convinced, unless a minister can in this sense be

all things to all men, it will much limit his usefulness. We need not be low, we need not be vulgar, we need use no word which would offend the most fastidious ear, and yet be perfectly intelligible to the fisherman on the beach, or the woman that cleans the chapel.

I have often admired our Lord's discourses from this point of view, independent of their solemn weight and power. What dignified simplicity, what exquisite clearness! Intelligible to the lowest, and yet, in their depth, unfathomable to the highest capacity. Blessed Lord! May our desire and delight be to exalt Your worthy name; for You are our All in all! All divine truth is in Jesus, comes from Him, and leads to Him. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. To know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, is eternal life, and all knowledge short of this is but death—as deadly in its consequences as the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

October 16, 1863

Dear David Beattie—I sincerely wish that I could, with the blessing of God, write you anything that might afford relief to your troubled mind, but I feel how helpless I am in this matter.

Your case, as you describe it, is truly pitiable; but it is what many have passed through before you, who afterwards had reason to bless God for the fiery trial. We have all by nature a great deal of vain confidence and self-righteousness, which have to be burnt up in all who truly fear God; and the Lord often sees it necessary to show His people terrible things in righteousness, that they may learn experimentally somewhat of the depth of the Fall, and the need of being saved by the free sovereign grace of God. Besides which, the Lord has to make His people see and feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they may truly loathe it, and themselves for it.

Now when the soul is under these painful exercises, it cannot tell what the Lord is about, nor how the scene will end. Sometimes it hopes and sometimes it fears, but its fears are usually much greater than its hopes; and so it goes on, often it may be sinking lower and lower until the Lord appears. You will find in this month's *Gospel Standard*, and in the forthcoming number, an account of exercises even greater than your own, in the first piece, called "A Mirror of Mercy", so that you have no need to despair. And you will find in "Grace Abounding", by Bunyan, an account of his deep troubles and almost despair.

If I could give you any advice, it would be to continue as far as you can reading the Word, and above all plying the throne of grace with earnest prayers and entreaties that the Lord would pity your case, have mercy upon you, and reveal to you a sense of His pardoning love. The great thing is not to give way to despair, nor give up what little hope you may have that the Lord will in due time appear for the deliverance of your soul. The blessed Lord is

able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them (Heb. 7:25). And the same gracious Lord has said—"Him that comes to Me, I will in never cast out" (John 6:37). You will find it good to plead with the Lord His own promises, such as the one I have just quoted, and that also—"Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). The blessed Lord came to seek and to save that which is lost (Luke 19:10); and thus there is hope for every poor sensible sinner who feels himself in a lost condition.

That the Lord may soon graciously appear for your deliverance is the desire of,

Yours very sincerely,

J. C. P.

November 10, 1863

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—Circumstances are always occurring to prevent that free and frequent communication with our friends which we desire in order to maintain with them friendly and brotherly communion. Sometimes we lack the time and sometimes the inclination; sometimes engagements to preach or traveling, with its various hindrances, prevent our sending the intended letter, and I for my part am sometimes deprived of the ready aid of my secretary, without whom I do not now often write letters to my friends. Please then to accept these apologies for my delay in communicating with you by letter.

We would have been glad to see you here, had you been able so to have arranged it; but the King's business must always take precedence, and supersede everything else. I am glad that you have found an open door at Helmsley, and that you feel encouraged to go into that distant and almost unknown region. It is in grace sometimes as in nature—new, fresh soil gives better and healthier crops than that which has been so much worked. I was struck with your expression of "breathless attention." That is not a feature often seen in congregations which have long heard the word of life; though, I believe, in such places at least where the Lord manifests His presence and His power, there generally is a good share of solemn attention if the preacher has anything really worth hearing.

Ministers sometimes complain of the lack of attention in their hearers when the fault is in themselves; for who cares to hear a cold, dry, dead sermon which is merely a repetition of what has been heard over and over again? All preaching and all hearing that really profits the soul, must be of the Lord. I feel for myself an increasing desire that the word might be blessed. Life is passing away and the shadows of evening are being stretched out. I desire, therefore, that during the time when I may be allowed to preach and write, the blessing of God may rest upon my labors more abundantly than it ever yet has done. Both of us have had our threatenings, and may be looking forward to the time of being laid up or laid aside. May we work then while it is day, for the night comes when no man can work.

**Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.**

December 21, 1863

My dear Friend, Mr. J. Blake—Your post office order came safely to hand, and will be paid to the secretary at the end of this month. I see so much good done by the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, and so much thankfulness manifested by the poor old pilgrims, that I am very glad to support it myself, and to see others doing the same. Satan will always oppose that which is good; and he will sometimes work upon our covetous heart to make us grudge giving anything to the Lord's cause, or the Lord's people. But what is the consequence if he gets the better of us, and shuts up our hearts and hands? We get into a cold bondage frame, in which there is no comfort for ourselves, and no doing any good for others. Besides which, by shutting up our compassion against the Lord's people, we provoke the Lord to shut His hand against us. I wish that I could have my heart and hand more open to the Lord's poor, but having family expenses I cannot do all that I would.

It is a great mercy to be kept looking to the Lord for the continued supplies of His Spirit and grace; for without it we soon sink down into carnality and death. Oh, that we might live more a life of faith in the Son of God, in the sweet persuasion that He loved us, and gave Himself for us! This is the happiest and the most blessed life that a man can live on earth; but none can do so except by the special help and continued grace of God.

May you and I be enabled to walk tenderly in the fear of God, and to live to His glory.

**I am, my dear Friend,
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.**

January 18, 1864

My dear Friend, John Grace. . . My two favorite authors from whom I may say I have derived more instruction, profit, and consolation, and I may add, more heart-searching examination than many others, are Dr. Owen and Huntington. I am now reading, as far as time and opportunity allow, the doctor's Commentary on the Hebrews, which I purchased some time ago (the original edition in four folio volumes). That Epistle has always been a great favorite of mine, and Dr. Owen is truly great in those deep and important subjects which are there handled as the Person, sacrifice, blood-shedding, and death of our great High Priest, with His present intercession within the veil. These are the divine realities which form the food of faith. But how little are they received and believed in, even by some of whom we would hope better things. Most seem satisfied with hoping that they are the children of God because their feelings tally with what are described as marks of grace from the pulpit. But the Lord Jesus Christ, as the object of their faith, with the anchorings of hope and the flowings forth of love toward His dear name,

with the various exercises whereby this faith in Him is tried, they seem to know so little of; and what is almost worse, do not seem aware of any deficiency. But a faith of which our once-crucified and now glorified Lord is not the subject and object, scarcely seems to be such a faith as the Scripture speaks of.

Look for instance at John's First Epistle. What a stress he lays upon believing in the name of the Son of God; and how he separates all men into two classes, those who have, and those who have not the Son of God. He does not lay down a certain number of ever-fluctuating feelings as sure marks of heavenly grace; but comes at once to the three Christian graces, faith, hope, and love—faith and love in almost every verse, and hope in 1 John 2:3. I am also reading, as occasion serves, Goodwin on the Ephesians; but I cannot get on so well with him as I do with Owen. In some deep points of truth he is perhaps more profoundly versed than Dr. Owen, but there is so much repetition and such long unwieldy sentences that, after I have read them, I scarcely seem edified or profited by what I have read.

How different is the immortal Coal-heaver! How at once he comes to the very marrow of his subject, and in his original inimitable way throws off from his pen living words of the truest and most gracious experience, from the beginning of a work of grace up to the highest point of divine attainment. Like a master musician he runs up and down the chords of the heart, and strikes off without the least effort passages of consummate truth and beauty. It almost seems as if the book of the human heart with all its deceitfulness and baseness, the book of the new man of grace with all its varied pages, and the book of the Word of God, were all equally familiar with him, and that he turns alternately from one to the other with all the intimacy that a merchant has with his journal and ledger, and finds in a moment what order to write or what sum to pay. I must confess that no writer knocks the pen so completely out of my hand as the poor Coal-heaver, whose very name must now hardly be whispered in the professing Church. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

February 15, 1864

Dear Sir—I have much pleasure in forwarding you a copy of a sermon from the text which you name, as having been heard preached from by me, by your sister, during my last visit to Gower Street. I cannot say however that it is by any means the same discourse as that under which she was blessed, as I can rarely preach in the same way from a text at different times. Still, many of the ideas may be the same, and of course the general drift would not differ. The doctrine and the experience would be the same or similar, though there might be a very different way of handling the whole subject.

If I remember right, I was favored in my soul when I delivered that discourse in Gower Street; perhaps more so than I was when I spoke from it at Stamford. If however it should be any satisfaction to your mind to possess

the sermon, I feel pleased to make you a present of it; and hoping it may be the Lord's will to communicate with it a spiritual blessing.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours very sincerely for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

February 19, 1864

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner—I see more and more what an afflicted people the Lord's people, or at least the best of them are. What sufferings in body, what trials in mind, what afflictions in family, what perplexity in circumstance, what trials in the church, what foes without, what fears within, are the most spiritual of the Lord's people exercised with. But how, by these afflictions, they are separated from the great mass of dead and worldly professors with which the visible church is filled; and how through these tribulations the work of grace is deepened and strengthened in their soul! We can look back to ourselves, and we can see in others how many wares were taken into the ship, which in the storm had only to be thrown overboard. I can see, even in those gracious friends to whom my heart is knit, that many things were cleaved to, if not actually indulged in, from which the furnace of a later period in life has purged them.

The Scripture well and wisely speaks of grace in our heart, as gold; but this gold gets mixed with dross and tin; not that gold is dross and tin, but as in the natural ore, the gold lies as if in streaks and in veins embedded as it were in worthless matter, so the grace of God in a Christian heart lies as it were in thin veins, surrounded with the mass of nature's corruptions. This is why we so need the furnace, for its hot fires discover and separate everything in us which is opposed to the grace of God.

Thus I have observed in those Christians who have passed through the deepest trials, and been most exercised in their own souls, more simplicity, sincerity, uprightness, godly fear, consistency, and fruitfulness; and yet with all this we find them continually lamenting their barrenness, deadness, and unprofitableness. Why so? Because the light which shines into their mind reveals, and because the life which is moving in their heart makes them feel, those deep and abiding corruptions which are never purged away in their being, though they may be in their power and prevalence.

I was much pleased with what you said about having your mind more fixed upon our blessed Lord, as having died and risen from the dead, and gone up on high. I have long seen and felt that our faith, if it is to work by love and purify our heart, must have an object—a divine and heavenly Object to whom it can look, on whom it can hang, and with whom it may have to do. There is a great tendency in the mind, and one, I must add, often encouraged by the ministry of the day, to look too much at our evidences instead of looking to Christ. It is a delicate subject to handle, and I should much like to talk it over with you in the fear of the Lord, and in that exercise of our enlightened judgment and spiritual experience which makes conversation profitable; and I believe, as we see eye to eye in these matters, we would not

differ nor dispute. The great difficulty is to avoid getting on one wrong ground, in our anxiety to get off another. We see, for instance, many preachers speaking in very bold language of always looking to Christ, and shooting arrows of contempt against the poor tried children of God for being so much bowed down with doubt and fear, and against the ministers who, they say, encourage them in them. Now, how grievous it would be to join, even in appearance, with such men, for we feel confident that the faith of which they speak is for the most part presumption.

But then, on the other hand, there may be an error in leading the poor child of God to look too much to the work within instead of the work without, and make his feelings to be his Christ. Now we know that all our hope centers in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God; and we know that our faith, if it brings any peace or consolation with it, only does so as it receives the Son of God as made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. To take Christ out of our sight is like taking the sun out of the sky; and to look to one's self for light is like substituting a match for the light of day. What we need is for the blessed Lord to come into our soul in His dying love, in His risen power, in His free, rich, superabounding grace, in the manifestations of His glorious Person, and in the sweet assurance that He loved us and gave Himself for us. This is the doctrine—the heavenly doctrine which Paul preached, and which he prayed that the saints might enjoy (Eph. 1:12-23; 3:8-21), and this was his own experience (Gal. 2:19, 20). Though so deeply favored and so richly blessed, he was not looking to nor leaning upon his own experience, even though he had been in the third heaven, but was looking to and leaning upon his blessed Lord. How this shines, as with a ray of light, through his blessed Epistles, and oh that we might be taught by the same Spirit, have in measure the same experience, and preach to others the same glorious Gospel, holding forth the Word of life that we may rejoice in the day of Christ that we have not run in vain, neither labored in vain!

You complain of your want of ability &c.; but all our ability is of the Lord, and not of ourselves. One man may have greater natural ability, more clearness of thought, and power of expression, or his spiritual gift may be larger; as one servant in the parable had five talents given to him, and another two. But "Well done, you good and faithful servant", was said to both. The great thing is to labor with a single eye to God's glory, according to the ability which the Lord gives us. It is the Lord's Word, not our own, which we have to preach, and what the Lord blesses is not what we speak, but what the Lord speaks in and by us.

How mysterious are the Lord's dealings with His people, and often how inexplicable; but it almost seems as if the Lord had a controversy with Zion in taking away or laying aside His servants, and raising up so few to fill up their place. It will soon be with us, time no longer. Oh that we might be enabled to say when the time comes—"I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course, I have kept the faith!"

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

March 30, 1864

My dear Friend, Mr. Grace—The friends, I am sure, will be very glad to hear you as they have had so little preaching lately. It is trying to be so much in the furnace, and to be so often laid aside from the work of the ministry; but I hope it may be sanctified to my soul's good. But no chastisement we read for the present is joyous, but rather grievous, nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto those who are in exercise thereby.

I have been reading, during my illness, Bourne's Letters and Vinall's Sermons, and have found much in both agreeable to my own experience of the things of God which has been both confirming and encouraging. It is in the furnace that we learn our need of realities, our own helplessness and inability, and yet find there is a movement of divine life Godward—a reaching forth after the Lord Jesus, His person and work, His blood and righteousness, and dying love. It also brings to our mind the shortness of life, how vain all things are here below, and what a solid reality there is in the things of God as embraced by a living faith.

I have felt much union with the poor afflicted family of God, and seen the blessedness of true humility of mind, brokenness of heart, contrition of spirit, godly sorrow for sin, separation from the world, and living to the glory of God. These are things which will abide when head knowledge, pride, and presumption, will be driven like the chaff before the wind.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

To the Members of the Particular Baptist Churches in Stamford and Oakham

April 2, 1864

Dear Friends and Brethren—As it has pleased the Lord again to lay upon me His afflicting hand, and thus to prevent my coming among you in the ministry of the Word, I have felt disposed to send you a few lines by letter, to show you that I still bear you in affectionate remembrance.

I need hardly tell you what a great trial it is to me to be thus afflicted, not only on account of the personal suffering of body and mind which illness almost always brings with it, but because it lays me aside from the work of the ministry; for with all its attendant trials and exercises, and with all my shortcomings and imperfections in it, I have often found it good to be engaged in holding forth the Word of life among you, and have been myself fed sometimes with the same precious truths of the everlasting Gospel which I have laid before you. But if it be a trial to me to be thus laid aside, it is no doubt a trial also to those of you who have received at any time any profit from my labors, now to be deprived of them. In this sense therefore, we may be said to bear one another's burdens; and so far as we do so in a spirit of

sympathy and love, with submission to the will of God, we fulfill the law of Christ.

But as nothing can come upon us in providence or in grace but by the Lord's will, and as we are assured that all things work together for good to those who love God, and are called according to His purpose, among whom we have a humble hope that we are, there is doubtless some wise and gracious purpose to be accomplished by this painful dispensation. I have, as you well know, long held and preached that it is through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God; that the Lord has chosen His Zion in the furnace of affliction; that it is the trial of our faith, and therefore not an untried but a tried faith, which will be found unto praise, and honor, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; and that no chastening for the present seems to be joyous but grievous, yet that afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto those who are exercised thereby.

Now I have to learn for myself, experimentally and feelingly, the reality and power of these truths, as well as ministerially set them before you. Indeed those of us who know anything aright, are well assured in our own minds that none can speak experimentally and profitably of affliction, and the fruits and benefits of it, but those who pass through it and realize it.

But besides you, my immediate hearers, I have a large sphere of readers, to whom I minister by my pen. There seems therefore a double necessity that I should sometimes, if not often, be put into the furnace, that I may be able to speak a word in season to those who are weary. Marvel not then, nor be cast down, my dear friends and brethren, that your minister is now in the furnace of affliction; but rather entreat of the Lord that it may be blessed and sanctified to his soul's good, so that should it please God to bring him out of it, he may come forth as gold. Peter speaks of being in heaviness for a season, if need be, through manifold temptations (1 Peter 1:5); and James bids us "count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations" (James 1:2). The words "manifold" and "diverse", though differently translated, are the same in the original; and the word "temptations", as I have often explained to you, includes trials as well as temptations in the usual sense of the term. We may expect therefore that our trials and temptations should not only widely differ in kind, but be very numerous in quantity.

Now as to temptations in the usual sense of the term, I think I have had a good share, for I believe there are few, whether external, internal, or infernal, of which I have not had some taste, and of some more than a taste. But I cannot say the same of trials, for some severe trials have not fallen to my lot. Though I have had losses, and some severe ones, I cannot say I have had experience of painful business trials. Though when I left the Church of England, I gave up all my present and future prospects, and sacrificed an independent income, yet through the kind providence of God, I have been spared the pressure of poverty and straitened circumstances. I have not suffered the loss of wife or children, and have been spared those severe family trials which so deeply wound many of the Lord's people. But of one trial, and that no small one, I have had much experience—a weak and afflicted tabernacle. Though my life has been wonderfully prolonged, yet I have not really known what it is to enjoy sound health for more than thirty-

three years, and for the last seventeen have been liable to continual attacks of illness, such as I am now suffering under. Thus I have had much experience of the furnace in one shape, if not in some of those which have fallen to your lot. But this I can truly say, that almost all I have learned of true religion and vital godliness, has been in the furnace, and that though ill-health has been the heaviest natural trial I have ever experienced, yet I trust it has been made a blessing to my soul.

But I will now tell you, my dear friends and brethren, a little of what I have felt under my present affliction, for you will feel desirous to learn whether I have gained any profit by trading. I cannot speak of any special blessing, and yet I trust I have thus far found the affliction profitable.

1. I have been favored at times with much of a spirit of prayer and supplication. This I count no small favor, as it has kept my soul alive and lively, and preserved it from that wretched coldness, barrenness, and death into which we so often sink. We must feel the weight and power of eternal realities, and highly prize spiritual blessings, before we can sigh and cry to the Lord to bestow them upon us. If I did not covet the Lord's presence, and the manifestations of His love and blood, I would not cry to Him as I do for the revelation of them to my soul.

2. I have seen and felt the exceeding evil of sin, and of my own sins in particular, and been much in confession of them, and especially of those sins which have most pressed upon my conscience.

3. I have seen and felt much of the blessedness of true humility of mind, of brokenness of heart, and contrition of spirit, and what a choice favor the fear of God is, as a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. You all know how, for many years, I have stood forth as a preacher and as a writer, and yet I feel as helpless and as destitute as the weakest child of grace, and a much greater sinner, as having sinned against more light and knowledge than he.

4. I have felt my heart much drawn to the poor afflicted children of God, and especially to those who manifest much of the mind and image of Christ. I never, during the whole course of my spiritual life, felt the least union with the vain-confident doctrinal professors of the day, but have always cleaved in heart and spirit to the living family of God. But I have never felt more drawn than now to those of the people of God, who live and walk in the fear of the Lord, who are spiritually minded, who manifest the teaching of the blessed Spirit, and whose souls are kept alive by His continual operations and influences. I lament to see any who profess to fear the Lord carnal, and worldly, and dead, and do not covet their company nor envy their state.

5. I have been reading during my illness Mr. Bourne's Letters, Mr. Vinall's Sermons, and Mr. Chamberlain's Letters and Sermons, and am glad to find myself joined with these men of God in the same mind and in the same judgment. I have found their writings profitable, sometimes to encourage and sometimes to try my mind; but as in the main I feel a sweet union of spirit with them, I trust it is an evidence I have been and am taught by the same Spirit.

One of the most trying circumstances of my illness is that any exertion of the mind increases the illness and retards the recovery. I need perfect rest of mind and cessation from all mental labor; and yet I am so circumstanced that, with the exception of preaching, I am obliged to work almost as hard as if I were in perfect health. I have however this consolation, that I am working for the good of others, and that I must work while it is day, for soon the night will come when no man can work.

I have spoken thus far and thus freely of some of my own trials, and the effects of them; and now I wish to add a few words upon my present affliction in its peculiar bearing upon yourselves as a church and congregation. Everything connected with vital godliness has to be tried. My ministry among you; the cause of God and truth as ours professes to be; the faith and patience, hope and love, of those who fear God in the church and congregation; the mutual union of minister and people, and of the people with each other, have all to be tried as with fire. And it seems that the Lord is now trying us in all these points. We have lost by death during the past year some of our oldest, most established, and valued members, and by their removal the church has become proportionately weakened. My own ill-health, for the last few years, has left you for weeks sometimes without the preached Word. And as we know that a congregation is first brought together, and then kept together, chiefly by the ministry of the Word, this circumstance has a great tendency to thin and weaken our assembly. Many will come to hear preaching who have no real knowledge of, or love for, what the minister preaches; such hearers therefore naturally fly off when there is no minister in the pulpit. But these very things which naturally weaken a people as a people, try also the reality and vitality of the work of God among them. The ministry of the Gospel, when owned of God, is no doubt a great blessing to a people, and the deprivation of it will be deeply felt by those who derive profit from it. But this very deprivation may have its attendant benefit. You may see more clearly, and feel more deeply thereby, that you must get your blessings, your encouragements, your tokens for good, your helps by the way, your sips and tastes of the Lord's goodness and mercy, more directly and immediately from Himself. And this will help to put the ministry in its right place—to be highly prized as an ordinance of God, and yet not to be made almost a substitute for those other means of grace, such as prayer and supplication, reading the Word, private meditation, and meeting together among yourselves, all which the Lord can bless as much, if not more, than the ministry itself.

If my ministry has been owned of God to your souls, it will stand. The blessings which you have received under it, whether many or few, little or much, will abide and be rather strengthened than diminished by my present suspension from my labors. If all I have preached in your ears for more than twenty-five years is merely in the letter, and you have never received the least blessing nor felt the least power from my ministry, all you have heard will fall away from your mind and memory, like last autumn's leaves from the trees. Now then is the time to prove, by the effects left on your spirit, whether my word has been to you only in the letter, or has been attended with some power to your soul.

Many people's religion goes no deeper and reaches no further than hearing and approving of what they hear. They may at the time seem interested, or instructed, or even moved, with what they hear; but nothing is carried home with them to sink deep into their heart and to work with a divine power in their conscience. These are well described by the Lord as coming to hear His Word as His people come, and sitting before the prophet as His people sit, and hearing His words but not doing them. So to some, if not many of you, I may have been as one that has a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; and with your mouth you may have shown much love, but your heart has gone after your covetousness (Ezek. 33:30-32).

Now when the voice is silent and the sound of the instrument not heard, such people's religion seems to die away. The Lord then may be purposely trying your religion by suspending the ministry for a time, to show the difference between those who have a living spring in their souls, independent of and distinct from the preaching, and those whose religion lies almost wholly in the use of the outward means.

We often speak of our weakness. It is a part of our creed and of our experience, that the strength of Christ is made perfect in weakness. But what a very painful and trying lesson this is to learn, whether individually as Christians or collectively as a Christian church! Now that is just the very lesson which you are learning now, and which I believe you will have to learn more and more. It is not often that living churches are what is called flourishing churches—that is, in the usual acceptance of the word. Large congregations, an abundance of respectable hearers, a continual accession of members to the church, flourishing circumstances, and a great flow of such prosperity as the worldly eye can measure, is not the appointed lot of the true churches of Christ. All this we may seem to see and believe, but it is only trying circumstances that can really convince us that when we are seemingly strong then we are weak, but that when we are weak then we are strong.

But I will not weary you longer. I shall therefore only add that, as the Lord through undeserved mercy is gradually restoring my health and strength, I trust that after a little time I may be given to your prayers. Meanwhile I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Brethren, pray for us,
Your affectionate Friend and Servant in the Lord,
J. C. P.

April 26, 1864

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . . I much liked the account which you gave of our dear friend Mr. Grace's testimony among you. It was quite commended to my conscience as simple, spiritual, and suitable. There was nothing in it, as it seemed to me from your account, too high or too low, but such a line of things as would meet with the average experience of the Lord's family. He told me, when here, that the text from which he hoped to speak at Oakham had been presented to his mind, and I said to him that I had generally found

that such seasons were favorable. I expected therefore that it would be a good season.

I hope I can rejoice in the Lord's blessing the labors of other good men. It is indeed a sad spirit when ministers are jealous of each other, and would rather cavil, and find fault with each other, instead of desiring that the blessing of God might rest upon them and their labors. Every sent servant of God has his own peculiar gift and line of things, in which he is strong, and out of which he is weak. Now it matters little what be a man's gifts or abilities, it is only what the Lord blesses which is of the least worth or value. I have long seen and felt this, and I hope an experimental feeling of it has much kept me from exalting myself and despising others. Oh that miserable spirit of detraction and envy, which would gladly pull others down, that we might stand as it were a little higher upon their bodies! Where is there any true humility of mind, simplicity of spirit, brotherly love, or an eye to God's glory, when this wretched spirit is indulged? But I have rather wandered from my subject. I hope that a permanent blessing may rest upon the seed which our dear friend was enabled to sow. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 27, 1864

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner—Afflictions and trials, when they are made to work together for good, much draw the family of God nearer and nearer to each other. I have used this figure sometimes—Put together two pieces of cold iron, there is no uniting; put together one piece glowing hot out of the furnace and another cold piece, still no union; bring together two pieces, both out of the furnace, and let the heavy hammer of affliction fall upon them both together, there is a welding, a union, and they become one. The application will suggest itself without any explanation. I have felt, since I have been myself in the furnace of affliction, much more drawn to, and united with, the suffering family of God, than when I am out of it. I have no doubt, dear friend, that you have felt the same in your afflictions and trials, and that they give you more feeling for, more union and communion with, the suffering members of the mystical body of Christ, than when you are not so much in the furnace. The humble, the simple-hearted, the tempted and tried, the afflicted, the broken in heart and contrite in spirit, are not these the choicest of the Lord's precious jewels? And why? Because they are more like Christ, more conformed to His image, more manifesting the power of His grace.

I never was, since I made a profession, one in mind and spirit with the heady, bold, daring professors; but though for many years I could not clearly discern where they were wrong, yet I had an instinctive feeling of disunion and of separation from them in heart. I think from the very first, where there is what our blessed Lord calls the light of life, there is a spiritual discernment both of the truth of God and of the children of God. By the first we are in good measure kept from error, and by the second from becoming mixed up with ungodly professors. Not but what we often make great mistakes; but

this is more from lack of judgment than from willful error. The Lord therefore graciously pardons such errors in judgment, as He knows that they are not done out of malicious wickedness.

How mysterious is the life of God in the soul. It seems like a little drop of purity in the midst of impurity. When I was a boy in London, there was exhibited in the window of some eminent watchmaker, a very curious movement, if I may so term it. If I remember right there was a flat plate of glass or metal, I forget which, suspended horizontally on a central pivot. In this plate there were cut, what I may call perhaps, little paths or roads communicating with each other, top and bottom, and a large globule, as it seemed, of quicksilver kept perpetually coursing up and down these paths, depressing alternately each side of the plate as a kind of pendulum. I may perhaps describe it wrong, as more than forty years have passed since I have seen it; but it just struck my mind as a representation of the new man of grace in the heart coursing up and down so bright, shining, and spotless, and yet giving movement to and regulating the whole machine. Please to forgive me if my figure be wrong.

I have had a severe attack of what I may almost call my constitutional malady—bronchitis. Through mercy, all the inflammatory symptoms have been removed, and now my chief ailment is great weakness and tenderness. Still, I am thankful to say that I am daily mending, and being able now to get my walks when the weather admits, I hope I may, with God's blessing, be after a little time restored to my usual health. It is very trying to me and to my people that I should be laid aside, as I so often am; but they bear it with much kindness and patience, and I doubt not there is a secret purpose of wisdom and goodness to be accomplished thereby—"What I do, you know not now; but you shall know hereafter".

It is a part of true Christian wisdom, of living faith, of real humility of mind, of submission to the will of God, to be content to believe what we cannot see. "He leads the blind by a way that they knew not." A sense of this blindness will lead us to commit our way unto the Lord, to trust in Him, that He may bring it to pass. But we have to mourn over our ignorance, darkness, unbelief, infidelity, and that wretched lack of submission to the will of God, which adds so much to the weight of every trial. If we could but believe, and be firmly established in the belief, that our various trials, whether bodily, or family, or mental, or connected with the church, were for our own good, how much would it lighten their load. But to grope for the wall like the blind, and to grope as if we had no eyes, leaves us to carry the burden alone; and you know what poor fainting work we make of it, when we have to carry the load with our own arms. The sweet persuasion that the Lord has sent the trial, will support us in it, and will bring us out of it, wonderfully lightens every trial, however weighty it may be in itself.

You have now a trial before you. You are going to London, weak in body and suffering various ailments which seem to need the especial care of home. Amid all these ailments you have to stand up before a London congregation, among whom there may be some choice children of God, and very many sharp-eyed keen-eared critics. You are looking perhaps to what you think is your lack of education, or ability to set forth the precious truths of the

everlasting Gospel. You do not consider how the Lord can strengthen you in body, mitigate your ailments, alleviate your pain, take away the fear of man, and give you a door of utterance which may not altogether satisfy yourself, and yet may be satisfying to the hearers—at least to that part of them who alone deserve the name of hearers.

I have long seen, and see it more and more, that it is not gifts and abilities that the Lord blesses, but His own Word in the heart and mouth of His sent servants. As to gifts and abilities, they are something like what Mr. Huntington says of female beauty, scattered upon some of the worst of men. The letter ministers are far beyond the experimental in abilities, and in their way, far greater preachers. But what are all their gifts and abilities, but to build up themselves and their hearers in a graceless profession? A few simple words in the mouth of a simple-hearted servant of God, like David's sling and stone, will do more execution than all Saul's armor, or the spear of the Philistine like a weaver's beam. Be content then to go simply in this your might, with what the Lord has done for you, and what He may speak by you; and if Mr. Pride gets a wound in the head, it will not be the worse for the grace of humility. If you have but a single eye to the glory of God, He will bring you through safely, and it may be, successfully and honorably. . . .

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

May 14, 1864

Dear Friend—You may perhaps have heard that it has pleased the Lord to lay upon me His afflicting hand, so that for the last three months I have been quite ill from an attack of bronchitis. I trust however, with the blessing of God, I am gradually recovering, and have come here by the advice of my medical attendant for change of air.

It has been a trial to me, and to my people also, to be laid aside from the work of the ministry, especially as I have found such great difficulty in procuring acceptable Supplies. We cannot choose our own crosses, and generally speaking they are laid upon us where and when we feel them most. But they are as indispensable as blessings, and indeed are closely connected; for it is the trial that makes the blessing sweet.

I am glad to find that you can sing just now in the heights of Zion. The time has been when you were in the valley, and when you thought there was no mercy for a wretch like you. But the Lord's thoughts were not your thoughts, nor His ways your ways; for He has said—"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:9).

We all have our trials; you have yours and I have mine, though in some respects they are similar, from weakness of body and trials of mind, both privately and ministerially. Nothing can reconcile us unto them but the power of God, and the persuasion that our trials and afflictions are working together for our own spiritual good. They have a voice, if we have but ears to

hear; and they say—"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth; for you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:2, 3).

I am sorry to say that the health of Mr. Tiptaft does not improve so much as his numerous friends could desire, if it were the will of God; and yet I do not think that he is very much worse. But as regards his voice I see no improvement, nor any prospect of it, though we know that with the Lord all things are possible. For many months he has not been able to speak beyond a whisper. He does not suffer much pain, though sometimes inconvenience by a troublesome cough, especially at meals. He seems at times favored in his soul with the presence of the Lord.

Please remember me very kindly to Mrs. D., and give my love to Mr. Vaughan and the friends.

Yours sincerely for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

May 18th, 1864

Dear Friend, Mr. J. Davis—Your letter enclosing £5, (which I will pay to the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society), has been forwarded to me from Stamford to this place, where I am staying for the benefit of my health by the advice of my medical attendant. It has pleased the Lord to lay upon the His afflicting hand, so that for two months I have been unable to stand up in His holy name. I trust, however, that through mercy I am gradually, though slowly, recovering, and hope that it may please the Lord to raise me up again and restore me to my work.

I am glad to find you have been spared to return to your adopted country, and found your family in health. You have been spared to pass over many miles of wide sea since we met last year at Allington. I am glad to have seen you, and both I and the friends, Mr. Parry and Mr. Tuckwell, whom you saw at Allington, felt a union with you in the things of God, and liked your spirit. I am sure you must feel it to be a trial to have so few with whom you can feel sweet communion in the things of God where you are now, more especially as there seems to be strife and division even among the few who meet together.

Few things more show the low state of the life of God in the present day than that spirit of strife and contention which seems to rend asunder most of the churches. What little life and power there must be in the soul when people are ready to quarrel almost about a straw. How quick they are to see faults in others, and how slow to see faults in themselves. I find myself much more exercised about myself than about any other people. The great thing is to be right one's self, to have some testimony from the Lord that we are His, that we may walk in His fear, and live to His praise. We shall have plenty to do to look well at home, to watch the movements of our own heart, to be seeking the Lord's blessing, and to strive after union and communion with the blessed Savior of poor, lost, guilty sinners. If those who profess to fear and love the Lord were more brought down in their own souls, were more

humbled, and stripped, and emptied, and laid low, there would be less strife, less contention, less backbiting, and more love, tenderness, and affection towards the people of God.

I thought that I could see in you at Allington a spirit of love and affection to the Lord's people, and a great unwillingness to rip up their faults and failings. And it seemed to me that you had tasted, felt, and handled the goodness and mercy of the Lord in your own soul, which made you long after a renewed sense of His favor and loving-kindness, which is better than life itself. I desire, therefore, that you may be blessed and favored in your own soul, made and kept very little and very low in your own eyes; and may the Lord keep you from a spirit of strife and contention, from getting entangled in the world, or being overcome by sin and Satan. You are called to stand firm, not only for living truth, but also to make it manifest by your life, conduct, and conversation, that you know its power and blessedness in your own soul.

**My love to Mrs. Charwood, and to all who love the Lord.
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.**

May 25, 1864

Dear Mr. G. F. Taigel—I owe you an apology for my delay in replying to your letter; but various circumstances have concurred to prevent my answering it. And now that I have undertaken to send you a few lines in reply, I must fairly confess I hardly know what answer to give.

When we are in trouble and perplexity about divine matters, we often desire the counsel and advice of friends, especially of those whom we think to be established in the ways of truth. But we find after a time, that to lean upon them is like leaning upon a broken reed, which only runs into the hand and pierces it. Every part and particle of divine truth we have to learn for ourselves experimentally, in order that we may really know it. This is particularly the case in sitting under the ministry of the Word. Every child of God has to prove for himself the ground on which he stands; and generally speaking, he must be deeply and for a long time tried before he can come to a right judgment. He will have to compare the ministry which he hears with the work of God upon his soul, as well as with the Word of truth. He will also have to watch and see what power and savor, unction or dew, rest upon the word which he hears. If his soul be alive and lively in the things of God, he will soon find what the ministry is; and though for a time he may think the fault is all in himself, yet when he finds no power or unction under the ministry, and that it rather starves his soul than feeds it, rather draws up and dries the dew upon his soul than communicates it, he gradually learns that, whatever that ministry may be in itself, or whatever it may be to others, it is but a dry breast to him.

I do not wish, considering my position, to express any opinion about Mr. Wells or his ministry. Yet I cannot but think that there is a great deal of truth in what you say; that there is no separation or discrimination in his

ministry, and that it is more like 'head notions' than an 'experimental knowledge' of the truth. What the man is in himself I must leave. One thing however I do know, which is, that he holds very serious error upon the subject of the eternal Sonship of Christ, and has used, what I may call, some awful expressions about it; for instance, such as saying that the doctrine of eternal generation was from beneath. Mr. Gunner, under whom you now sit, is a man sound in the truth, and has been taught it experimentally, so that I hope his word may be blessed to your soul.

Yours sincerely for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

June 15, 1864

My dear Friend, Mr. E. Walter—I am sorry to say that it will not be in my power to accept the kind invitation which you have sent me to come down to preach at Wadhurst, or Tunbridge Wells during my anticipated visit to London.

I would much like once more to see your aged father, with whom in times past I have taken sweet converse in the precious things of God, and who for many years used to come up to hear me when I was in London. I do hope that the Lord has blessed his soul with more consolation than he used at that time to speak of, and that his last days may be his best days. He always had since I knew him much of the manifest fear of God in living exercise, but did not enjoy much of that sweet liberty which some of God's saints are favored with. But I never doubted his case or state, and fully believe it will be well with him whenever the time shall come to cut the mortal thread.

The reason why I cannot come is the state of my health. I have been confined to the house for March, and a good part of April, through bronchitis, which has left me very weak; and though I am venturing to go to London in the strength of the Lord, yet it is in much weakness. I am therefore unable to accept any invitations, beyond my engagement at Gower Street, and have already refused several.

I am glad that your poor aged father still bears me in affectionate remembrance. He has seen many of his old friends gradually decline and drop—among them his pastor, Mr. Crouch. But what a mercy it is that though man dies, Jesus lives, and that He is full of compassion, mercy, and truth to all those who fear and love His great name! The path in which your father has been led so many years is a safe way, though a rough and rugged way. But the end will make amends for all.

My sincere Christian love to him and to all who love the truth.
Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

June 22, 1864

My dear Friend, Mr. Tanner—On looking over your letter this morning to refresh my memory, I was reminded of one of Bunyan's master traits, where, in describing the clothing of the women in the house Beautiful, he says, "They could not see that glory each one had in herself which they could see in each other. Now therefore they began to esteem each other better than themselves," etc. So I could see—don't think I am flattering—that grace in you which I cannot see in myself. You have had not only a long and trying affliction, but have had trial upon trial from almost every quarter—in your family, in your business, in the church, in your soul, and continually in your poor afflicted body. Your sympathizing friends would, if they could, take all these loads off your back, and all these pains and infirmities out of your body. But the same hand which took away the affliction, would with it take away the consolation, and by giving health to the body would remove health from the soul.

You have not only a better but a wiser Friend than we poor mortals could be to you, even with our best wishes, and tenderest sympathies; and that all-kind and all-wise Friend will not lay upon you any more than His grace enables you to bear; and though the profit of it may not appear to yourself, it is seen and felt by others. No one but he who has had an experience of it knows what a heavy trial an afflicted tabernacle is, and especially when to weakness is added almost constant pain. Of the former, as you know, I have had much experience; but of the latter I have had less, perhaps, than many of my friends, for my illnesses have not usually been attended with bodily pain and suffering.

But, through the goodness and mercy of the Lord, I am very much better, and entertain a hope that, with the help and blessing of the Lord, I may be brought through my London labors without breaking down. I have proved again and again that the strength of the Lord is made perfect in weakness, nor do I expect that I shall have any other experience of His strength but as made known in the same way. You know, my dear friend, that it is very blessed to feel the strength, but very painful and trying to learn the preceding weakness. But can the two be separated? If the strength of the Lord is to be made perfect in it, weakness must be as indispensable for that perfection as the mortice is for the tenon.

I was sorry to hear of your dear wife's affliction. But how kind and gracious was it of the Lord to give her such a rich blessing! Oh, how mysterious are His ways, and His dealings past finding out, and yet what goodness and mercy are stamped upon them all! How true it is that whom the Lord loves He loves to the end; and that He never leaves nor forsakes those in whose hearts He has planted the grace of godly fear. But oh, how in long seasons of darkness, all His past mercies seem buried and forgotten. I have often thought of a remarkable expression of Bunyan's in his "Grace Abounding," where he says "that when he had lost the feeling that though God did visit his soul with ever so blessed a discovery of Himself, yet that he found his spirit afterwards so filled with darkness that he could not so much as once conceive what that God and what that comfort was." How true is this that there seems to be through darkness and unbelief such a clear and clean sweep of

everything tasted, handled, and felt, that it seems even as if the very conception of them was gone.

But it is in such spots as these that we feelingly and experimentally learn the depths of the fall, and how thoroughly and entirely destitute we are by nature of either power or will. Now what would we do, or what could we do, under such miserable circumstances, unless the Lord of His own rich, free, and sovereign grace, revived our spirit! What poor, unprofitable creatures would we be in the pulpit and in the parlour, in the church and in the family, on our knees or with the Bible open before our eyes, if the Lord did not come of His own free grace. It is this thorough inwrought feeling and experience of our own miserable helplessness and of the freeness and fullness of sovereign grace, which enables us to declare as from the very bottom of our heart what man is by nature, and what he is made by grace; and as all the dear saints of God have a similar experience, both of darkness and light, of nature's miserable destitution, and of the Lord's almighty grace and power, it enables us, according to the measure of our grace and gift, to speak to the heart and conscience of the living family of God.

I see more and more that what the Lord blesses is His own word and work—that it is not great gifts or abilities in opening up the word, but that it is what the Lord in His sovereignty blesses. I have long seen this in a remarkable way in our dear friend, Mr. Tiptaft, now laid aside. His best friends could not say that his gifts were very great, or that he was an able expositor of the word of truth. And yet how much has his simple testimony been honored and blessed, far beyond that of men who have outshone him in ministerial gifts. No doubt he has been tried sometimes at his lack of variety and ministerial ability, but has been strengthened and comforted by the testimonies which he has received of the blessing of God resting upon the word preached by him.

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

August 3, 1864

My dear sister Fanny,

I think of moving to Croydon, as there is a place of truth there, and the climate is dry and warm. My year at Stamford and Oakham expires in October, and then I think of resigning my care of the two churches and congregations. I shall much feel the step every way, and shall have to sacrifice my salary, which I can ill afford with my family. But it is better to stop in time and not sacrifice my life, which I shall do if I continue laboring as I have done. My dear wife and our son Charles are gone down to Croydon today, to see about a house. It is a large place not far from London. It is much warmer than Stamford, with a dry soil.

I think this last attack has brought matters to a crisis. If it pleases God to restore my health I would not lay down the ministry, but supply occasionally. It is the continuous labor, and in all weathers, which tries me; but I am deeply tried in various ways, as it is a most important step, and I cannot see plainly the will of the Lord. I need much faith and patience, and for some

consolation to be mingled with my afflictions. I shall have more trials in providence as well as in grace, and a rough and thorny path every way. But the Lord is all-sufficient.

I hope the review has not hurt your mind. If I write at all, it must be honestly; and I thought a few hints might be useful to others. Let failings be tenderly touched, but not wholly passed by, as if a person were a perfect character. The accounts of saints in Scripture mention the bad as well as the good; and I would have been accused of partiality if it had been wholly praise. But I would be sorry to hurt your mind.

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

August 3, 1864

My dear Friend, W. T. Keal, M.D.— These continual attacks warn me that I cannot go on laboring as I have done. I cannot sacrifice my health and life, as I certainly shall do if I continue my ministry at Oakham and Stamford. I have a wife and family to think of, and I may add, the Church of God generally, besides the two causes where I have labored so many years. But I feel convinced I cannot go on as I have done. The climate, also, is too cold for me in winter, and especially in spring; and as every attack weakens me more and more, I am less able to endure it. I shall much feel leaving my people and the friends with whom I have been connected so many years, and no other cause would have induced me to do so. But again and again, and especially of late years, I have been laid aside for weeks together, and it is but a gloomy prospect to look forward to a succession of attacks of a similar nature. At present, my heart, though weak, is not diseased, nor is emphysema in itself a fatal malady; but I have to consider the probable consequences of my repeated bronchitic attacks, and their effect on my constitution. And if these consequences are likely to be very serious, no people could require of me that I should sacrifice not only health, but life itself, for their sake. I would not lay down the ministry if I ceased to minister at Oakham and Stamford, except, perhaps, for a few months this winter and spring, to recover my health, nor would I attach myself to any other people. But occasionally, as the state of my health permitted, I might supply at Gower Street, or any other place. I wish to make it a matter of prayer that the Lord would direct my path; nor do I wish to come to a hasty decision; but, as my year is up at the end of October next, and I cannot stay another winter at Stamford, it is in my mind not to go on beyond that time.

I have no doubt that my dear friends at Oakham and Stamford, and you and your dear wife among the number, will feel much grieved at the decision to which I have been compelled to come. But I have been almost practically useless for some time, and every attack lasts longer and leaves me weaker. I shall have to sacrifice a good part of my income at the very time when I need it most; but I do not wish to be a burden to the friends who have hitherto for so many years liberally ministered to my necessities. Indeed, I am in a strait, and much tried and exercised in my mind, as the step is so important in every way. I have great need of faith and patience, as the trial is exceedingly heavy,

spiritually and temporally, in body and soul. None but the Lord, to whom I look, can do me any real good, and He alone must guide, support, and be with me.

Croydon is the place to which we shall probably move, as there is a chapel of truth there, and the soil and situation are dry and warm. This last attack has much pulled me down, both in flesh and strength. Dr. Corfe advises me to go to Allington for a little change, though I would prefer to come home.

Our united love to your dear wife, our children, etc.
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

August 4, 1864

My dear Friend, Mr. Lightfoot—I feel that I must write to you on a subject which, I am sure, will much try, not only your mind, but the mind also of many of my dear friends and hearers; and nothing but necessity would compel me to do so.

I have for some time been convinced that the state of my health, and the repeated attacks of severe illness which I have now had for several years, quite unfit me for the labors which I have undergone at Stamford and Oakham for nearly twenty-six years. I came to London very weak, but was in hopes that the change, as in former years, would do me good. And this was the case for the first two or three weeks; but the Lord was pleased to let a cold fall upon my poor weak chest, and the consequence has been one of my attacks of bronchitis, which has quite laid me aside. Dr. Corfe has attended me, and carefully examined my chest, and says I am not fit for continuous work, and that the climate of Stamford is too cold for me. I will endeavor to procure his opinion in a written expression of it, but I am quite convinced, from a feeling sense of my great bodily weakness, that he is right in his judgment.

What, then, must I do? Must I go on until health and life fail together, or adopt such means as, with God's help and blessing, might to some extent preserve both? I have a family to think of besides myself and the Church of God generally; and am I called upon to sacrifice all to the people among whom I have so long labored? I do not see that I am; nor could my friends, though they might be sorry to part with me, demand such a sacrifice. Besides which, my long and severe illnesses make me almost practically useless for weeks and months together; and if this is to increase, I am only a burden to the friends and no benefit. I am much tried on the subject, and am begging of the Lord to guide and direct me; for it is a most important step for me, as well as the people.

I seem, then, brought to this point, that I must resign my pastorship of both my churches at Stamford and Oakham; and, as my year expires in October next, then to leave, as I cannot stay at Stamford another winter and spring. You, and my dear friends and hearers, will think this a very hasty and

precipitate step, and that I ought to have given you a longer notice. And so I would have, had there been any other reason than the state of my health. I shall have to make a very great sacrifice of income, which I can ill afford; but this will prove my sincerity, and that I am not leaving my people for advantaged motives.

I am very unwell, and deeply tried. The Lord appear for me in this most painful trial. My love to your wife and the friends.

J. C. P.

To The kind Friends who have contributed to the Testimonial presented to me by the Church and Congregation meeting at Providence Chapel, Oakham
October 11th, 1864

My dear Friends—I accept with much thankfulness and sincere gratitude the liberal, I may indeed say noble, testimonial which you have given me of your esteem and affection. It is much beyond both my wishes and expectations; but I have long known your liberal minds, and that to your ability, and beyond your ability, you have for many years shown me similar proofs of your love. I deeply regret that I am compelled by my failing health to sever the tie which has so long bound us together. But so far as we are united by the more enduring and endearing bond of the Spirit, knitting our hearts together in mutual love and affection, distance and absence will not separate us in spirit, if they separate us in body. We shall still desire and pray for each other's spiritual good, and meet at the throne of grace. The blessed Spirit may also sometimes bring to your mind and memory portions of the Word of God's grace which I have for so many years preached among you; and this will remind you, not only of me, but of those days when we were accustomed together, in the house of prayer, to find the presence and power of the Lord in our midst.

Great and many have been my infirmities and deficiencies, both as a minister and as a pastor, some perhaps arising out of my weak state of health, and others from a body of sin and death. But my desire and aim have been to preach to you faithfully and experimentally the Gospel of the grace of God.

And now, friends and brethren, farewell. Accept my love in the Lord, and as we have so often met below in the earthly courts of His grace, so may we meet above in the courts of His heavenly glory.

I am, my dear Friends and Brethren, your late attached Minister and Pastor, and still your affectionate Friend and Brother,
J. C. P.

October 14, 1864

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner. . . I came here last Friday, after a sad parting with many attached friends and hearers, among whom I have labored for so many years. The Lord mercifully gave me strength to preach

at both places twice on the Lord's day, and at Oakham on the Tuesday evening before I left them. *I have given them the best part of my life, and spent upon them my health and strength.* God grant that it may be manifested that I have not labored in vain, nor spent my strength for nothing. Nothing but my failing health would have induced me to leave them; but both they and I were well convinced that I was not fit to carry on my continuous labors. We parted therefore, I trust, in mutual love and affection, as well as mutual regret.

I unhappily took cold the day before I left Oakham, and have been poorly ever since—not having crossed the threshold of my new abode since I entered into it. I have much desired to experience here the power and presence of the Lord, that I may have His approbation upon the step, and His sanction of my pitching my tent in this place. I desire to be ever watching His hand, both in providence and in grace; to acknowledge Him in all my ways, that He may ever direct my steps. I have been so often laid aside from preaching, and that for weeks and months together, that I do not feel the trial so great as might be anticipated. I live also in hope that it may be the Lord's will so far to restore me that, during the summer months at least, I may be enabled to go forth in the Lord's name. At present I am seeking rest, though as usual it is hard to obtain it, for much work lies before me; and if my tongue be still, my pen apparently will not lie idle. Indeed I have never for many years sought indolence, but have found a willingness to labor as far as the Lord has given me strength.

The meridian of life with us is gone by. The Lord has seen fit to lay his hand upon our poor bodies, and we may expect the rest of our lives to be more or less invalids, scarcely hoping for any length of time to be free from those attacks, which we must expect rather to gain potency with declining years. I think sometimes of you, our dear friend at Allington, and myself. We all seem to have before us a trying path, and I believe our desire is to find in it submission to the will of God, and to have every trial sanctified and blessed to our soul's profit. No doubt we need a great deal to bring us down. "He brought down their hearts with sorrow." We desire to have a broken heart and a contrite spirit, a humble mind, a tender conscience. We desire to live and walk in the fear and love of the Lord, to be kept from evil that it may not grieve us. We also covet the presence and blessing of God in our souls, in the manifestations of His love and mercy. We desire also to see His good hand stretched out in providence, that we may have reason to bless and praise His holy name for His kindness and goodness to us; and yet with all this, what coldness, deadness, and darkness often beset the mind! Unbelief and infidelity, doubt and fear, surmises and misgivings, possess the mind, so that the life and power of real religion appear almost gone! Thus we have many changes, and these will ever keep us from being settled on our lees and being at ease in Zion. The flesh, it is true, loves an easy path, and left to ourselves, we would almost barter eternal life for better health, greater strength, and a larger amount of earthly good.

But it is our mercy that we cannot choose our own way, our own will, or our own cross, but that all is appointed for us—what to do and what to suffer, what to be, and what not to be. I wish I could be more spiritually-minded, which is life and peace, walk more in the enjoyment of the love and favor of God, feel more of the preciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and have a

stronger faith in Him. We cannot always nor often tell how our trials and afflictions are working for our spiritual good, nor how they are answers to our prayers for more humility of mind, and to know more of the power and blessedness of eternal realities. It takes a great deal to wean us from the world, to humble and mortify our proud heart, and break our stubborn spirit. We would like to have it done quietly and gently, by a secret, spiritual, and supernatural influence resting upon the mind, without any affliction of body, trial of mind, or crucifixion of the flesh. We would like Jesus to be manifestly our All in all, without walking in a path of trial or suffering.

We tell people from the pulpit what is the right way of getting at spiritual blessings, and yet are ever seeking or desiring them to come to ourselves in some different way. At least I find it so to be the case with me. It is a great thing to be made spiritually upright and sincere, to be ever seeking the blessing of God as a felt internal reality, and to desire nothing so much as His sensible favor and approbation. But it is a hard struggle to get at this and into this in the right way, especially when the Lord seems to hide His face and turn a deaf ear to our petitions. Still we must keep on seeking His blessed face, until He turns the shadow of darkness into the morning. . . .

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

October 24, 1864

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I was beginning to feel very desirous, I may say anxious, to learn how matters were proceeding with you at Oakham, when your kind and affectionate letter came to hand to relieve my anxiety. I read it with very great interest, and I hope some feeling, not only on account of the expression of your affection towards, and continued interest in, my unworthy self, but as giving me some account of what I wished so much to hear—what was doing as regards the settlement of a minister and pastor among you. . . . May the Lord guide His servant to do that which shall be most for His people's good and His own glory; and I hope that my dear friends at Oakham and in the neighborhood will unite their supplications that the Lord would make His will clearly known; for without that no real blessing could be expected.

It is as much for the interest and comfort of the church and congregation that it should be the manifest will of God to bring Mr. Knill among you, as it can be for his. His coming might seem at first to settle matters quietly and comfortably; it would remove the trouble and anxiety about procuring acceptable Supplies; and all for a time might seem to go on prosperously. But unless the blessing of God rested upon his settlement among you, storms would arise in the apparently settled sky, and there would spring up difficulties and perplexities of a most trying nature. But if it were the manifest will of God that he should be settled over you, then whatever difficulties might arise, the power and presence of God and His blessing, would overrule and overcome all. There is no use therefore trying to settle such an important matter in a hasty, I might add, fleshly way, nor to tempt him as it were to decide such a point, by offering worldly advantages.

I always foresaw that if it pleased the Lord to remove me, it would open a door for much perplexity how to get my place supplied. Not that I wish to attach any value or importance to my labors among you, but as knowing the extreme difficulty in procuring acceptable Supplies. It was with the greatest difficulty that I could get my pulpit supplied when I went out. All these things have been present to my mind for years—in fact, ever since I have been strongly pressed to go to London. I have always felt that I would stay with you as long as health and strength were granted, and nothing but most painful and trying necessity would have compelled me to leave you. I feel therefore deeply anxious that Mr. Knill should be settled over you by the will of God, and that His blessing might rest upon every step which has been taken in His fear to promote it.

I shall not soon forget my last days among you; for surely I was helped both in body and soul to speak to you in the name of the Lord at my parting farewell. I have just finished revising the sermon which I preached from Phil. 1:5, 6, and I seem to think that it will be acceptable to the friends when it comes out in print, as I felt some sweetness and savor in revising it. I would much like to have my three farewell sermons put together in a little cover, when the third has been published in *The Gospel Pulpit*, that they may be a little memorial of my ministry among you, and may show both to friends and enemies what it has been. I would prefix a little preface, if thought desirable; and Mr. Ford probably would be willing to strike off some extra copies. I certainly had no wish that they should be written down, but I now seem pleased that they have been; and may the Lord condescend to bless them abundantly. I would not have named this subject, had you not been the person through whom it was brought about. . . .

At this critical time, all who love the Lord and His truth, and feel knitted to the cause of God at Oakham, should join heart and hand, to tide as it were the ship over the present waves; you dear friend, and others who can pray in secret, and the male members who have the additional privilege of praying in public. My poor prayers are put up for you all, that the Lord would bless you, and appear for you in this trying hour. I much liked the quotation you made from some good man about the uniting power of prayer. Oh that we might know much more of it!

I am getting tolerably settled in my new abode. I have much coveted the special presence and power of God upon my soul, as a testimony of His approbation; but though I have been favored with a spirit of grace and supplications, and at times some nearness of access to the throne, I have not realized, as I could wish, the coveted blessing. I have been reading with much pleasure, and I hope some profit, Huntington's *Posthumous Letters*. The more I read them, the more I seem to see the fullness and blessedness, and the varied experience of God's living truth, as set forth in them. Indeed, they are most choice and profitable reading. I would like you, dear friends, to read sometimes in them during the winter. They are short and sweet; you can take them up and lay them down without their requiring any stretch of thought, or continuous reading. I am so much occupied myself in writing, that I have not much time to read authors. What therefore I read, I like to be of the best; and I find no writings suit me better than those of the immortal Coalheaver.

At present I have seen none of the friends, except Mr. Covell, who is very attentive and friendly.

Our united love to yourself and your dear sister, our dear friends at Wharfland and the Terrace. My love to all the dear friends. I shall not soon forget our last church meeting. Greet them all by name, and indeed all who love the Lord.

Yours very affectionately in Him,
J. C. P.

November 11, 1864

Dear Friend, Mr. Whitteridge—There is much in your letter which I like, and it seems commended to my conscience as written by an honest man. You speak of yourself as one who has not had much education; and yet your letter evidences that you must have taken much pains with yourself, and after all even where, as in my case, a good foundation has been laid by early and long instruction, a man, to know anything aright, must very much educate himself. I speak of this, of course, only in reference to natural education; for, as you well know, we must be taught of God if we are to know anything as we ought to know. Any knowledge which I may have of the only true God and of Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, must have come from the anointing which teaches of all things, and is truth, and no lie, if indeed it save or sanctify my soul. But I have had to learn for the most part what I know, and what I teach by tongue and pen, through trial and temptation; for it is through much tribulation that we must enter the Kingdom.

But I now come to the main subject of your letter—the wish expressed in it that I could render some help in the way of counsel to plain, uneducated men. In the first place, I hardly know whether I am competent to give it, or whether, if given, any one would be willing to take it. I find for the most part that men ask for advice when they mean approbation. But, apart from this, neither time nor health would allow me to undertake such a task. My health is of late weakened, mainly with hard labor and exercise, and employment of mind. I need rest both of body and soul—for thought, tongue, and pen. My medical attendant told me a day or two ago he would like, if he could, to cast me into a six months' trance, meaning, I suppose, that I needed perfect rest for that period of time. I could not, therefore, in addition to all my present work with the *Standard*, and much correspondence, put a fresh burden upon my back. I consider that in writing for the *Standard*, I communicate for the most part what I am taught and know.

I thank you, however, for your kind and friendly letter, and wish it were in my power to give you or any other sincere, simple man any such counsel as might be offered and received in the fear of the Lord.

Yours very sincerely for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

November 15, 1864

My dear Friend, John Grace—It is indeed now a long time since I wrote to you, but it is our mercy that union and communion, if ever we have felt it with any of the Lord's people, does not depend upon the post office, or indeed any other communication, but that which is maintained with our mutual Head. In Him all the members of His mystical body have both their being and their well-being; and thus their union and communion with each other still abide, however little there may be of present communication. There is one spot where all the regenerated family of God meet in spirit, that is, at the mercy-seat; and there is one Object on which they all fix their eyes, that is, the Son of God at the right hand of the Father. Lovers sometimes have fixed for both to look at the moon at a certain hour, that they may feel that their eyes, though distant in body, are viewing the same object. But those who love the Lord have a higher love and a better object than either moon or star, for they look, and sometimes from the ends of the earth, to the Sun of Righteousness.

I am well convinced that there is a secret union among the living members of the body of Christ; and surely next to union and communion with the Lord Himself, is union and communion with His dear people. May it be our blessed portion to enjoy a larger measure of both, for they wax and wane together; and he who loves Him who begat, loves him also who is begotten of Him. How sweetly does holy John treat of brotherly love, both in its source and in its streams; and how decisively does he lay down its presence and its absence, as sure marks of life and death! But alas, in our day the love of many is waxed cold; and indeed it ever must be so where there is so little faith which works by love and purifies the heart!

Since I have been in my new abode, I have had much in various ways to exercise my mind. Illness of itself is a heavy burden to carry; and though I must not call myself positively ill, yet I have much weakness and indisposition, which has much of the same depressing effect upon the mind. I have come also to a strange place and to a strange house, in most respects very inferior, though the rent is higher, than my own house at Stamford. I have also been much exercised in my own mind upon many things which I cannot altogether name, but which have served to cast me down, and at times to bring a cloud over my soul. And yet I hope, in and by all these things, the life of God has been maintained and kept up more than it would have been in a path of ease. I am well satisfied from Scripture, from observation, and from experience, that it is only through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of God, either really or experimentally. And I also believe that in very many, if not most, cases, trials and afflictions increase rather than diminish in the later stages of life. At least I expect this will be my case, and I have seen it also in others.

About ten years ago you gave me a volume of Mr. Huntington's *Posthumous Letters*. This volume I make my daily companion; not that I mean I am always reading it, but generally do so at some part of the day. And I must say, the more I read it, the more pleasure, and I hope I may add the greater profit, I derive from it. There is scarcely a point of Christian experience, from the lowest depth to the greatest height, which the immortal Coalheaver has not touched upon, and indeed handled, with his masterly unrivaled pen.

Nor is there an exercise of the soul, nor a secret lust, nor hidden corruption, that he has not dragged to light. It is indeed a most precious and valuable legacy to the church of God, and I could wish that it were more widely spread and better known. The two authors from whom I have gained the greatest profit, and the soundest as well as most savory instruction, are Dr. Owen and Mr. Huntington. I am a writer myself upon the things of God, but these two men above all others, and the latter especially, knock my pen out of my hand.

I am glad to find that, though I am laid aside, at least for the present, from the work of the ministry, you are still employed in the service of the great King. It is indeed a great honor for poor vile worms of earth to be employed as ambassadors for the King of kings and Lord of lords; but in these matters, as in all others, God is a sovereign, and as such I desire to submit to His holy will. It is a trial for me to be separated so much from my own former people; but I feel fully convinced that neither health nor strength were sufficient to allow me to continue ministering among them.

We shall be glad to see you if you can make it convenient to give us a call on your way to London. I gave your message to Mr. Covell. He generally comes to see me once a week, and I find him both a pleasant and profitable companion. He is very friendly and very unassuming. At present I have not been able to get out to hear him, nor have I seen anything of his people. Dr. Corfe tells me that my chest is much better than it was when in London, and gives me every hope that I shall preach again.

I am, my dear friend,
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

November 24, 1864

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . . I believe that affliction, especially when long continued, has a sobering effect upon the mind, for we learn in it our deep need of vital realities; and these, as they are felt and apprehended, put to flight all the enthusiastic notions and mere visionary views and delusions that we might have. I am very fond of a sound mind in the things of God, for this is what God gives with a spirit of power and of love. (2 Tim. 1:7). In the things of God, and in vital experience, there is a holy soberness; for as in believing the truth we have not followed cunningly devised fables, so an experience of the truth brings with it a solemn sober conviction of their truth and reality. In times of trouble, temptation, sickness, and death, we need something firm to support the mind, and this we have not in airy notions, but in the Word of God, as made life and spirit to the soul. Few things have more discredited a profession of our most holy faith than the wild notions and still wilder expressions which some have indulged in, giving to the Word of God all sorts of strained meanings, and thus perverting and distorting it from its divine simplicity. But I must not run on in this strain, lest I send you an essay instead of a letter.

I have rather got over the trouble and exercise which I had about the testimonial. I think perhaps that your view was the right one; and I dare say my pride was as much touched as my better feelings were pained. Good often comes out of evil; or at least good comes sometimes in a way in which we would not have it come. In this way therefore, I desire thankfully to acknowledge the good hand of God in this very testimonial, though had it been left to my option, I should at once have stopped it. . . .

I much like Mr. Covell. He generally comes to see me once a week, and sits some time. We agree very well on most points. I find his conversation spiritual and profitable, without any affectation and cant.

Mr. Tryon came down to see me about a week ago. He was very kind and friendly, and gave me some account how matters were going on at Stamford. Though absent from you, I still feel present with you. My desire is that the blessing of God may rest upon His church and people at Oakham and Stamford. I would not have left you, or at least not given up my charge, had the Lord given me health and strength to go on with it. But it is the mercy of the people of God that their edification or consolation does not depend upon man, but that the Lord Himself has undertaken both to comfort and to build up Zion. We may expect as we advance onwards, if our lives be spared, to be ever meeting with new trials and afflictions—but the Lord has promised that His grace shall be sufficient for us, and to this alone can we ever look as able to support us under them, and to bring us off eventually more than conquerors. It is a fellowship in affliction and trial, and a fellowship in the grace of the Gospel, which forms the tie between the members of Christ's mystical body. And why, but because it gives them fellowship with their common Head? (1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:9).

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 23, 1864

My dear Friend, John Grace—I cannot find among my books the last volume of Mr. Huntington's *Posthumous Letters*, but I have four volumes published by Bensley in 1822. . . . Taken as a whole, one may say that they contain the very cream of vital godliness. Not being controversial, there is the absence of that sharpness which marks some of his other writings; and being struck off, as one may say, at a white heat according to his various feelings at the time, there is a freedom and a warmth about them, a reality and a power, which much commends itself to one's conscience. It will be a sad day for the church of Christ in this country when the writings of the immortal Coalheaver are forgotten or utterly neglected; and there seems to be much fear of it, for there are only a few comparatively who read and value them. From no two authors have I derived such instruction and edification as Dr. Owen and Huntington. They have both condemned me, reprov'd me, cut me up, sifted, and almost emptied me—and also brought comfort, encouragement, life, and feeling into my heart. We have no such ministry now, take it for all in all, nor can we expect that matters will get much better—at least if Mr. Huntington is a true prophet.

Still, I believe that the Lord has a goodly number of those who fear His name; but they are, for the most part, in a low place as regards faith and godliness, and those who seem to be more blessed and favored are for the most part heavily weighted with trials and afflictions. I must say for myself, that the path in which I am now walking is the roughest and most trying road which I have traveled for a good many years. Mr. Hart is right in what he says: "That traveler treads the surest here, who seldom sees his way".

I am not out of the path; for indeed this has been, and is, my chief trial. I hope you may never be obliged to give up the ministry, or have to leave your own people and your own home. The Lord, I hope, keeps me continually looking up to Him to make every rough place plain, and every crooked thing straight; but it is one thing to be waiting, asking, and begging, and another to be blessedly receiving. Mr. Huntington tells us that, "the soul that has life may take comfort in the furnace"; but this is hard work, though I do believe that a living soul would sooner have the furnace, than be at ease in Zion.

I have been very busy with my Address (*Gospel Standard*); but with all my labor I cannot say much about it. No man and no thing are more than God makes them to be.

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1865)

January 2, 1865

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . . As the Lord, we hope, has brought Mr. Knill among you, you will now have, as a church and people, to watch and wait for what He may speak to your hearts by His servant. You and all our dear friends who know something experimentally of the kingdom of God, which is not in word but in power, will be looking out and feeling for the power which may rest upon his Word; and if he feels the power and blessing of God in his soul and ministry, and the Lord's people find and feel the same, it will be a confirming evidence that the Lord has sent him among you. I do hope that he may be more blessed in the calling and comforting of the Lord's people than I was, and that there may be a union of esteem, love, and affection between him and the people. No doubt there will be trials, and you will have to bear and forbear with one another's infirmities; but if the blessing of God be in your midst, everything else will be of little account. May the Lord keep you as a church and people from any root of bitterness which, springing up, may trouble you. . . . It is not for us, if we are oppressed, to fight our own battles. It is best to leave these matters with the Lord, who has promised to make every crooked thing straight. . . .

In my long observation of the people of God, and I may add, also in my own experience, I have seen that the Lord does not usually or often thus lead His people. It is, I know, a very delicate and difficult point, as your late dear husband has often felt and said, to distinguish between real divine leadings and impressions upon the mind. All these circumstances teach us to watch and wait, and see what the outcome of such things may be. I see that, in Scripture, much is said of a sober and sound mind (See 1 Thess. 5:6-8; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; 2:4; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7; 5:8; 2 Tim. 1:7). This sobriety of mind, especially when it springs from being sobered by afflictions, trials, and temptations, and by the solemn dealings of the Lord with the soul, is a blessed preservative, not only from levity and frivolity in the things of God, but also from delusion and enthusiasm.

We see sometimes how easily some who, we hope, fear God are lifted up and cast down by some transient impulse. There is nothing weighty, spiritual, or broken in their communication; but a wildness, and very often a vain, confident, presumptuous assurance, which finds no entry into a heart exercised with divine teaching. How narrow is the path that lies between truth and error, the teaching of the Spirit and the delusions of the flesh. We may well say of it, in the language of Hart—"The distinction is too fine for man to discern; therefore let the Christian ask direction of his God." How continually, at all times and under all circumstances, we need to be looking up to the Lord Himself to teach, guide, and lead us. And have we not His own gracious promise that, if we acknowledge Him in all our ways, He will direct our paths? "I will guide you with My eye."

You were not the only person who has objected to my answer on the wrapper of the *Gospel Standard*; but I think perhaps it has been a little misunderstood. It has been thought from it, that I hold with the practice of what is called 'blessing children'. This is not the case, for I see many evils attending it, though not wrong in itself could it be done in the fear of the Lord. But my main object was to testify against that spirit which will not allow the least deviation from our own path. For instance, Mr. Covell does two things which I never have done, and which, I dare say, if I had attempted to do at Oakham, it would have caused a stir. 1. He returns thanks for women after childbirth, and asks for a blessing upon mother and offspring. 2. He prays, and often at some length, for our children, begging of the Lord to bless them, and if it be His will, manifest them as His.

Now this does not offend my ear, though I never do it myself, and have often refused to do the first in London. Now suppose that without any public ceremony, for my remarks were more addressed to private than public prayer—but suppose that a gracious couple, having had a child born to them, should in simplicity and godly sincerity kneel down before the Lord, and ask Him to bless the babe, mentioning it by its new name, could that be condemned? And suppose that their pastor were to kneel down with them, thank the Lord for His mercy unto them, and call the babe by the name which its parents had given it, with a petition for the Lord's blessing upon it—must that be summarily cut off and cut down as a work of the flesh? It is what I never did myself, but it was rather my carnality than my spirituality to which it might be attributed. This then was the point at which I aimed—not to tie up matters of this kind with our own string; but to allow good men

a liberty of action where the Scripture did not condemn it. All this is quite different from infant sprinkling. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

January 17, 1865

Dear Friend, Mr. Walter—I was very glad to get a few lines from you, and to hear the account which you have given of your poor dear old father. I was always sure that sooner or later the Lord would break in upon his soul, for I do not know that I ever knew a man more deeply or more continually exercised about eternal things than he, or who had more of the fear of God, a sense of the weight and reality of eternal things, or more earnest desires for the manifestations of Christ to his soul. It is now many years since I first knew him, and ever since our first acquaintance we have been united in spirit; and now he is proving that the things he has so long professed are divine and blessed realities. I am sorry to hear of his afflicted body; and yet, as the poor earthly tabernacle must come down to the dust, it is a mercy that the Lord is for the most part taking it gently down. It is a mercy that, though so weak in body, he has all his mental faculties, and, above all, that the Lord is pleased sometimes to favor his soul with His sweet presence. The dear old man is now reaping what he has so long sown; and as he has sown to the Spirit so will he of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

I am glad to find that you and your wife are so kind to him in his old age. The Lord will bless you for it; and though you may feel at times the trouble, you will never repent having shown him that kindness which his necessities now require. I shall much prize the picture of my dear old friend, and send one of my own in return.

It has been a great trial to me to have to leave my own people and my own home, and to lay down the work of the ministry. But I am thankful to say, in answer to your kind enquiries on the part of your father, I am better in health, and entertain the hope that when the weather becomes warmer I may be able to preach again, though I never expect to be fit for much work. Still, I am spared to employ my pen, and I hope the Lord will give me grace to use it for the good of His people. I am glad that your father liked my Address. It has, I believe, been well received.

Give my love to your good old father. I shall always be glad to hear how he is, both in body and soul.

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

January 23, 1865

Dear Friend in the Lord, Mr. Blake—I was much pleased with your experimental letter, and would be glad at some future opportunity to put it into *The Gospel Standard*, if not in the body, which being limited is much

taken up, on the wrapper. It is indeed many years since you passed through the things which you have mentioned, and yet living experience is always fresh; there is something ever new in it, and this makes it refreshing to the saints of God. It is a mercy when the Lord keeps reviving His own work upon the soul, and does not allow it to sink down into coldness, carnality, and deathliness. I have known those who many years ago seemed from their own account, to have had a true and gracious experience of the things of God in their own soul; and yet, as years advance and age creeps on, appear to lose all its sweet savor, and to differ little from the dead professors of the day. And I believe this will be always the case, unless they are well exercised with trials and afflictions, and corresponding mercies, so as to keep their souls alive and lively. It is a sad thing to be allowed to drop into a cold dead state; especially if a man stands up in the name of the Lord to preach to saints and sinners. If he be cold and lifeless in his own soul, how can he instrumentally communicate life and warmth to the souls of others? And again, how is our inward life to be maintained but by prayer, meditation, reading the Scriptures and the writings of good men, and all connected with inward exercise through affliction and temptation? But how good is it of the Lord, of His own free and sovereign grace, of His own pure mercy and eternal love, to revive His work upon the heart. It is this which gives us submission to His holy will, resignation to His afflictive dispensations, and a sensible feeling that there is nothing worth desiring, nothing worth living and dying for, but the enjoyment of His favor and love.

Wishing you every enjoyment of the Lord's goodness and mercy, such as you have felt in times past, I am, dear Friend,
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

January 25, 1865

My dear Friend, Mr. J. Davis—I received safely your kind letter, with the enclosed cheque for £5, which I will endeavor, as the Lord may enable, to give away from time to time among the poor saints of God. I have what I call my charity purse, which is supplied from time to time by kind friends, and this, with what I am enabled to add to it from my own, allows me to help sometimes the poor saints of God. I shall therefore put your money into my charity purse, and as opportunity offers, shall give a little here and there to the poor saints whom I know, or who come before me. This, I think, is better than giving it away all at once, for when that is done, the money is sometimes given where not so much needed, or, at least, not so seasonable. If, indeed, a little of the superfluity of your land of gold and wool could flow among the poor suffering saints of God in this country, what a blessing it might be to them, without injuring the donors. But the Lord only can open heart and hand, and make anyone feel that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

You will perceive from the change in my address that I have left Stamford. Indeed, I have been obliged from failing health to give up the charge of my two churches and congregations at Stamford and Oakham, where I had labored for more than twenty-six years. Through mercy I am better in health, but never expect to be able to labor as I have done in the work of the

ministry; though I hope the Lord may enable me to preach a little from time to time when the weather is warm, as I much feel the cold, and cannot expose myself to it.

I hope you are favored from time to time in your soul with a sense of the Lord's goodness and mercy. This I know is what your heart is after, and without which you cannot feel satisfied. O may nothing ever content us but the blessing of the Lord, which alone makes rich; and if we are favored with this, we shall not covet the miser's gold, or be satisfied with a portion in this life. I well remember your visit to Allington, and felt a union with you, which time and distance do not break. Mr. Parry and Mr. Tuckwell are both of them afflicted in body, but I hope alive in soul. Mr. Godwin is quite well, and laboring hard in the work of the ministry. I hear Mr. Covell, the minister here, very comfortably. He is a good man, and a good preacher, contending for experimental, saving realities.

The Lord bless you, and keep you in His love and fear. My very kind regards to your son Aquila, Mr. Huntley, and all enquiring friends.

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

January 27, 1865

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—. . . I was very sorry to hear of our esteemed friend Mr. Tuckwell's illness, but hope it may not be really serious. Oh, when I look round upon my friends, especially those who like myself are advancing in life, I see how affliction is falling upon them one after another. How true the words, that "whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives." And what a mercy it is when we can bend our back to every stroke of His chastising rod, and believe that all is meant for our spiritual good. These afflictions produce, under divine teaching, exercises of soul before God, shake us out of the miserable lees and dregs of carnality and self, and make us long for and desire those gracious visitations which alone can preserve our spirit.

How sad it would be for men at our time of life, and with our long profession, to be at ease in Zion, and never be emptied from vessel to vessel. Except to fall under the power of temptation, which is the worst of all possible cases, few things are worse for a Christian than to drop into carnality and sloth; to have little or no heart for secret prayer or reading the Word, but to be ever like a spider spinning out some filthy web, shut up in a dirty corner of carnal security. Even if we do not get much, and only have, so to speak, our daily bread, it is far better to have the heart drawn out toward divine things than be shut up in worldliness, fretful murmuring, and peevish discontent with ourselves and others.

There is nothing which draws the heart out and up to divine realities, as some inward view of the glorious Person and work of our most blessed Lord. We may not perhaps enjoy much of His sensible presence; but still He is the Object of our faith and hope; and as by night and day our thoughts and

desires are mounting up toward Him, as He sits on His throne of mercy and grace, there is some separation wrought thereby, of heart and affection from this wretched world. No, even if we can only confess our dreadful sins committed before and against His holy Majesty, and seek for the application of His precious sin-forgiving blood to our consciences, there is some spiritual good wrought thereby, some separation from carnality and death, and some spirituality of mind in which alone is life and peace.

I look back sometimes through my long profession, and feel condemned at the wretched carnality and worldliness, not to say worse, which have possessed my mind; how little I have walked and acted in the fear of God, and how little I have lived to His glory. It is indeed a humbling retrospect; and nothing but the precious blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin, can wash away the blots and inconsistencies of a long profession. Thus we come into the spot of the poor tax-collector and the thief upon the cross, having no hope but in the superabounding grace of God in the Person and work of His dear Son.

I am very sorry to hear of your illness. Perhaps your anxiety about our esteemed friend, Mr. Tuckwell, may have partly brought it on. With the Lord all things are possible; but the Cause at Allington seems, humanly speaking, to hang upon you two. When you both shall have passed away, as we hope and believe to a happy eternal home—an event, I trust, yet distant, and your bodies lie mouldering in the little chapel yard, where you have so often stood, who will hold up the cause of truth as you two have done? Your house has long been a welcoming and welcomed home to men of God; but I cannot bear to think of the future, and therefore stop. I have spent many pleasant times in your company, and under four distinct roofs, where I have been your guest; and while life lasts I shall always gratefully remember your liberal and affectionate Christian hospitality. Let us hope that we may be spared to meet once more in the summer; as I should like, even if I could not preach much, to see you and my other Wiltshire friends again.

It will be thirty years on the 7th of next June since I opened my commission, preaching in the morning from Zeph. 3:12, 13, and in the afternoon from Rom. 2:28, 29. I hope I then proclaimed the same divine truths as I do now, though, like the Apostle, I might have used sharpness. But is not the Word of God, if properly handled, "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword"? You and others found it so; and was that not a proof that it was the word of the Lord to you? "The entrance of Your words gives light"; "Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord, and teach out of Your law." Blessed are those chastenings and those teachings which bring us to the feet of Christ, and by which He is made precious to the soul. This is the end of God in all His doings and dealings with His people, to strip and empty them wholly of self, and to manifest and make His dear Son feelingly and experimentally their All in all. In Him and in Him alone can we, do we, find either rest or peace.

Through much mercy my health continues pretty good, and when the weather is fine, I endeavor to get a little walk. We have near our house a kind of park, with well-graveled walks, and where one meets scarcely a single soul. Here I usually walk, and find it both pleasant and profitable. As we live a

mile and a quarter from the chapel, I am obliged to have a fly, and generally go but once—in the morning. I hear the minister, Mr. Covell, very comfortably. He is a good man and has a good experience, with a very fair gift, having a great knowledge of Scripture, and much readiness in quoting it suitably and appositely. He is very friendly, and generally spends an hour with me once a week.

It certainly is a relief to my mind not to have the burden of the ministry and the cares of a church and congregation upon my shoulders. Still, you may depend upon it, I am not without many exercises of mind, which, I trust, serve to keep my soul alive in the things of God; and if I cannot speak of any special blessings, I am thankful to find a warm spirit of prayer and supplication is often felt in my bosom. I have no doubt, my dear friend, that if our secret prayers and ejaculations for these many years could be numbered, they would amount to many thousands, may I not say tens or more of thousands. One mark of the elect is, that they cry unto God night and day; and though our petitions may often seem unanswered, yet the Word of truth gives us to believe that, so far as they are indited by the Spirit, they enter the ears of the Lord Almighty. Depend upon it, a man must be very dead in his soul when there are no such movements of his spirit upwards. The Lord keep us from sinking into carnality and death. But only He who quickened can keep alive the soul; and it is our mercy if we ever find any revivings and refreshings from His gracious presence. I trust that in your last affliction you have felt something of the same blessing which you had before.
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 2, 1865

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I think I have in this and my last letter answered most of your inquiries. I thank you for the excellent advice of Miss — which you have kindly sent me. It is a most needful word of caution, and I hope I may have grace to beware of the snare which she so truthfully lays before me.

I hope the Lord will give me grace so to write upon the precept, as not to swerve from those discriminating truths which I hope I have been enabled so long to contend for. I quite see, with you and her, that many legalists would gladly lay hold of what I might say upon the precept, unless grace and wisdom were given to me to handle it aright, to make it appear as if I favored their legal views. So far from that, I can assure you that I never more felt the necessity and blessedness of sovereign free grace than I do at this present moment, and was never further from creature strength, wisdom, and righteousness. My heart is and ever has been with those only who look to, hang upon, and exalt the glorious Gospel of the grace of Christ; but as I do see a beautiful harmony of promise and precept, grace and truth, love and obedience, in the Person and work of the Son of God, I have felt led to lay these things before the church of God.

In my walk yesterday in our quiet North Park, I seemed to have for a few minutes a very sweet and blessed view of the harmony of promise and

precept, and indeed every Gospel truth, in the glorious Person of the Son of God. It is in Him, my dear friend, that all truths harmonize. He is the center in which all Gospel truth meets and unites; and out of Him, as an ever-flowing, overflowing fountain of life, of grace, and truth, the whole Gospel, as a complete revelation of the wisdom and love of God, flows down into the hearts of His dear family. He is the Head and they the members; and as in our natural body there is a union of will and power which cannot be separated, so it is in the mystical body. Now all this is very different from taking the precepts as so many dead and dry commands. Depend upon it, we can never see and feel the beauty and blessedness of Gospel truth, except as we see it by faith and love in the Person of the God-Man. Severed from Him and the power and influence of His Spirit and grace, the precepts are but burdensome commands.

Poor Mr. T., like us all, has his trials. But unless he needed them, they would not be sent. Wherever I turn my eyes, I see affliction is the lot of the family of God; and I observe that the nearer they advance to their end, the heavier do these afflictions become. My poor friend Mr. Parry has had another severe attack, and now Mr. Tuckwell is ill. My sister too, Mrs. Isbell, has been quite ill, though now mercifully better. How true then it is, "whom the Lord loves He chastens" &c.!

What you have said about the new chapel at Oakham has quite satisfied my mind, and I hope the Lord's hand is in it. I fear you will all be disappointed in the Address (*Gospel Standard*), as it falls very short of what I could wish it to be.

I sincerely wish you and all my dear friends in Oakham and the neighborhood every blessing of the New Year, and may we all prove the goodness and faithfulness of God, both in providence and in grace.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 10, 1865

Dear Friend in the Lord, Mr. James Churcher—You have given me an interesting account of your late visit to our esteemed friends Mr. and Mrs. Church. It is good for those who love the Lord to meet together and speak of His precious name, as, no doubt, you have found at Gower Street; and the Lord speaks of hearkening and hearing the spiritual conversation of those who fear the Lord and that think upon His name. "Then those who feared the Lord spoke often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name." Malachi 3:16.

I should be glad to see the MS. book of which you speak. Though I attend the chapel at Croydon when weather and health admit, I have not yet seen Mrs. A., but I often hear of her from those who know her; nor have I yet made the acquaintance of W. G. Indeed I live much alone, and am very slow to form fresh acquaintances, though I ever desire to love those who fear and love the Lord.

My dear wife will be very happy to give you one of my pictures. It is a matter in which I myself take no part. But as many of my friends like to see the outward man as well as the inward man of J. C. P., she has had some taken. But you must come some day, when the weather is more favorable, and see me here, and you can then take away with you the picture of my poor body—looking to my writings and preaching for the picture of the renewed soul. I am thankful to say that, through rich mercy, I am somewhat better and stronger in health than in the summer. Still I shall never be again what I have been, and during the cold weather I keep much within doors. My desire is that every stroke of the Lord's afflicting hand may be blessed to my soul's good. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom; and God will take care that all His children shall be more or less conformed to the suffering image of their great Head.

Wishing you, my dear friend, the enjoyment of every spiritual blessing,
I am, yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

February 16, 1865

My dear Friend, Joseph Tanner—I am truly glad that you did not repent of your journey to Croydon. It is good for those who fear God, and have some measure of spiritual union, to meet together for a little converse upon those things which belong to their everlasting peace. It is pleasing to the Lord (Mal. 3:16), and strengthening to the faith and love of those who thus meet (Rom. 1:11, 12). I would be glad indeed if you lived a little nearer, that we might from time to time communicate more freely and fully than is possible by pen and ink. This John felt (2 John 12; 2 John 13, 14), for though to communicate by pen and ink is a privilege, yet it falls far short of communication by friendly and gracious conversation. But no doubt there are wise reasons why those who fear God and feel union with each other are often deprived of Christian converse. It may be a fact through the weakness and depravity of our nature; but it does not fall in with the Gospel truth of one body and many members, and that they all are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12:12, 13). My eye or ear, hand or foot, would not flourish most the more distant it was from, and the less united with, the other members. But alas, many blessed truths are weakened or broken asunder by the infirmity of the flesh! Yet of one thing I am sure, that where love is deficient, there is a sad lack of every other Christian grace. "Love all defects supplies." It is sweet to feel it, and a misery to be plagued with its opposite. But I am writing a letter to a friend, not preaching a sermon or writing a meditation.

I have often thought that, though there is in our day so much strife and division, yet there is a real and close union among the living family. How many kind affectionate friends has the Lord given to me; and my desire is to walk with them in union and communion, and as far as I can, to avoid everything which may tend to separation. Next to loving the Lord and His truth, is loving His people; and how sweet it is to feel the flowings forth of love and affection to the Lord's people for His sake, and for the image of Christ which we see in them. The lack of this love in our day stamps it with one of its worst characters.

No doubt you have heard of the serious illness of our friend Mr. Grace. He has been so reduced through weakness as to be scarcely capable of thought. But upon the whole, he has been favored with a calm and sweet reliance upon the faithfulness of a covenant God, and been able to lie peaceably and passively upon those everlasting arms which are underneath. He has not now his religion to seek, but enjoys the benefit of what in past seasons he has tasted, felt, and handled of the pardoning love of God. Much prayer has been made for him by his church and his numerous friends, and much interest and affection shown on all sides. In one of the churches (Mr. Clay's) he was prayed for publicly.

But the Lord seems taking home or laying aside His ministering servants. Good old Mr. Chandler, in Kent, is upon a sick, and probably dying bed. We look around, and how few there seem to be raised up to take the place of those who have stood hitherto upon the battlements of Zion. And what sickness and affliction seem to fall to the lot of our personal friends. But of course, as we advance in life, we must expect both affliction for ourselves and for others; and if not ourselves summoned away, to see those taken from us with whom we have walked in Christian union, and taken sweet counsel together. We know not how soon it may be with us, "time no longer." I was truly sorry to read the account you give of your son's affliction. You have indeed, my dear friend, affliction upon affliction, trial upon trial, wave upon wave; but not one too many, nor too heavy, if we can but believe that they are all sent in number, weight, and measure by a kind and loving Father, and only wise God.

You will see, as I advance in the subject, what are my views of the precept. I hope they may coincide with yours, but shall be very willing to receive and consider anything that you may say where you differ from them. It is indeed a trying spot to write what so many read, and among them so many of the excellent of the earth. I see no reason why you should not put pen to paper upon those blessed truths, such as the work of the Holy Spirit, into which you seem led feelingly and experimentally. No doubt, writing is a gift as much as preaching, and practice too is requisite in order to express ideas clearly and fully. But gold is gold, whether wrought with art and skill, or roughly and inartistically. And as the roughest workmanship in gold is far more valuable than the finest workmanship in plated metal, so sound experience and gracious teaching, however roughly wrought, will ever outshine all the lacquer of mere creature eloquence when the substratum is base metal. Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

February 23, 1865

Dear Friend, Mr. Hammond—If my advice can be of any service to the church at — I shall feel very happy to give it; but I wish you and the friends to bear in mind that I can only give you counsel upon general grounds, as I am quite ignorant who the person is about whom you make the inquiry.

Now, to be candid with you, I must say that I have very little confidence in ministers who advertise their services. As far as I can see there has not been

for many years a greater demand for real men of God than at the present time. It has pleased the Lord to call some of His dear servants home, and to lay others aside by sickness and infirmity. There are very few settled pastors anywhere; and yet there is a great desire in many places for real experimental preaching. Now it seems to me that a man really taught of God and able to feed his church with food convenient for them, need never advertise his services; for not only can God find him out in his obscurity, but God's people will find him out too. I never, therefore, feel satisfied with an advertising minister, as I think there must be something in the background, such as lack of grace, lack of gift, or lack of character, which keeps him hidden in a corner. It certainly seems a taking advertisement for poor churches; and not knowing the man I cannot say that he may not be a gracious man with a small gift so as to prevent his general acceptability, and yet might be serviceable in a small way. If, therefore, you still think about the man who thus advertises himself, I would advise the church to move very cautiously and very warily, and to make very strict inquiries, not only of the man himself, but of any references.

You may depend upon it that it will be far better for you to go on as you are, either with your broken state, struggling to keep together in the fear of the Lord, than get a man among you who might bring in error, have only a letter knowledge of the truth, perhaps be a bad character, and bring nothing upon you but trouble and disgrace.

There was a time with you when the Lord seemed to smile upon your cause, when you had gracious and godly members, some of whom I knew, now gone home, and when the Lord blessed the word in your midst. Oh, how grievous it seems to be to look back to times past, and with Job to remember the days when in the Lord's light you walked through darkness, and the rock poured out rivers of oil. Oh, that those among you, and my good old friend Mrs. W. among them, might be stirred up to seek the Lord's face in prayer and supplication, that He would turn your captivity, and appear for you as a church and people.

If I can be of any service to you in this matter I shall be willing to do so; but you quite distress my mind when you talk of paying me for it. Freely you have received, freely give.

Yours very sincerely for the truth's sake,
J. C. P.

February 28, 1865

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—I have been desirous for some time to answer your truly kind, affectionate, and experimental letter, which I read with much sweetness and pleasure. When I read how the Lord had favored your soul, and the sweet and blessed feelings which you had under it, the words came to my mind—"Love all defects supplies." When your letter came, I had just been reading 1 Sam. 20, and I thought verse 23 was very suitable to the feelings of mutual union and affection which had been between us for so many years, in spite of all that sin and Satan, friends or

foes, professors or possessors may have tried to break it. What you said also about the precept, and the desire which you felt as the Lord blessed your soul to keep it, very much fell in with my own views and feelings, and with what I had been writing the day before. When walking in the North Park a few days before, I had for a short time a very sweet and blessed view of the meeting of all doctrine, precept, and practice in the Person of our dear Lord, for so I must call Him, as I believe He is dear to both of us, though you may have been more favored than I. I am not fond of referring anybody to my poor writings, but if you will just read a few lines in page 94 of the *March Standard*, beginning with "All doctrine" down to "acceptable service", you will see what, for a few moments, seemed presented to the eyes of my faith. Now this was much the strain, though you were favored with a larger and more abiding measure, of what I seemed to see and feel upon these points. When then your letter came, it so met my feelings and so dropped into any experience, that it quite did me good to read it. And as I would like others to feel the same, I want to ask your permission to put it into the *Standard*.

This, my dear friend, is the right way to keep the precept. You were keeping it in the railway carriage. There was no wandering eye or wandering heart; no listening to the conversation; no going out after the things which feed pride and covetousness; no, I dare say you did not want to look out of the window of the carriage. Love is the fulfilling of the law—love to the Lord, love to His truth, love to His people, love to His doctrines, love to His ways, love to His ordinances, love to His precepts. And I am well convinced, where this spring is lacking, there is love to neither doctrine, experience, or practice. Oh that I were more favored with it in my own soul! I should then need no whip and no spur. But where there is not a spiritual mind and a love for the Lord, and what comes from and what leads to the Lord, religion, call it by what name you will, is but a burdensome, legal, and unacceptable service.

I like much what the Holy Spirit says by Paul, Gal. 6:15, 16. Our best rule is the new creature—that new man which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24). And can we not say, dear friend, with Paul—"As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God"? And if we are blessed with the possession of this inward rule, and the Holy Spirit shines and act upon it, we shall find it sweetly harmonize with the precepts as the outward rule.

But there are very few, speaking comparatively, in the professing church of God who can receive or bear this. When you began to insist on practice at W. you know how it was received, and what a storm and confusion it created. Now I believe that men can bear the precept, if it be handled in a legal way, though they themselves are walking contrary to it. But when a man thinks he can, when he likes, alter his ways, the precept does not touch him, because he believes that if he is not fulfilling it now, he can and will do it one day. But when it comes out of a Gospel heart, is preached by Gospel lips, and handled by Gospel hands, then none will receive it but those who have felt the inward life and power of the Gospel with its effects in the soul. But I must not fall to preaching. You know these things better than I; and it is our mercy if we have been taught by the Holy Spirit to know anything for ourselves, either of doctrine or experience, either of promise or precept.

You have no doubt heard of the dangerous illness of Mr. Grace. But he has been spared to his wife and family, and to his congregation also, as I hope; though I understand it will be probably some time before he will be able to resume his place. He was comfortable in his mind during his illness; not favored with any great manifestations, but with a calm reliance on the faithfulness of God, and with some sweet communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. He felt himself that he would die, and was quite resigned.

You will be glad to hear that, through much mercy, I am better in health than when you were here, and hope now that it may please the Lord to restore me in some measure to the work of the ministry, though I hardly expect ever to be fit for much continuous labor.

**Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.**

March 4, 1865

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—You may perhaps have already received the sad tidings communicated in the accompanying letter. I call them sad, not for Mr. Grace's sake, poor dear man, who is sad no more and never will again know what sadness is; but sad to his family, to his church and congregation, to his personal friends, among whom we indeed were, and to the church of God at large. At his age indeed, and with an attack so severe, it was almost to be anticipated that he might sooner or later sink under it; but I understand that he himself, whatever might have been his feelings at first, had lately anticipated recovery, for in a letter received this morning by Mr. Covell from one of his leading men, it is mentioned that but a short time before he sank into the arms of death, he had been speaking of preaching again.

I wrote to him a few days ago, and I now feel glad that I did so, as it seems that he was pleased with my letter. Its chief drift was the sweetness and blessedness of calmly relying on the faithfulness of God, and lying like a little child in the arms of eternal love. It was not with him as if he had for the first time to find pardon and peace. That had been long ago sealed upon his heart. All that he then needed was to die in faith as he had lived in faith, and to receive the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul.

It will be an irreparable blow, humanly speaking, to his poor widow and family, and to his church and congregation. Indeed I know no one who could at all take his place over them. I would say that no man whom we have known was more generally respected, both in his personal and ministerial character, especially at Brighton, where he had lived in the eyes of the people so many years, and from his former connection with Mr. Hannington, was almost as widely known by the world as by the church. We shall never see his friendly countenance or hear his cheerful voice again, at least not in this life; nor shall we ever converse with him as we have done on the precious things of God. He is gone, and we must soon follow, and may our last end be peace, if not joy, in believing.

The Lord comfort, bless, and be with you both, and with all the church of God. Our love to all our dear friends.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 19, 1865

My dear Ann—I fear you will begin to think that I have quite forgotten my promise to write to you; but you know how much my time is engaged, and even were it not so, that to will is often present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not.

What a mercy it is for us that, if indeed we belong to the Lord, nothing can ever separate us from His love, so that neither time, nor distance, nor circumstances can cut the bond of union. Though we feel so often at a distance from Him, He is never at a distance from us; and as a proof of this, there are from time to time revivals of faith, and hope, and love. And what a mercy too that the whole work of grace, from first to last, does not depend upon ourselves or upon anybody else, but depends altogether upon His faithfulness who cannot lie. But why do I say all this? To encourage you and all my dear friends from whom I have been separated in body, but not in spirit, to trust more in the Lord's goodness and mercy, and less in themselves or in one another.

I was glad to find that you and my dear friends at B. still cleave close to one another in love and union. Next to enjoying the Lord's presence, and having union and communion with Him, the greatest favor is to have union and communion with the dear family of God. And how painful it is, instead of finding this sweet union, to find little else but strife and division. But even this sometimes, though so painful and wounding to the feelings, works together for good; for it drives the soul from looking to and resting upon man, to look more to the Lord and to rest more upon Him. Thus when the spirit is wounded and distressed with what is seen of strife and division, if it make one look more to the Lord and seek more after a feeling sense of His goodness and mercy to the soul, it works for good, though so trying and painful. I have always found that the worst effect of strife and division is to ruffle one's own spirit, and communicate that very spirit of strife to one's own mind which we so lament to see in others. It is in this way that strife leads to strife, and one evil begets another, until every gracious and godly feeling seems withered and gone, and nothing to remain but guilt and confusion.

It seems to me a great mercy that the Lord should have raised up Mr.— to go in and out before you, as I hardly know what would have been the consequence had you been left without a man of God to keep you together and feed you with the bread of life. He is a man who has gone through much conflict and deep exercise in his own soul, and enjoyed also blessed seasons of deliverance, so that he is able to speak a word in season to those who are weary. Those who receive benefit from his ministry, and esteem him as the servant of God, should seek to hold up his hands, not only by prayer and supplication on his behalf, but by maintaining, as far as they can, a spirit of

love and union towards him. I know from painful experience how the hands of a minister are weakened when, instead of pulling with him, the people pull against him. But this union of love and affection requires much self-denial and mastery over one's own spirit; for it is only by pride that comes contention, and if the soul were well humbled in the very dust, then there would be a spirit of sweet humility, and with that humility, there would be forbearance and love.

I truly desire that every blessing may rest upon all who fear God and love the Lord Jesus Christ, not only at — but everywhere. And my advice to all my dear friends. . . is to live and walk, as far as they can, in the fear of God, looking unto and hanging upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and living in a spirit of love and union with His dear people. Give my love to all who remember me in the love of the Gospel.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

April, 1865

Dear Friend—I am very much obliged to you for the gift of beautiful fruit you have sent me, which arrived safely this afternoon. I accepted it, not only for the value of the present, but also for your kind and affectionate consideration of your old friend and pastor, now separated by distance, but with his church and people often still present in spirit.

I desire to make daily supplication on behalf of the little Church and Cause of God and truth of which I was the unworthy shepherd for so many years. May the God of all grace hold her up, establish and strengthen her, unite the hearts of the friends in affection and love, teach them to bear and forbear with each other, and to feel that the blessing of one is the blessing of all, and the blessing of all is the blessing of each.

I desire and pray that the blessing of God may rest upon Mr. Knill when he comes among you, and I hope those of the church and congregation who are blessed with a spirit of prayer may hold up his hands by secret supplication to the Lord, that his word may be with power. I shall not feel envious, I trust, if the Lord blesses his ministry among you manifold more than He has done mine. There are no blessings like spiritual blessings, and to be without them is for a child of God to walk in sensible darkness. May it be our blessed portion to be receiving daily supplies out of the fullness of Christ, enabling us to walk in the fear of God, embracing with a living faith His dear Son, have our vile lusts and passions mortified and crucified, and live in peace with the dear family of God.

Your affectionate friend,
J. C. P.

April 20, 1865

Dear Friend—I am sorry to be obliged once more to decline the invitation of my Zoar friends. Indeed I have no alternative—for so far as I dare make

engagements, the Lord's day for which you have asked me, I had already fixed to spend with my Oakham friends. It will be therefore quite out of my power to accept your kind invitation. And I much also fear, even were you to ask me for a week-night when I am (D.V.) at Gower Street, whether I should be able to accept it.

It is quite true that, through much mercy, I am better in health; but I still feel, and shall probably ever feel, the effects of so many attacks of illness, the consequence being such tenderness of the chest, and an habitual cough which tries me much, especially in preaching, and which sometimes I think will prevent my preaching altogether, as speaking often brings it on. But we must all have our afflictions and trials; and this is one of mine, heavy to bear as interfering so much with the work of the ministry, and crippling me just where I should wish to be strong.

I am glad to find that the Lord still favors Zoar. It used to be a favored place twenty-five years and more ago, when you were but a young man. In those days, what a concourse there was; and how many dear saints of God used to flock like doves to the windows. Great changes have you seen there. If then the Lord is graciously reviving His work in your midst, to Him be all the praise. There are no doubt many gracious souls in the east of London, to whom Zoar used to be a little refuge. That it may ever be so, and that increasingly, is the desire of,
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

June 27, 1865

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I have no doubt that a few lines from me, just to let you all know how I am and how I am going on, will be acceptable to you and to our dear friends at Wharflands.

I came back much wearied by my labors at Oakham and Stamford, and was not at all well on the Saturday evening. Still I went to chapel on Lord's day, and preached twice to large and attentive congregations, and on the whole, though weak, was comfortably brought through. On Monday I was better, through mercy, and preached on the Tuesday evening quite comfortably. And last Lord's day I was still much better, and was helped in body and soul through both services. Mr. Ford was not there, which some regretted, as I was favored with some life and liberty in speaking. My texts were Luke 24:25, 26 and Heb. 11:13. I showed from the first our folly, and mainly in four points—

- (1) looking at external appearances, and judging our state and case from them. Here I named the gloomy cloud which hung over me last year in my illness, leaving an attached people and my own comfortable home, and how the cloud seemed gradually breaking;
 - (2) trusting to our own reasoning minds;
 - (3) crediting Satan's lies;
 - (4) being led by other people, and not looking to the Lord for guidance.
- I then showed the slowness of our faith to believe all that the Scriptures have spoken, and the necessity of the sufferings of Christ, and His entrance into

His present glory. As I felt some liberty of heart and mouth to open these points, I almost wished that the reporter had been there. But I may (D.V.) have an opportunity of again speaking from the words, when they can be taken down, though I may not have the same door of utterance.

A good man told me what a blessing my sermon on a similar subject from Psalm 107:17-20 (which you will find, I think, in the *Zoar Pulpit*) had once been made to him, and that the blessing had been renewed that morning. Thus the Lord does not leave His poor unworthy servant, but helps him still in body, soul, and spirit. The heat was trying on Lord's day, but we got all the air we could. I hope the good Lord will bring me through my London labors, and bless them.

In the evening I dwelt much on the three marks of faith—

- (1) seeing afar off;
- (2) being persuaded of the truth and blessedness of the promises;
- (3) embracing them with love and affection.

I also spoke much of our being strangers and pilgrims on the earth; how felt and how confessed—confessed in life and conduct, as well as in words. And I spoke of dying in faith, and dwelt on the life and death of our dear friend William Tiptaft, as a remarkable example of both. I trust on the whole that we had a good day. . .

Yours affectionately,

J. C. P.

July 28, 1865

My dear Friend, Mr. Tanner—I am glad there is some hope of seeing you at Calne. May we meet in the spirit, as well as in the flesh, and find and feel the presence and blessing of the Lord resting upon us in public and in private, in our communion with the Lord, with His people, and with one another. I trust I feel thankful in being so far better as to be able again to speak in His blessed name. I have labored now for ten continuous Lord's-days, eight of them at Gower Street, and am not worse for my labors—indeed, rather stronger than when I began them. How good the Lord is to poor unworthy me. May a sense of it lead me to walk in His fear and live to His praise! I was well attended at Gower Street Chapel, and my last Tuesday evening congregation was quite a usual Lord's-day one. I felt encouraged that eight Lord's-days had not worn out my ministry among them.

I feel for you in your trials and afflictions, so various, painful, and multiplied. But dare I wish you free from what the all-wise, all-gracious Lord lays upon you? Could He not in a moment remove them all?

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

J. C. P.

October 23, 1865

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I am sorry to have to mention a sad event,

which took place on Saturday. I was sitting quietly in my room before dinner, when Mr. George Covell, the brother of the minister, came up to ask me to preach as yesterday. His brother, I am grieved to say, had broken a blood-vessel that morning after breakfast, and had brought up a considerable quantity of blood. Dr. C., his medical man, had been sent for, and had ordered him to bed, to be kept very quiet, and indeed had enjoined that course of treatment which I knew was usual in such cases. I felt much grieved at the circumstance, as he has been so kind a friend to me, and as I knew well what a grave symptom it was. I therefore said immediately that I would preach once for him, taking the morning service, but that I could not do more in my present weak state. My services of course were gladly accepted; and so yesterday morning, in the midst of a most driving rain which lasted all day, I went in a cab to the chapel, and was on the whole helped through better than I could have expected. The incessant rain much thinned the congregation; still we had a goodly number, and I was very glad to do what I could to alleviate the blow, both to himself and the congregation. I am glad to say he is going on well.

It was only on Friday that he came to see me, and as the day was fine, wished to take me a drive into the country. He was very cheerful, and seemed to be in the best of health. When he has come to see me on a cold, wet, or snowy day, I have sometimes said to him—"Happy man, not to know or care whether it is cold or hot, wet or fine"; and now see, he is lying on a bed of sickness, bidden not to speak, and I, the poor invalid, standing up in his place. I have not felt anything for some time which has so truly grieved me; and I look forward with pain and fear to what may be the result. He is much loved by his church and congregation, and it will be to them a most severe blow. I cannot do much for him and for them, as at this time of the year my winter cough is often very troublesome; but still I hope to render what little help I can.

Oh how uncertain is everything here below! How often have I coveted his health and strength; and yet how all may be dashed in a moment! He has been much blessed in his soul of late, especially on a Lord's day or two back, and for the most part enjoys a sweet assurance of his interest in the love of God and the blood of His dear Son.

We still continue to like our new abode and, I may say, our new town. I have found a nice dry walk, very retired and very pleasant, which quite makes up for the park I have lost. One very nice feature of this place is the great dryness of the gravel walks, so that even after heavy rain, a day or two gives you a walk where you scarcely soil your feet. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 29, 1865

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—You will be glad to hear that my dear friend Mr. Covell is wonderfully restored, and seems almost as well as before. I wish you could have heard his opening address the first time he preached after his illness. He gave a testimony which might well make many of us blush or hang

our heads down for shame. He said that for many months previously he had never once gone to bed dry-eyed—that is, as he explained it, without having shed tears during some part of the day, either of contrition or melted by mercy. He also said that, in reference to this, the words of Psalm 126:5 were much upon his mind, and that the interpretation which he gave them was the glimpses of joy which he felt on these occasions; but when he was laid upon his bed, that then he saw that this reaping in joy had a much greater fulfillment, for that he swam as it were in a sea of love, enjoying so much of the presence and power of God. I cannot tell you half that he said, and much wish that it had been taken down. The chapel was very full, and it might be said the people rejoiced with trembling, fearing his exertions might bring on another attack. But he seemed not at all the worse for it next day, and has now resumed his usual labors. I am (D.V.) to speak again for him on the morning of January 7, as it is ordinance day, and thus he has more than his usual labors. I feel quite willing and desirous to do what I can to help him, and as I have a cab to and fro, and the chapel is easy to speak in, I can do so without much risk.

30th.—I am sorry to find you have not been well. Where one naturally possesses an active mind, to have our energies lowered is in itself a suffering, especially where we have so many calls upon both body and soul. You have many cares, not only from the anxiety and burden necessarily attending your waiting upon your dear invalid sister, but from the weight with which church matters and church trials rest upon your mind. It is indeed a blessed mark of divine teaching to have sympathy with the cause of Christ and His afflicted members; but it adds much to the burdens which the true follower of the Lamb has to carry. Where the conscience is tender in the fear of God, and the Lord's people much loved in Him and for His sake, it must open up a path of peculiar suffering, for it is a part of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ which the Apostle longed to know. Those who are wrapped up in carnality and self escape many of the trials and sufferings which befall the family of God; but if they escape the suffering, they also escape the consolation, and what is more, that conformity to the suffering image of Christ to which God has predestinated His people. It is a mercy that we have some left who love Zion, who feel bound up in her welfare and interests, and who can say with the Psalmist, Psalm 137:6. Praying souls hold up a minister's hands—nor indeed can any others rightly expect to derive a blessing from his ministry.

I am glad to find that Mrs. B. made a good end. She always seemed a very attentive hearer, and one of the afflicted followers of the Lamb, as her countenance bore marks of care and suffering. How often it is that at eventide it is light! Mr. Lightfoot, who used to visit the sick a good deal at Stamford, has met with several instances of a blessing being given on the bed of death to exercised souls who sat for years under my ministry. It is encouraging to find how faithful God is to His own word and work.

Two good men, twin brothers, Moses and Aaron Burton, called on me the other day, and both of them testified how much my published sermons had been blessed in Sussex. They had been on a visit to Mr. Godwin, and brought back a good account of his health, but a sad one of the ravages of the cattle plague, which has swept away nearly all the cows of the poor freemen who

make the cheese at Godmanchester. Who can tell what the end may be, and what we as a nation may have to suffer? For we are so bound together, that the loss to one is injury to all. But what few signs of national repentance! . . .
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1866)

January 24, 1866

My dear friend,

We seem to have to learn every attribute of God by repeated teachings; like children ever forgetting yesterday's lesson, and compelling, so to speak, the kind and patient teacher to teach it all again. Indeed, none but the Lord could or would bear with such miserable pupils, such out-of-the-way blockheads, such thorough dullards, and obstinate incurable dunces. Surely of all men and women we have reason to speak well of the patience and forbearance of the God of all grace, the God of all our mercies, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Had He not been what He is in His dear Son, He must long ago have driven us from His presence; and banished us for evermore out of His sight. But His goodness leads to repentance; and a sense of this in the heart makes us desire never to sin against Him more.

J. C. P.

January 24, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I am just now in the thick of my sermon for Mr. Ford, which takes both time and care to bring out in a clear and acceptable way. I am making, I am sorry to say, very slow progress with the memoir of our late dear friend William Tiptaft; but I can only do a certain amount of work, and get so weak and jaded if I exceed it, that all the freshness of my writing seems faded and gone. I generally spend an hour after breakfast in reading the Scriptures, chiefly for the most part in the original, as far as time admits; and then, when my mind is fresh, address myself to my *Standard* work. After dinner I rest, and in the evening comes correspondence, and reading again the Scriptures before bedtime.

And yet how time slips away, and what little real good seems to be got or done! At times it quite disheartens me to find so little progress made, if any at all. Still we must go toiling and suffering on, and not get weary in well-doing, but commit our ways and works to the Lord. I have often thought that the standard in my own mind both of preaching and writing is set rather high, and that is one reason why I seem sensible of so many failures. I never could be satisfied, even as a natural man, with anything mediocre or commonplace, and was always aiming at some knowledge or attainments beyond the common level. The same feeling perhaps accompanies my

spiritual mind, so as never to rest satisfied with anything which does not bear the mark and stamp of God.

I was out on Lord's day morning, and heard Mr. Covell from Heb. 1:8, 9; but he only got as far as the first clause of verse 8. He was very solemn and affectionate, said he was a dying man, and spoke to the people as such. I heard him very well until just towards the end, when the oppressive atmosphere of the chapel—not a single ventilator open—well-near overpowered me. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 29, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I need not tell you that, in making engagements to preach, I feel more and more my dependence upon the Lord to enable me to fulfill them. The friends therefore of course will bear this in mind, and I hope it may stir up prayer and supplication on their and my behalf, that the Lord would grant our mutual desire to meet once more in His gracious and blessed name. We may indeed expect that every year, not to say month, may work a change in those of us who are advancing in the valley of tears. I look round sometimes, and think how many are fallen asleep of friends and brother ministers, whose life, humanly speaking, seemed better than my own—your poor dear husband, Isbell, J. Kay, and our dear and valued friend William Tiptaft. How I have seen them taken, and I left. Our friend Mr. Grace too, Mr. M'Kenzie, Mr. Gadsby, and Mr. Warburton, besides private Christians whom I have known. How loudly these things speak, and seem to bid us sit loosely to the world, have our loins girt and our lamps burning, not knowing how soon the message may come personally to us.

I was much struck with what you said about the year 1866 being a marked epoch. . . . When I look round upon this miserable world, and see it so overflowing with sin and sorrow, God so provoked, His people so afflicted, wickedness so rampant, godliness so low, it gives room to some inquiring thoughts—"Lord, how long?" But I forbear expressing all that I think and feel, contenting myself with this—that the Judge of all the earth must do right, that He will avenge the cause of His elect, and that it shall be well with those who fear God.

We read, I think, that there is a time when the mystery of God shall be finished, as He has declared to His servants the prophets. Then there will be a full clearing up of that great mystery, which now so sadly puzzles us—why things are as they are in this sin-disordered world; and all things will be made clear to the glory of God, the praise of Jesus, the salvation of the saints, the destruction of sinners, and the confusion of Satan. Our present portion is to suffer with Christ, that we may be also glorified together, believing that if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.

Our wisdom and our mercy will be to be ever looking unto Jesus, hanging upon Him, and cleaving to Him with purpose of heart, fighting the good fight

of faith—that fierce and daily battle which we have to carry on against sin and self, Satan, and the world. I don't know any other way of getting on, or getting through our daily army of enemies without and within, but by believing in the Son of God, and looking to Him for the continual supplies of His grace; and this we are obliged to do, there being no other way open to us, and being shut out by law, conscience, guilt, and fear, weakness, sinfulness, and helplessness from walking in any other path but where Jesus stands at the head of the way. It is like a person in a dark night on a lonely moor eyeing a light at a distance, on which he fixes his eyes, and to which he directs his steps. How graciously He says, "I am the way; no man comes unto the Father but by Me." This seems sometimes our only direction, like the light of a lighthouse across the sea to guide the ship unto the desired haven.

But I am writing a letter, not preaching a sermon, and must therefore pause in the full current of thought. I was at chapel on Lord's day morning. Mr. Covell preached from 2 Chron. 33:12, 13, but did not get much beyond—"The Lord is God." He spoke very nicely upon affliction, and its effects in Manasseh's case. I heard him very comfortably, and could follow him very nicely in the path he laid down. I am (D.V.) to speak for him next Lord's day morning.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 16, 1866

Dear Friend in the Truth, Mr. Hoadley—We have to thank you for a very fine hare, which you have been so kind as to send us through your son. These little marks show that you still bear me in affectionate remembrance. It is, indeed, one of my mercies that I have many friends among the dear family of God who love me for the truth's sake; and may I never say or do anything to forfeit their esteem and affection, but be enabled still to labor in word and doctrine according to the ability which the Lord may give me. I consider it a great privilege that I am still enabled to go on contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and my highest reward is that the Lord should condescend to bless to His people anything which drops from my tongue or pen.

I hope the Lord still continues to strengthen you in standing firm for His truth; and you will find, as it is opened up to your heart with greater sweetness and power, a firmer standing in it and bolder contending for it. I am, dear friend, yours in the Lord,
J. C. P.

February 24, 1866

My dear Friend,—. . . You ask me a question, and inquire for a recipe which I can by no means give, and which, if I could, would neither satisfy nor be of any service to you. I believe that we, of ourselves, can neither obtain nor maintain the presence of God, that His visitations are as sovereign as His

grace, but are directed by infinite wisdom. There is an expression in the Ephesians well worth considering. "Wherein He has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence" (Eph. 1:8). His abounding is in the riches of His grace; and yet it is guided by wisdom and directed by prudence. So that He knows how and when to give out of these abounding riches.

I hope you still continue your little meeting together. I found it good to be there when at —.

Yours affectionately in the truth,

J. C. P.

March 22, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . . It will be no disappointment to me if I am not the person to open the new chapel. Indeed, I was not aware until lately that any such thought or plan was entertained by the friends. Whoever opens it and whenever opened, may the presence of the Lord fill the house, and thus a gracious token be afforded of His approbation.

I am sorry to learn that Mr. Knill is suffering from a bad cold. He labors hard in the ministry, and will find, as others have found before him, that so much continuous exertion, with all the trials and exercises attending the ministry, tells upon the bodily strength. Most of our laborious ministers have been men of large frame, wide and deep chests, and much bodily strength—such were Huntington, Gadsby, Warburton, and Mr. Kershaw. Our dear friend also, William Tiptaft, was a strong-made man, broad and sound in the chest. Oh what a blessing health is, and what a trial is the lack of it! How it has crippled me nearly every day of my life for many years, though I have been spared already to live longer than many once expected! I have also been favored with much activity of mind—and if I have not been able, like many of my brethren in the ministry, to go about preaching the Word, yet with my pen I have labored hard, and perhaps never harder than at the present time.

The older I get, and the more I see and feel the solemn importance of the truth of God, the more do I desire and seek to put forth nothing by mouth or pen which is not instructive or profitable to the souls of men; nor did I ever more, if so much, desire to keep very closely to the Word of inspiration, and to advance nothing which is not in the fullest harmony with the Scriptures. I have read them a good deal this winter, and find them more and more full of holy wisdom and heavenly instruction. All I want is to believe them with a stronger faith and more sensibly, warmly, closely, and affectionately embrace the gracious and glorious truths revealed in them. It is for lack of this faith, simply to receive what God has revealed, that they are read for the most part with so little profit; unless they are mixed with faith, as the apostle speaks (Heb. 4:2), they cannot profit the soul. I am now reading the earlier chapters of Isaiah, the beginning of Leviticus, and the Epistle to the Colossians, studying them as far as I can in the original, and seeking to enter into the mind and meaning of the blessed Spirit in them.

If we read the early chapters of Leviticus with an enlightened eye, how much there is in them to illustrate the one great sacrifice of our gracious Lord. In Him we see the burnt offering as offering Himself without spot to God, the sin offering as bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, the trespass offering as especially applicable to sins of commission, and the grain offering as representing Him to be the food of our souls. Christ is the sum and substance of the Scriptures. Without Him they are a dead letter, full of darkness and obscurity; but in and with Him they are full of light and blessedness.

The apostle says—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16), by which, I suppose, he means the word which testifies of Christ, and holds Him forth to our faith, and hope, and love. This is to dwell in us, not to be a passing visitant, but an abiding householder, and that "richly", so as to supply richly every need, and "in all wisdom", so as to make us wise unto salvation, and be ever guiding our thoughts, words, and ways. But oh, how short of all this do we come, our house being rather like an inn or a London lodging-house, with all sorts of guests, and all better lodged and better cared for, than the owner and master! Nothing more shows our desperate case by nature than the open doors and windows of our house, giving admission day and night to all manner of rackets guests, who care for nothing but their own convenience and enjoyment.

I am glad to learn that dear Mr. Keal has taken so much to reading the writings of the immortal Coalheaver. I have often felt that no writer knocks the pen more out of my fingers than that wonderful man. And there is this great advantage in his writings, that though full of divine thought, they do not require any strong exercise of our mental faculties. Thus many can read Huntington who cannot read such writers as Owen, Goodwin, and Charnock. His great gift is opening up a living experience, in which he excels in clearness, fullness, and variety, and I may add in savor and unction, all other writers that I am acquainted with. He also throws great light upon the Scriptures, for no man ever had a greater knowledge of them, or a clearer insight into their spiritual meaning. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 20, 1866

My dear friend, Joseph Parry—It seems to be your lot never to be free from your affliction for any long time. This is painful for the present, and not very encouraging for the future. But what can we say to these things? If we believe that all things are arranged by infinite wisdom and eternal love, and can believe our own interest in these wise and gracious arrangements, it will reconcile us to the severe dealings, though so trying and painful to the flesh. But I am well convinced that we may see and believe all this as a matter of doctrine, and yet be utterly unable to take any comfort from it, or obtain any rest in and by it. Our head believes one thing and our heart feels another. Nothing then but the almighty power of the Lord in a way of support, and His goodness and mercy in a way of experimental feeling, can reconcile our poor fretful wayward minds to the weight of a daily cross.

And what adds to it is continual fear of doing or neglecting something which may bring on an attack of any illness to which we are subject; so that we seem to move about in a kind of trepidation, fearing lest this cold wind, damp day, or some such circumstance may bring on what may be an attack. Through mercy, I do not usually suffer from pain, even when I am most ill; but to feel the weakness produced by it is in itself a suffering, and since I have known myself what the feeling of bodily weakness is, I have much sympathized with those of the dear family of God who suffer from great bodily weakness, and much more so when pain is added to it. It must have been very trying to you to have been laid up when Mr. H. was with you.

I am thankful to say that I am, through mercy, somewhat better in health, and am going to make the attempt of preaching at Gower Street next Lord's day. I go up in much weakness and with many fears; but I know that the Lord can make His strength perfect in the one, and graciously dispel and disperse the other. I have often gone up to London weak and feeble, and yet been mercifully strengthened, and left London stronger and better than when I entered it. There is something in the dry air at this time of the year which suits me there. But be it so or not, I must look higher and trace the good hand of the Lord in giving me strength according to my day. I felt for the deacons at Gower Street, and the church and congregation generally, as they have such difficulty in getting Supplies; and my being unable to go last month much put them about on account of the shortness of the notice. I hope to be under the roof of my dear friends Mr. and Mrs. Clowes. I expect to see my good old friend every year more aged.

But we must expect that others, like ourselves, feel the pressure of advancing age and infirmity. Nor need we wish ever to live in this miserable world. The grand thing is to have a good hope through grace, and to be blessed, when our appointed time comes, with dying faith in dying moments, and be carried safely through the dark valley of the shadow of death. It is a mercy in many respects that the time and mode of our dismissal is hidden from our eyes. Thousands who have dreaded the last stroke have found, when it came, it was not a stroke of wrath, but one of tender love, and longed to be gone before the thread of life was cut. I am very sure that nothing short of sovereign superabounding grace, pure mercy, atoning blood, and dying love can meet our case, silence doubt and fear, open the gate of heaven, close the door of hell, and make the grave sweet.

I was struck with a passage that I met the other day in good Dr. Owen—"I know not how others bear up their hearts and spirits; for my part, I have much ado to keep from continual longing after the embraces of the dust, and shades of the grave, as a curtain drawn over the rest in another world." We have stood sometimes over the grave of a departed friend, and have thought within ourselves, here is a rest for his poor worn-out body—here will it be safely kept until the resurrection morn. Someone, perhaps, may think or say the same thing over us. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 21, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . .

We have lived to prove the uncertainty of all earthly things; and the various trials and exercises of body and mind through which we have passed have well convinced us that all here below is stained by sin, spoiled by infirmity, and ever subject to change. But what a mercy it is that the foundation of God stands sure, that those whom He loves, He loves to the end—the words will recall to your mind a funeral monument, where you have shed the silent tear—and that none can pluck out of Jesus' hand the objects of His all-victorious grace! It would, I hope, have rejoiced the hearts of many if, as we see eye to eye in the things of God, so we might have seen each other face to face in the flesh. But such was not the will of God, and though I feel His trying dispensations, yet I desire to submit to His heavenly will. No doubt there was a purpose in it, though at present it may be hidden from our eyes. But I will not dwell longer on this subject. The time may come when I may once more see my dear friends face to face, but when I cannot say; as if I were to mention a time, it might only cause a fresh disappointment. I will therefore leave that matter to the disposal of the Lord, who can bring it about in His own way.

When you receive this, I shall, if the Lord will, be in London under the roof of my old and attached friends Mr. and Mrs. Clowes, with the hope and expectation of preaching at Gower Street on the coming Lord's day. I go up to London in much weakness and in much fear. May the Lord graciously make His strength perfect in the one, and remove and dispel the other. I have proved both in times past, and have sometimes left London stronger than when I entered it. At this season of the year the dryness of the air seems to suit my chest; nor do I feel the exertion at Gower Street so much as might be expected from the size of the place. It is the bad ventilation in chapels which hurts me more than the physical exertion of preaching; and had I stood in the new pulpit at Oakham, I would have looked round narrowly to see how the ventilation was managed, and might have longed to have the same command of a window as I was indulged with at the old chapel. How freshly sometimes has the breeze come in when I have almost fainted with the pent-up breath of so many hearers! I used to tell you I loved the pure breath of heaven both in nature and grace, though I admit that often the keen breezes chilled my frame.

How we look back sometimes upon days that are passed, and how all seem now to have passed away as a dream in the night! But if God has in His mercy done anything for our souls, or if I instrumentally have been of any service to His afflicted family, that does not pass away; for what God does, He does forever, and the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is as firm and lasting as the finished work of the Son upon the cross. We look around, and see how this and that friend or neighbor is passing away. We think perhaps of those whom we have lost. But they are not lost, though *we* have lost them. They are safely housed in the mansions above, out of the reach of every storm; and what a day will that be when the Lord comes to make up His jewels, when He will present them before the Father and say—"Of all whom You gave Me, I have lost none!" Oh may we, and those with whom we have walked in friendship and affection, be found among them! That happy day will make amends for all suffering and sorrow felt here below. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

September 20, 1866

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—It will not be in my power to come round by Godmanchester on my return homeward, as I hope (D.V.) to go to Nottingham next Wednesday, and preach there on the next evening and the following Lord's day. I was unable last year to fulfill my engagement, and therefore when Mrs. Henry Abel wrote to ask me, I felt bound in some measure to go there, if my health admitted; and as I have a vacant Lord's day, it seemed hardly worth while to go for one evening.

I came here via Leicester, and spent a day or two at Humberstone. On the Thursday evening I took tea with Mrs. Hardy, and went to the chapel to hear Mr. Hazlerigg, having previously declined speaking that evening, as I felt weak and unwell from my London labors. Mr. H. went into the pulpit, read and prayed, and to my great surprise, came to me suddenly as I was sitting in the pew and begged me to preach, as the friends would be so disappointed to see me there and not hear me.

It took me very much by surprise; but after a few moments' consideration, I complied with his wishes, and got into the pulpit, where I was helped through, somehow or other. I never was taken so by surprise before, and under ordinary circumstances, would not have consented.

I found the friends here much as usual. Mr. and Mrs. K. looking better than I expected, though I see Mr. K. much aged every way. We had a very full chapel on the Lord's day, and I hope on the whole we had a good day, as I felt at home with my old people, and some of them, I believe, felt at home with me.

It is a very nice chapel, much more easy and comfortable to speak in than the old—better ventilated, and with more accommodation every way for the people. The day was sadly wet after the morning, which seemed to mar the enjoyment of the day, especially considering the crops upon the ground still unharvested.

Through mercy I am pretty well, but rather wearied with my labors; and like a tired soldier, am looking out for home and winter quarters. You have probably heard of poor Mrs. R. Healy's affliction. She is now in London under medical treatment. May the Lord mercifully bless the means. She heard me two Lord's days at Gower Street, and was in the lodgings, as I did not occupy them, which she and her husband thought very comfortable. I drank tea with them there, and thought them a great improvement on the old ones, both in point of situation and size. I hope to leave tomorrow for Stamford, and shall be at Mr. Michelson's, where I expect to remain until the following Wednesday. I cannot now add more, except that we all unite in love to Mrs. Godwin and yourself.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 18, 1866

Dear Friend in the Truth, Mr. James Davis—I received safely your kind letter and the cheque for £5 which it contained, and ought to have acknowledged its receipt by the last mail; but the day slipped away almost before I remembered I should have acknowledged it. Forgive me this wrong. My mind was much occupied by preaching and writing, and various engagements. As you kindly gave me the option I have just put down £2 10s to the account of the Aged Pilgrim's Friend Society, and the other £2 10s I keep as a little fund from which to relieve poor saints, of whom I know and see many in my various movements here and there. I am not able to do as much for them now as I was before I gave up my two chapels, and lost with them all the income which I had from them. I am glad, therefore, of any little help to enable me to give away a little to the poor saints of God.

Through mercy I have been pretty well during the summer, and was enabled to preach sixteen continuous Lord's-days, and once in the week, and sometimes twice besides. This I consider a great favor, and I hope that the Lord not only brought me through the work, but was with me in it. I was eight Lord's-days at Gower Street Chapel, and visited Wilts, being at Allington three Lord's-days, and preaching at the Calne anniversary, where I think we had the largest attendance which I have ever known. Our poor friend Mr. P— is still a good deal afflicted, but was able to get out on all the Lord's-days that I was there. I fear, poor man, he will be afflicted for life; but his pains and afflictions seem to be sanctified to his soul's good. We are sorry to see our friends suffer, and yet what can we say, when we see their afflictions sanctified to their soul? We cannot love them, nor feel for, and sympathize with them as the Lord does; and yet He sees fit in His wisdom and mercy to afflict them, and we know that He would not do so unless it were for the good of their soul. What can we say then? All we can do is to beg of the Lord that He would support, comfort, and bless them; and this we shall do, as we are led to feel for them, and sympathize with them in their afflictions and troubles.

You would see in this month's *Gospel Standard* the account which you sent of your departed friend. I think it will be read with much interest, as there is so much in it that is very striking, and such an experience, both of law and Gospel, as one does not often meet with in these days. What a proof such an account affords of the wondrous sovereignty of God, and the exceeding riches of His superabounding grace! It is such things which show us the Lord Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, that He still deals with the souls of His saints, at least with some of them, as in days of old, and that true religion and vital godliness are ever the same as wrought in the soul by a Divine power. But how is the fine gold become dim, both in minister and people! Where are there now such ministers as Mr. Symons and Marriner, whom you used to hear at Bristol?

The work of God upon the soul is almost everywhere at a low ebb, and though there is in this country, and especially in Wilts, a spirit of hearing, yet there is but little power either in the pulpit or in the pew. It seems to be the same with you in Australia as with us—great profession, but very little

Divine life and power. Error abounds, and is wrapped up under such specious shapes that it is very hard to detect it. But you will always find that where error is there will be pride and contention. It is only a knowledge of the truth, attended with divine unction and power, which will produce brokenness, contrition, humility, meekness with faith, hope, and love, godly fear, a spirit of prayer, separation from the world, and that sweet spirituality of mind which is life and peace.

I hope that the few among you who love the Lord and His precious truth will keep close together in love and union, avoiding all things which cause strife and contention. You may be few in number, and may be derided as a little assembly; but it is better for a few to meet together and walk together in love and union, seeking the glory of God and His blessing, than to be mixed up with a number of people who have neither part nor lot in the matter of eternal life.

**Please to give my love to Mrs. Charlwood, and any of the friends who may know me from my writings, and feel union with them, and with me for them. I hope Aquila is well, and your wife; kind remembrances to them. Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.**

October 25, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I feel it to be a mercy to have been brought through all my travellings and labors, and to have reached my own home in peace and safety. To be preserved in our going in and out, and to find the Lord a shade on our right hand is indeed a mercy, and especially to one who feels his need of preservation from many things which do not affect the health or comfort of others; and besides all this, to have been allowed to fulfill all my engagements, and blessed, I hope, in fulfilling them, gives, or should give, an additional ground of thankfulness. I was enabled to preach during the past summer for sixteen continuous Lord's-days, besides speaking on the weekday evening, and in no one case disappointed the people, or broke an engagement. And I would gladly hope that amid all my weakness, sinfulness, ignorance, and infirmity, that the Lord was pleased sometimes to bless the word which I was enabled to preach in His name.

If I have learned anything by advancing years, and a long experience of the ministry, it is my own insufficiency to every good word and work; and that, even were I enabled to preach the Gospel with all clearness, faithfulness, and consistency with the word of truth; yes, were I just such a minister as I understand what a minister should be, even then all my words would fall to the ground, except so far as the Lord Himself were specially pleased to bless them to the souls of His people. While, then, I am thankful for any little help given to preach the word of life, yet I would be far more thankful to find that a blessing rested upon the word.

When, too, I consider what man is as a fallen creature, and what my heart is naturally, how hard, impenitent, obdurate, and unbelieving, and know that my heart is only as if a copy of all other hearts, how sensibly it makes me feel

that the whole work, first and last, must be of the Lord, and that if He withhold the blessing, Paul himself might plant, and Apollos water, but there would be no increase. If, then, any blessing may have rested on my labors during the summer, I may well retire into my winter quarters with a feeling of thankfulness that they have not been in vain in the Lord. I am glad I have been to Oakham and to Stamford, not only once more to see my dear friends in the flesh, but also to unite with them once more in the house of prayer, and to feel some renewal and revival of the love and affection which never can be extinguished when once it has been kindled by the power of God.

I had some nice conversation with S. C. and her niece, also with others. At Stamford I was not able to see much of the friends, but was well attended, and felt comfortable in speaking among them.

I sincerely hope that you and your dear sister may derive benefit from your sojourn at L. It certainly was very beneficial to me both times that I was there. I am, through mercy, pretty well, and preached last Lord's-day morning and also on Wednesday evening. My texts were Jer. 31:11, 12, Lord's-day morning, and Wednesday evening Heb. 10:36, 37. From Jer. 31, I showed that there were six things stronger than Jacob, whom I took as a typical representative of a child of God: 1. the law; 2. sin; 3. Satan; 4. the world; 5. death; 6. hell, all which I worked out. Then the redemption by the Lord Himself by price and power, first price, and then power; then the effects as manifested to the soul in coming and singing in the height of Zion, on which Jesus now sits enthroned, and flowing with a melting heart to the goodness of the Lord to feed upon Gospel bread and Gospel wine, the unction of the Holy Spirit, the Paschal Lamb, and the fatted calf. I hope we had, upon the whole, a beneficial time.

I spoke on Wednesday evening, as my friend Covell was gone to the anniversary at Cranbrook, and I had quite a good congregation. . . .
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

October 25, 1866

My dear Mr. Whitteridge—I am obliged to you for your kind invitation to preach in your chapel when I am in town; but you will perceive from personal observation that my physical strength is but small, and, indeed, I find that my labors at Gower Street are quite as much as I can accomplish. I could not, therefore, undertake to accept your invitation, as I find that to preach more than once in the week besides the Lord's-day is more than I can do without suffering, and the hazard of laying myself up altogether. It is many years since I have suffered from weakness of the chest, and indeed was compelled by it to give up two chapels and congregations, among whom I had labored for more than twenty-six years. I feel it therefore a mercy that I am allowed during the summer months to speak a little in the name of the Lord, and gladly would I do more for His name's sake, if His glorious Majesty did but give me the power.

To preach the Gospel is a very important, and, I may say, an arduous task. Rightly to divide the word of truth, to take forth the precious from the vile, to preach the Gospel with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, by manifestation of the truth to commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Well may we ask, Who is sufficient for these things? I feel myself most insufficient, but I know that the Lord makes His strength perfect in weakness, and this encourages me to cast myself on Him, and seek help from His gracious hands who has said, "My grace is sufficient for you."

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,

J. C. P.

November 23, 1866

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—I was sorry to learn from your last kind letter that the Lord had again laid upon you His afflicting hand; but it was your mercy to find profit from the furnace, and that the painful trial was sanctified to your spiritual good. We are such poor, stupid, cold, lifeless wretches when things are smooth and easy with us, that we seem to need trial and affliction to stir us up, and bring us out of carnality and death. The Word of God is written for an afflicted and poor people, and they alone understand it, believe it, feel it, and realize it. How often you had read Micah 7:8, 9, and yet did not enter into its sweetness, suitability, and blessedness as you did in your late affliction. There is a sermon of mine from it in the *Gospel Pulpit*, No. 77, which you can look over; but I daresay you could preach a better sermon from it than I did, if you could tell out all that you felt in the sweet application of it. Luther used to say that, before he was afflicted, he never understood the Word of God. This witness is true. There is no real place for it in our conscience or affections. And yet how hard it seems, and trying to the flesh, to learn our religion in such a painful way; but any way is better than to miss the prize at last. And if we are favored to reach the heavenly shore, we shall forget all the perils and sufferings of the voyage.

I hope however that you will take all due care of yourself at this trying season of the year, as you cannot stand the damp and cold as you once could. I have not been very well myself the last week, but with this exception I have, through much mercy, been more than usually well during the autumn. This has enabled me to get most days my usual walk, without which I rarely find myself in tolerable health.

I preach here sometimes, but more to assist my friend, who though much recovered is not I think very strong, than for any other reason. He is a very good preacher, much better than most that I know; and what is better than good preaching, his whole heart and soul seem in it. He has been very much kept during a long profession, nearly as long as mine, and been at times much blessed and favored. This gives much life and power to his ministry, but at the same time makes it very searching. Last Lord's day morning he spoke from 2 Kings 18:6, 7, and was very close upon cleaving to the Lord, and departing not from following Him. I could not find, alas, that I had cleaved so closely to the Lord, and not departed from following Him as he

drew the line. But it is good sometimes to be searched, that we may see our sinfulness, confess, and forsake it.

The ministry of the day is for the most part so loose and lax that it is good to have a closer, if not stricter, line of experience drawn out, if it be not too strongly insisted on for the casting down of the tried and tempted. I remember how you once were much tried by a sermon which I preached from Romans 12:1, 2 more than ten years ago (in 1856), though I believe I advanced nothing in it but what you would fully agree with. We need castings down and liftings up, sometimes to be searched and exercised about the reality of our religion and sometimes to be strengthened and encouraged so as not to be utterly cast down. It is those who have no changes that fear not God. All who walk in the ways of truth and righteousness will find changes within, though we know that there are no changes without, for with God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Though we do not like these changes for ourselves, yet we have little union or communion with those who have none.

The Lord we trust has opened our eyes and hearts too to see and feel what true religion is; and though we seem at times to have so little of it, and almost none at all, yet in our right mind nothing can satisfy us but what comes from and leads to the Lord. Growing years have not made us grow more in a good opinion of self, or the goodness of the creature. If we have grown in anything, it is in a sense of the suitability, blessedness, grace, and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 17, 1866

Dear Friend in the Lord, Alfred Hammond—I am glad to see how the Lord keeps alive His sacred work upon your heart, though I doubt not that, like most others of those who fear God, you have your changes. Indeed I believe, for my part, that the soul, when once made alive unto God, can no more be healthy than through air, food, and exercise, in the same way as the body. Breathing out desires, and breathing in the breath of the Spirit, hungering and feeding upon the bread of life, movements and exercises of each spiritual grace as faith, hope, love, patience, repentance, and godly sorrow for sin, meekness and humility, quietness and resignation, a falling into the hands and before the face of God, the renunciation of all our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness—these and similar exercises keep the soul alive and prevent it from settling on its lees or being at ease in Zion. These are the lessons which I am daily learning, and have been trying to learn for many, many years, but seem to have learned very little to profit. Still I have learned something of what I am, and something of what the Lord is; and I have learned in this school how vile I am, and how good is He. I feel myself utterly unworthy to occupy the position in which I am placed as a writer and preacher; still I desire to be faithful according to the measure of my light and grace. In this dark and gloomy day, stewards need to be faithful, as I have every reason to believe you are.

The Lord bless your aged father, yourself, and all near and dear to you by natural and spiritual ties, with every needful blessing. My love to you all.
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

December 17, 1866

My dear Friend, Mr. Clowes. . .

You cannot expect to have now that health and strength which you had in younger days, and it will be your wisdom and mercy to bow down before the will of God, and submit with patient resignation to the strokes of His afflicting rod. He has often in times past blessed, relieved, and comforted your soul, and though through the power of unbelief you may at times call in question all He has done for you and in you, yet all your doubts and fears do not affect the reality of His work nor the exceeding riches of His superabounding grace.

I was glad to learn, from a few lines received from Mr. G., that you felt your feet upon the rock. May the Lord give you grace and strength there to continue fast and firm, and not be moved from your standing by the assaults of Satan and the flesh. But I know from painful experience that it is only as the Lord is pleased to give and strengthen faith, that we can fight in this battle. We think of our sins, backslidings, inconsistencies, infirmities, the little fruit that we have borne or are bearing, and the few marks that we seem to have of the grace of God being in us of a truth. Unbelief is a dreadful foe to the soul's peace, and Satan takes every advantage of working upon our natural feelings to bring us into bondage and confusion. Bodily weakness also much helps him on, as we seem to have no strength of mind or body to resist him. In such extremities there is only one way of getting help and relief—to fall down before the Lord in all our weakness and sinfulness, and beg of Him to undertake our cause, that the sighing of the prisoner might come up before Him, that He would save those who are appointed to die.

But I hope my dear friend has obtained some gracious answer from Him who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him; for it is this alone which can give any solid comfort or abiding relief. You have for many years been learning your own sinfulness, weakness, and helplessness, and have often been brought down in your soul before God, as having in self neither hope nor help. And there have been times and seasons also when you have had discoveries to your soul of the goodness and mercy of the Lord, which have enabled you to believe in His name, hope in His mercy, and cleave to Him in love and affection. Now all these things are so many pledges and foretastes of His unchanging and unchangeable love; and I hope that you may be enabled to hold firmly what the Lord has given graciously, and not give way to Satan and unbelief.

We are miserable sinners in a miserable world. All around us, within us, and without us is a wreck and ruin. Sin, horrid sin, has utterly defiled both body and soul, and stained and polluted everything that is of the earth. Amid all this wreck and ruin which we daily feel, there is only one ray of light to guide

our feet through this tangled maze of sin and sorrow, and this light beams forth out of the Son of God as once crucified, but now risen from the dead, and gone up on high to appear in the presence of God for us. He has destroyed death and him who had the power of death, even the devil, who through fear of death has so often brought us into bondage.

I was glad to hear from my dear wife the message that you sent, that you had no fear of death. He is the last enemy, and if his sting be taken away, then the victory is won. The sting of death is sin—but if that sin be pardoned and put away, then the sting is taken out, and to die is only to fall asleep in Jesus. I believe, for the most part, God makes His people willing to die before He takes them to Himself, for they feel there is no other release from trouble and sorrow. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

December 20, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . . You know how interested I am in all that concerns the spiritual welfare of the Church at Oakham. I am truly glad therefore to find that, as the Lord takes away with one hand, He gives with the other. You must expect to see every year increasing gaps made in your midst. For many years our ranks were but little thinned; but as you know, my later days witnessed the removal of some of the chief pillars and ornaments of the church. My own feeling was much against widening the gate of the church, or we might have had numerous accessions. But my desire was quality rather than quantity; jewels which would one day shine in the heavenly kingdom, rather than what might turn out reprobate silver. But we are liable to extremes, and therefore I do not say that we might not have kept out some who might well have come in. It is a very difficult and delicate point, and one which requires very great judgment, discernment, and wisdom from on high, united with the spirit of love and tenderness. All I can say is, that I hope your new members may be to the church, both for its strength and ornament, and that neither you nor they may ever have any cause for grief for their admission among you.

I am also glad to find that the Lord gives His blessing to Mr. Knill's ministry; and I hope that as he becomes increasingly united to the church and people, he will find a corresponding increase of light, life, and power to minister among them the Word of truth. A church and its pastor should be like private friends, who know each other increasingly through length and intimacy of communion, and are thus enabled better to understand, and feel for, and sympathize with each other. The great point is *reality*, that a minister should be a real partaker of the grace of God, and be enabled by the Spirit's teaching and power to deal spiritually and experimentally with the Word of truth, and with the heart and conscience of the people of God. If a man be right, all in the end will come right, and be made right; and if he is in his right place, that also will be made manifest. God will ever acknowledge His own grace, His own work, His own cause, His own people, and His own servants. Clouds and darkness may rest upon them all, but the true light will

arise, and shine them all away. A minister therefore need well be assured of three things—

(1) his own standing;

(2) his ministerial commission;

(3) that he is ministering to a people over which God has set him.

Doubts and fears may and will try his mind upon all these three points; but only so far as he is in some good measure established in them, can he find faith and confidence in doing the work to which he has set his hands. . . .

The loss of Mr. Lightfoot at Stamford will be, humanly speaking, irreparable. He and I did not quite see eye to eye on every point, but I very much esteemed him, and indeed as a deacon he was quite my right hand. No man in the church or congregation was, I believe, so much esteemed by the people generally; and from his great amiability of disposition, he had but few enemies. I fully believed he would make a good end, as I have seen for some years much growth in him of life and grace; and he was a man who increasingly loved and feared the Lord, bringing forth fruit in his old age. . . .
Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

December 25, 1866

Dear Friend in the Lord—What are all our thoughts of or toward each other, or our remembrance, compared with the thoughts of peace which the Lord has to the suffering members of His mystical body, and the book of remembrance which is ever open before His gracious and all-seeing eye? We are powerless to help ourselves, and we are powerless to help one another, at least in spiritual things. Even when the will is present, or the desire on their behalf, we have no power to communicate to them the grace or the comfort which we would have them enjoy. But the Lord has not only will, and such a will as of which we have no measure, but power to do that which His will prompts.

It is this fullness in Him, and our sense of it, which lays the soul at His feet in all its poverty and deep necessity, which makes it turn away its eyes from all creature help and hope, and instrumentally, through the power and influence of the blessed Spirit, draws forth its breathings and desires towards Him, and Him alone, as the Fountain of all grace and glory, the Source and Spring of all happiness and holiness. Here, as on consecrated ground, all the quickened elect meet; here there is no jar, strife, or ambition which shall be the greater; here each God-taught soul sinks into its native nothingness, and looks for everything to the Lord the Lamb.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

December 31, 1866

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—The sad tidings contained in your letter came upon me quite with a sudden shock, as I had no idea that there was any serious danger connected with poor Richard's illness. Being accustomed to see him enjoying so much health, I could scarcely bring my mind to think of him as seriously ill. But oh, what lessons we have to learn of the brevity and uncertainty of human life; and how those seem taken away to whom we looked forward as pillars and supports of the cause of truth, when older heads should be laid low. I feel very much for the poor widow, with this heavy aggravation of all her afflictions, and I feel for the church and congregation, who have lost a most valuable member. There are few men with whom I have had more conversation or communion on divine things. We saw, I believe, eye to eye in the things of God, and he always treated me with great respect and affection. We cannot at present see the reason of this mysterious dispensation. Time only can unfold what is wrapped up in its bosom; and I cannot just now convey to you what thoughts have sprung up in my mind respecting it. Our dear friends at W. have troubles in their old age, and are likely to have more, but they have this satisfaction, as well as his poor dear widow, that he is gone to enjoy what his soul loved and longed for.

I was thinking this morning, as I was getting up, that there could be no real happiness or peace while in this poor body of sin and sickness. But we cleave to life; yet none of those who have dropped the body to be with the Lord would ever wish to take up again the miserable shell of humanity. How broken, how contracted, what a miserable tabernacle of sin and death must it appear to their glorified spirit—worse to them than a beggar's cast-off rags would be to us. My cold is, I hope, passing off. I was not able to get out yesterday. Mr. Covell preached from Rom. 8:38, 39.

**We unite in kind love to our dear afflicted friends,
Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.**

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1867)

January 16, 1867

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I have been much occupied with writing, but I take the first opportunity of sending you a few lines to express my sympathy with you all under those trying afflictions which have fallen with so heavy a weight on those whom we so much esteem and love. I feel very much for you all, and especially for poor dear Eliza in her distressing bereavement, and the heavy pressure of her own personal affliction. I cannot say that at present I feel at all reconciled to the loss of our dear friend Richard Healy. Indeed, excepting Mr. Keal, there is scarcely one whom I would miss so much if I were with you. He seemed so calculated to stand in the gap, and fill up the place of those who in time must have to give way to infirmity or old age. For many years our losses by death in the Church at Oakham were but few. But

oh, in these last few years what gaps have been made, especially among our male members, who are so much needed in the church! God is able to raise up others to supply their place, but no man having drunk old wine, etc. New members can never be to a church what old members are; for they lack the experience and the wisdom which the dealings of God bring about, in an exercised conscience and a matured judgment.

You will much miss our departed friend's prayers on the reading days, for I have frequently heard how honest he was in his confessions, and how earnest and sincere in his petitions. He was possessed also of a good experience, and for the most part pretty sound in judgment, with a right apprehension of living realities and a desire to glorify God by his life and conduct. I have had much conversation with him at different times, and I believe we always met and parted in sincere friendship and affection. We could communicate very freely in divine matters, and well understood each other's minds in those points of exercise and temptation, where hints are sufficient, and to go beyond which is to venture on unsafe grounds. He always treated me with great respect and affection, and if he did not agree with me on all points, would not make it a matter of dispute. When I have seen him looking so strong and healthy, I little thought that I would be the survivor. How often have I looked from my window on a winter afternoon, on my return from chapel, and seen him and his poor wife hurrying off through the cold air to go home amid the dark night, when I was glad to keep close to the fire. It grieves me to hear that his poor widow is worse. Daily do I beseech the Lord that He would comfort her heart, give her faith and patience, and sanctify to her soul's good every stroke of His afflicting hand. Nor do I forget to ask the Lord that He would sanctify the stroke to her aged parents, who have had so many family trials of late years. I hope the Lord will abundantly bless Mr. Knill's ministry to the sorrowing church, as well as to the friends and relatives of the deceased.

I quite approve of the purchase of the ground at the cemetery. It is an odd word to make use of, but I have often said—"How very comfortable it is to have a cemetery where the people of God can be buried by their own minister, and lie together until the resurrection morn." You would more deeply prize the spot where you have placed a monument to your late dear husband, were his remains beneath it.

I was much interested in the account you gave of the funeral. I thought much of you all that day, the snow lying so deep, and the weather so cold. It must have been a very solemn and affecting scene; and the numbers who attended it showed what great respect they had for his memory. I do hope the solemn event may be blessed and sanctified to the church and congregation. Such heavy strokes seem sometimes to stir up the soil, and fit it for the reception of the Word. "You received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit." Deep affliction and the joy of the Holy Spirit going together, make the Word received, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually works in those who believe.

I am always glad to get a few lines from you, as I have scarcely any other means of obtaining any news, either temporal or spiritual, of what is going on among you at Oakham; and you may be sure that having been among you

for so many years, you all still live in my affections and remembrance. I feel a great comfort in my own mind that, amid all the trials which have befallen you, Mr. Knill is with you to comfort your hearts by the word of life; for I hardly know what you would have done had the pulpit been vacant, and you left merely to Supplies.

We unite in love, &c.; and please assure the church for me that I still bear it in my heart, and desire that the blessing of God may abundantly rest upon it.
I am, my dear friend,
Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

January 24, 1867

My dear Mr. Copcutt—The United States is a wonderful country, and possesses in the largest abundance every natural gift of heaven. But unless God shows great mercy in the gifts of His grace, and raises up a people in your midst to fear His great name, all your wealth and power, and all the capabilities so largely possessed of furnishing everything in the shape of wealth and abundance, may only prove sources of sin and eventual misery. Amid so widespread a profession, one would hope that God has, here and there, some whose hearts He has touched by His grace; but there is a sad lack of a preached Gospel, and of ministers who take forth the precious from the vile, and so are as God's mouth. As the editor of the *Gospel Standard*, I get letters sometimes from various parts of the United States, and in almost all of them I find the same complaints of the lack of a sound experimental Gospel ministry. Gracious people also, who have emigrated, send back the same report; so that I am forced to come to a conclusion that the truth as it is in Jesus is but little held and little preached.

I have the pleasure since I have lived here of sitting under a very sound, experimental, and much-favored servant of God, Mr. Francis Covell. During, indeed, the severe weather, I have been much confined to the house, but greatly prize his ministry, as his soul is much alive in the things of God. In prayer especially he is most warm and fervent, with great sincerity and simplicity of petition, much humble confession of sin, and great earnestness in wrestling for heavenly blessings. In his preaching also, though not what is called eloquent, yet his sermons are sound in doctrine, clear and savory in experience, and strictly practical in all fruits of Christian obedience.

Your various journeys, both at home and abroad, must bring to your mind many pleasant reminiscences, as well as striking contrasts. You have seen the palms and tropical vegetation of Cuba, the pine forests of Canada, the glaciers of Switzerland, and the green fields and well-cultivated lands of Bucks, besides, no doubt, a large acquaintance with the scenery of your adopted country. The face of nature thus affords many pleasant recollections; but how man has ruined everything and every place which he has touched! What sin, misery, and wretchedness meet the eye and grieve the heart on every side! Violence, injustice, cruelty to man and beast, oppression, falsehood, selfishness, and disregard of everything but the cravings of

aspiring ambition, show themselves everywhere; not to mention those grosser evils in which man seems to sink to a lower level than the beasts.

There is one feature in this country which is especially admirable—the supremacy of law. No one, from the richest peer to the most abject pauper, can set himself against the law; and as our judges are men of great ability and sterling integrity, and are upheld and supported by all the power of public opinion, their decisions are final. Law is our grand protection, without which neither property nor person would be safe; and where there is in a nation a respect for law, liberty flourishes under its shade. . . .

Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

January 25, 1867

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—We can hardly expect to pass through life, and especially the latter stages of it, without trials and afflictions; for if they do not come in one shape, they will come in another. The Lord means to make us sick and weary of everything but Himself; and I believe that most of His people are made willing to depart before the final stroke comes. It is the lack of sweet manifestations of His love and mercy, the sense of what we have been, and what a wreck and ruin sin has made of us, with the various exercises of mind that spring out of it, which so often make the prospect gloomy. But this stirs up many an earnest sigh and cry for the Lord to appear and to speak a word with power to the soul, that we may enjoy a blessed testimony to our acceptance in the Beloved. How much one is led to see and feel of the dreadful evil of sin! How loathsome it is in the sight of a holy God! What vile wretches we are in ourselves! And what a mighty work the gracious Lord had to do to save us from death and hell! I never saw so much of the evil of sin, and of my own evil case as a sinner, as I have seen and felt of late; and I do beg of the Lord, not only to manifest and reveal Himself with power to my soul, but to give me godly sorrow for sin, with a broken heart, a contrite spirit, and a humble mind.

These things many overlook, and some despise, but they are choice gifts of God, and highly prized by those who know their value. Seclusion and solitude give time and opportunity to look over the past; and I am sure the reflection is anything but comfortable. Oh what heaps of sins are brought to view, and how little we seem to have lived in the fear of God, to have sought His will, or been fruitful branches in the only True Vine! Men speak sometimes of looking back upon a well-spent life, but I cannot; I have to cast myself wholly upon the superabounding grace of God. No doubt advancing life and frequent indisposition make us see things in a very different light from that in which they are viewed by the young and healthy. But the question after all is, Which is the right view? Is the world a happy or a miserable one? Is life to be lived to self, spent in carnality and ease, or should we seek to live unto God? David could say—"Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I have kept Your word." It will be our mercy if afflictions have taught us the same lesson. But I must not sermonize, though I have no doubt that in these points we see and feel alike.

Allington must have presented but a cold and chilling appearance during the late frost and snow; and I can readily believe that the north-east winds, which were felt keenly here, must have swept from off your Downs with terrible force. But the snow must have been a great protection to the young wheat, and thus we can see mercy in that severe snowstorm which was so widely prevalent. I spent two winters at Allington, 1835-1836 and 1837-1838, and my reminiscences of it are of great cold without, whatever warmth and cordiality there was within, especially when the big blocks sent a roaring fire up the drawing-room chimney, aided by the draught of the middle door, left open by the present master of the house, then a little pale-faced boy. We have seen great changes since then; but I believe we may say that our mutual friendship and affection have not changed, but rather expanded, as the little boy into the stout well-grown man.

Many friends have we seen removed since June, 1835; and the list of ministers who have stood in your pulpit since the chapel was opened, who have been removed by death, forms quite a long catalogue. Poor old Mr. S. is another added to the number. As my life is thus far spared, I desire that what still remains of it may be spent in the fear of God, and for the good of His people. I did not think, when I first knew you, that I would have written so much or been so widely known; but I have been led on, step by step, seeking neither praise nor popularity, but content to do what lay in my path, and what I felt called upon from time to time to execute. *The Gospel Standard* and the sermons take up much of my time, and it is sometimes a weariness to the flesh; but they occupy my thoughts and exercise my mind upon divine things, which is better than indolence or distraction. I can hardly however get time to attend to the memoir of our late dear friend William Tiptaft, as the press, like the two daughters of the horseleech, is ever crying "Give, give." . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

January 26, 1867

My dear Friend, Mrs. Clowes—I desire sincerely to sympathize with you in your present deep trial and heavy affliction, and I wish that I could offer you some consolation, or at least some hope, under the weight of your trouble. But I know well that none can give you any support or consolation but the Lord Himself. And oh that He would kindly and graciously speak a word with power to the soul of your poor afflicted husband, and that he might be blessed with a feeling sense of the Lord's love to his soul! We do not doubt but that he is all right for eternity. We know, and he cannot deny, that the Lord in times past has been very gracious unto him, and has manifested His love and mercy to his soul. But he wants to hear again His blessed voice, and to feel the certainty of His pardoning love, through the application of His atoning blood to his conscience. Oh that it might please the Lord to give him one sweet smile, to break in upon his soul, and say, "I am your salvation", break all his bonds asunder, and reveal peace with power to his heart! But even should this be withheld, the Lord has already mercifully taken away his fear of death; and thus it may not please His gracious Majesty to grant him the blessing which he desires, and we also desire for him. The Scripture says but little of the dying experience of God's saints; and sometimes we look too

much for what the Lord has not especially promised—that is, any great manifestations of His love and mercy. He has promised to make their bed in all their sickness, never to leave them or forsake them, and that He would love them to the end. And all this He will fulfill in and for our dear friend. . . .
Yours most affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 14, 1867

My dear Afflicted and Widowed Friend, Mrs. Tanner—But for much occupation I would have written to you immediately that I received the tidings of your late beloved husband's departure, that I might sympathize with you in your troubles and sorrows. I had heard of his illness, but was not aware until the day before he died that it was of so serious a nature. But now, poor dear man, he is released from all his sufferings, both of body and mind, and is in the fruition of that perfect happiness to which he so often looked forward during the latter stages of his pilgrimage here. Having so sweet an assurance of his eternal happiness, and knowing what a life of suffering his was, it would indeed be selfish and cruel to wish him back. You well know what he had to suffer with his many trials from so many quarters, and though you may deeply miss him, and weep at the thought that you will never more in this life see his face nor hear his voice, yet I am sure that you have every reason to rejoice, rather than mourn. Still, nature will have its course, and it is often a great relief when the tears can freely flow, and grief find its appointed vent. It was a great mercy also that you and your daughters were able to minister to his needs and comforts in his last illness, and to have the sweet satisfaction of witnessing the sweet peace that he enjoyed in his soul. What an infinite mercy it also is, that the Lord has blessed you with the consolations of His spirit at various times; and I do hope that as your afflictions abound, so also may your consolations.

I believe you know that we were much united both in heart and judgment. Indeed, I had great esteem and affection for him; and I am sure he always treated me with the greatest kindness and affection. I would be glad if you could put together some little obituary of him, as he was so much esteemed and respected by all who knew him, that there might be some record of him in the *Gospel Standard*.

With our united kind love to yourself and Mrs. W., I am,
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

February 16, 1867

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—And so our dear and esteemed friend Joseph Tanner is entered into his eternal rest. For him there is no more pain or suffering, but an eternity of bliss and blessedness in the presence of God and the Lamb. We shall miss him greatly, especially you, who have lost in him, not only a valued and affectionate friend, but a choice and acceptable Supply. We shall never see his face or hear his voice upon earth any more. He was younger than both of us, but from his many bodily afflictions, more

advanced in constitution than in age. He has left a good name behind him, which is a wonderful mercy, considering the snares and temptations to which he, in common with others, was exposed. Even his own family could scarcely have wished him to live, when they saw him so continually racked with pain and suffering. It must have been a satisfaction to him to see his eldest daughter comfortably settled in life before he was taken away. Thus he could sing both of mercy and judgment, and the combination of these two makes, in divine things, the most harmonious music. I believe he had a very sincere and warm esteem and affection for you, and had a good union with the friends generally at Allington. How one after another is passing away, and if our dear friend William Tiptaft had been alive, he would have been reckoning up how many ministers, who had occupied the Allington pulpit, had been removed by death. I have no doubt that many thoughts have crossed your mind in connection with the removal of our esteemed friend, and many desires and petitions have gone upward that, when your time shall come, you may find the Lord to be the strength of your heart, and your portion forever. I have no doubt your prayers will be abundantly answered. .

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Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 25, 1867

My dear Afflicted and Widowed Friend, Mrs. Clowes—I would have written to you before this to express my deep and affectionate sympathy with you under your distressing bereavement, if I had not thought it best to wait a little until the first gush of your sorrow had found vent. When sorrow is so very recent and so pressing, there is no room in the heart to receive any word from a friend—and none but the Lord Himself can either console or support the troubled spirit. Knowing how all your affections, and almost your life, were bound up with my dear departed friend, I am sure that your grief must be very great. But I do hope that the Lord may not only impart some sweet consolation to your troubled heart, but give you also some submission and resignation to His holy will.

I would be glad if you could bear in mind how many mercies have been mingled with your bereavement. He was spared to you for many years, and was permitted to live to a good old age, possessing all his faculties both of body and mind to a remarkable degree. Was not this a mercy for you both? The Lord also took his earthly tabernacle gently down, and thus gradually prepared your mind for his final removal. Was not this a mercy? How much more deeply you would have felt it if he had been taken away suddenly! How united also you both were, both in natural and spiritual love; and what a kind, tender, and affectionate husband you always found him to be. The recollection of this, I know, only increases your grief, for you keep thinking upon all that you have lost in him. But is it not a great mercy that you can look back upon the years of your married life with satisfaction, and without any regretful recollection? You were also enabled to nurse him tenderly and affectionately to the last, and do everything for him which his illness and infirmities required. Was not this a mercy, that sufficient health and strength were given you to do this?

But the mercy of mercies is that you have so good a testimony that he is gone to his eternal rest. It pleased the Lord indeed, for His own wise purposes, to keep him for many months in a low place. Poor dear man! He was so afraid of presumption, vain confidence, and hypocrisy, that he almost misjudged his own state and standing. Having been blessed in days gone by with clear manifestations of the Lord's love to his soul, he could not rest satisfied unless they were renewed. I never doubted him, though he often doubted himself; for not only his past experience, but his life, conduct, tenderness of conscience, godly fear, true humility of mind, separation from the world, and Christian spirit, clearly manifested his possession of the grace of God. In all my long communion with him, I never received from him anything but the greatest kindness and affection. A man of more tender spirit I never knew, or one who boasted less of himself, or in any way put himself forward. I much feel his loss, and shall always think of him as long as I live with the highest esteem and affection.

I much regret that my health did not allow me to come up and see him, and to comply with your wish that I should pay the last tribute of affection to his remains. I was glad to learn that the Lord shone upon his soul before He took him hence, though, had it even not been so, I would not have been shaken in the least as to his eternal happiness.

And now, my dear friend, I do hope that you will not abandon yourself too much to your great sorrow. You cannot recall him; nor would you in your right mind wish so to do. Resignation and submission to the will of God are very desirable for you; and when you can say, "Your will be done", it will bring you relief. May the Lord sweetly shine upon your soul, and give you a word to comfort your heart. I endeavor to pray to the Lord that He would give you resignation to His holy will, comfort your heart, and grant you faith and patience. If you could drop me a line just to let me know how you are, and especially anything about the last days of my dear departed friend, I would esteem it a favor.

Please present my kindest regards to Mr. Lavell; I feel for him as well as for you. He has lost, indeed, a most kind and affectionate father.

My dear wife unites with me in kind love and sympathy.
Yours most affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 6, 1867

My dear and esteemed Friend, Mrs. Peake—I am not surprised that our friend O. should feel as he does towards our dear departed brother Richard Healy, or wishes to put on permanent record those traits of Christian uprightness which he has mentioned. I will think over the subject, and as far as space admits, either in the next issue or at some other opportunity, will endeavor to record them in the *G. S.* The simple fact is, that being pressed for space, we can only allot a certain portion for the obituary, and are therefore obliged sometimes to divide, and at others to curtail, the accounts that are sent us. But I am sure that in this day we need testimonies to vital godliness

and real, powerful, practical religion; for this is that in which there is, and I suppose always has been, so great a defect in the church of God. I have often thought of, and sometimes quoted, the words of Bunyan where, speaking of Talkative, Christian says, "The soul of religion is the practical part", meaning doubtless that where there is no practice, religion is but a lifeless corpse. But nothing commends it more to the consciences of all men, whether natural or spiritual, than to see the fruits of godliness made manifest, especially when they are directly opposed to self-seeking and self-interest.

The providence which removed him is indeed mysterious. We seem to understand, and be reconciled to the removal of the aged and infirm, especially of those who bore the heat and burden of the day, like the two Coopers and other members of your church—but to see the young, like Richard Healy and your own dear husband, taken away, whose lives seemed so valuable both to the church and their families, makes us sometimes wonder at the Lord's dealings. And yet we know how many sorrows and sufferings they have been spared, and the very circumstance that they were taken away in the very prime of life and usefulness, casts round their memory a more tender and sacred halo. I believe that the obituaries in the *G. S.* are generally very acceptable and very profitable. Mr. —, of Nottingham, has frequently mentioned to me how good he has found the obituaries, and we find sometimes how people on their death-beds have spoken of the encouragement which they have met with in reading them. In a sense, we may say of the departed saint whose experience and words are thus recorded—"By it, he being dead, yet speaks".

We are deeply grieved to hear of poor Eliza's sufferings. Seeing nothing before her but pain and suffering, and having, we hope, a good testimony of her eternal safety, it will be almost a relief if the Lord would give her a parting smile and take her to Himself. When I left Oakham in 1864, I left them both, as it appeared, in the full enjoyment of health and strength, and now one is gone, and the other fast following. I pray the Lord to sanctify the affliction to her aged parents, that they may see in it the frailty and uncertainty of all things here below, seek more earnestly to know and live unto the Lord of Life and Glory, and submit with resignation to His holy will. My daily prayer for poor Eliza is that the Lord would comfort her heart, alleviate her pain, give her faith and patience, with submission to His will. Poor Richard is spared the suffering of seeing her suffer, which he could ill have borne, and all those anxious cares which would have been entailed upon him by her illness. We know not from how much evil death saves us from, and still less what bounty it gives. Could we see with the eye of God, we would see wisdom and goodness marked upon every movement of His hand.

You probably know that my dear friend Mr. Clowes is gone to his eternal rest. He was very much tried through the whole of his illness, and sank very low, fearing at times that he was lost—but about two hours before he died, the Lord broke most gloriously in upon his soul. I will endeavor to let you see Mrs. Clowes's letter. She is indeed a mourning widow, for I think I scarce ever saw a woman whose almost every thought seemed to be to and for her husband. He was indeed a most kind and affectionate partner, and as a Christian, blessed with a good experience, with great tenderness of conscience, and much circumspectness of life. We were much attached to

each other, as I have known him for more than thirty years, and being with him every summer since 1855, of course I have seen a good deal of him. He was a man of very tender feeling, and never parted from me without shedding tears of true affection. I shall much miss him when I go again to London, if spared to fulfill my engagement at Gower Street Chapel.
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

March 27, 1867

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—I have no doubt that you were shocked, though perhaps not surprised, at the tidings of poor Mrs. Healy's death. The case indeed was hopeless from the first, and nothing could be looked for but a long suffering illness, of which death would be the close. At last she sank away, passing off quietly, and the last few days scarcely able to speak audibly or intelligibly. But we have every good ground of hope that her soul was saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation, as she had had at various times many sweet promises applied to her heart, and many encouraging words spoken with power. Her religion was indeed not so deep and clear as her poor husband's—but there was great sincerity and sweetness stamped upon what she said. It will be ten years on the thirtieth of next month since I married them. Looking at them then, there was every promise of their life being long—but how mysterious are the ways of the Lord! They now lie side by side in the Oakham cemetery; yet could the question be put to them, they would not change their present state of happiness and peace with any others who might be named as enjoying everything which this world can give—and were you their father, I believe you would look at their grave with a sweeter satisfaction than if, in the full enjoyment of life and health, they were walking after the course of this world.

I was much united in heart and spirit to poor Richard. As far as he had opportunity, when I was at Oakham, he would often come up to my sitting-room for the sake of a little undisturbed spiritual conversation, and very sweetly would he speak of the things of God and His dealings with him. I have often envied his health and strength, as he was a stout, strong young man, caring little for wind or weather, though there was something in his countenance which at times betrayed a native delicacy of constitution.

But here I am still in the wilderness, having survived him and many others whose prospects of life, humanly speaking, were much greater than my own. We think of bringing out a little memoir of him, which will, I believe, be found interesting and edifying. He was a man who carried out his religion into practice. Some instances will be named in the memoir; but I will just mention one now. One day during the cattle plague he was struck with the fact that his beasts had been preserved. "Well", he said, "Your poor people, Lord, shall reap the benefit", so he sent Mr. Keal £20 to be distributed among the poor members of the church and others who feared God in the congregation. I much doubt whether many professing farmers whose herds were spared have acted in a similar way.

With you and me, dear friend, the bloom of life is utterly gone, and we may almost say, "We would not live always." There is nothing for us, as regards us personally, to look forward to but increasing years and infirmities, until we are brought down to our native dust. Our chief desire and the longing of our heart is to be favored with some sweet manifestations of the Lord's love and mercy, and no doubt your heart, like mine, often goes up to His blessed Majesty that He would take pity on us in our low estate, compassionate us, and speak a word of peace and consolation to our inmost soul. He has taught us, we trust, to fear, revere, and adore His great, and glorious, and holy name, and to believe in His dear Son, looking to Him alone as all our salvation and all our desire. We have seen and felt a little of the evil of sin, and desire to repent of it with real godly sorrow, brokenness of spirit, contrition of heart, and true humility of mind.

We would desire also to be more separated from the world in heart, spirit, and affection, to be spiritually-minded which is life and peace, and to know more of that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord. And though we find sin still working in us, and sometimes as bad as ever, yet our desire is to have it subdued in its power, as well as purged away in its guilt and filth. We have lived to see what the world can do for us, and found it can only entangle; and what sin can do, which is to please for a moment and then bite like an adder. And we have seen also a little of the Person and work, blood and righteousness, grace and glory, blessedness and suitability of the Son of God; and He has won our heart and affections, so as at times to be the chief among ten thousand and the altogether lovely One.

But with all this, we desire more clear visitations of His gracious presence, more precious words from those lips into which grace is poured, and more sensible discoveries of Himself in the light of His own countenance and the words of His own application. Am I an interpreter? Do I read some of the desires and feelings of my friend's inmost soul, and express the breathings of his heart toward the Lord at various seasons by day and night? I tell my friend Covell sometimes that I want "realities", and that if he did not preach them, I could not sit to hear him. How I see men deluded and put off with a vain show, and how few there are, whether ministers or people, who seem to know anything of the transforming efficacy of real religion and vital godliness. Here I have been about forty years, for it is just now forty years since eternal realities were first laid upon my mind, groping and feeling as it were my way to the true light and to the true life, to the vital power and divine reality of the kingdom of God. And yet after all my thousands of prayers, looking and crying to the Lord for His teaching and blessing, and all my reading, writing, preaching, and professing, how little do I seem to know of the kingdom of heaven as set up in the heart by the Holy Spirit! Only just enough to show me what and where I am, what I want, and the miserable state of all who are destitute of the life and power of God in the soul.

I hope what I am writing from Ephesians 1 may be made a blessing. I have seen much in that wondrous chapter, and if I can but a little lay bare its glorious riches, it may comfort and encourage some of the dear family of God. Thus I may hope to preach from my study, if not from the pulpit.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

April 1, 1867

My dear Friend, Thomas Godwin—I understand that you and Mrs. Godwin saw poor Mrs. Healy on your way to Leicester, and found her much altered. When we received the tidings of her death—though in some sense it came as a shock, as such tidings always do, yet I felt it to be a merciful release. There was nothing before her in this life but suffering and pain; and as one had a good hope of her eternal safety, no one who loved her could wish her to continue in her house of weakness and suffering. It was a kind providence that she had her father's house in which to spend the last days of her widowhood, and so kind and attentive a nurse in her sister Emma, who has much risen in my estimation from her unwearied devotedness to her suffering sister.

Mr. and Mrs. Keal would doubtless feel the stroke; but I have often observed that, in old persons, the natural feelings are a good deal blunted, and that they bear the loss of relatives with much less sorrow than those who are younger. My desire and prayer for them both is, that the Lord would sanctify the affliction to their souls' good. They must shortly follow; and it will be their mercy if the Lord would brighten their evidences, and manifest Himself more clearly unto them, before He calls them hence. We know their great kindness, liberality, and hospitality to the Lord's saints and servants; and how they have borne the heat and burden of the day, and stood by the Cause with unabated firmness for so many years. Now if the Lord would but shine into their souls in their latter days, what a strength and comfort it would be, both to the people and to those like us, who have received from them so many proofs of kindness and affection.

We think of bringing out a little memoir of poor Richard, as a little memento of him; and I think it will be well received. It will contain his experience, which appeared in *The Gospel Standard* last year, and the letters to his wife, which our friend Mrs. Peake has put together, and which have appeared, and will appear also in the *G. S.* He was a man well taught in the things of God, tender in conscience, liberal in heart, and circumspect in life. We have at various times had a good deal of conversation upon spiritual things; for he would come up to me in my little study at Oakham, and there we would often compare notes upon the precious things of God. We saw much eye to eye in the precious truth, and if we did not meet on every point, we never jarred nor disputed, as he always treated me with great respect and affection, and knew well how much I was attached to him. He had a great esteem and affection for you, as your ministry had at various times been blessed to his soul—and when he was first brought under deep spiritual trouble, he felt as if he must come and see you, that you might give him some encouragement.

He was also very fond of our friend the late William Tiptaft, and in many points much resembled him. I little thought, when I made him my executor, that I would survive either him or his wife. But oh how many heartier and stronger men have I seen removed from this vain scene; and I am still spared, who have held my life in my hand, as it were, so many years, and known so much of bodily affliction! My desire is to live to the Lord all the days that still remain to me in this lower world, to walk more in His fear,

enjoy more of His presence, and be more spiritually-minded, which I know from experience is life and peace. My chief trouble is the recollection that I have not walked more in the fear of God, but have been so often entangled in the snares spread for my feet. I do earnestly desire to know more of a broken heart, a contrite spirit, a tender conscience, and a humble mind, with sweet visitations of the Lord's love, and the rich manifestations of his superabounding grace. It is my mercy that I am not settled upon my lees, or at ease in Zion; but find my soul for the most part kept alive in the things of God in prayer and supplication, in reading His holy Word with sweetness and savor, and passing my time much alone in the exercise of it on divine realities. . . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

April 2, 1867

[Mr. King having sent Mr. Philpot an extract from a publication entitled "Predestination, Calmly Considered from Principles of Reason,"—Mr. Philpot sent the following reply.]

Dear Mr. King—I am sorry that you should take the trouble of reading such books as that from which you have sent me an extract; especially as you acknowledge that the reading of it produced much hardness, barrenness, coldness, and deadness in your soul. Indeed to my mind the title of the book is itself sufficient to condemn it. Predestination as a divine truth is not to be calmly considered from principles of reason, being in a Christian point of view wholly a matter of divine revelation. The great Apostle of the Gentiles who has laid it down so clearly and fully (Rom. 9), does not attempt to reason about it; but, in answer to one who does, says, "No but, O man, who are you that replies against God?" and in Romans 11:33, shuts the whole matter up in the words "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

I do not feel disposed, therefore, to examine the extract which you have sent me; though, as far as I have looked at it, it seems to me both erroneous and sophistical. Thus he speaks of the existence of sin being in consequence of the sovereign appointment of God. Now I do not believe that this is Scripture doctrine, nor do I know a single passage even bearing that way. I fully believe that the entrance of sin into the world, and of death by sin, was according to the permissive will of God, for without it it could not have entered; but not appointed by Him in the same way as what is good, for such an assertion, reason how we may, would make God the Author of sin. I think, also, that all his reasonings about sin being a creature and such metaphysical subtleties are mere sophisms. Two things are very evident; first, that sin is a most dreadful evil, hateful to God, and calling down His displeasure and righteous punishment; and secondly, that there is no remedy for this dreadful evil, except through the incarnation and blood shedding of the Son of God. Here I rest, not being willing to trouble my mind with daring reasonings of men destitute of godliness, and here I advise you to rest too. Yours very sincerely, for truth's sake,

J. C. P.

April 16, 1867

My dear Friend in the Lord, Mrs. Peake—I am very glad that the memoir of our late dear friend, William Tiptaft, so far as written, has given satisfaction to yourself and my Oakham friends. I have had to steer a kind of middle course, which is always very difficult to maintain. On the one hand I wish to write an interesting biography, and on the other to make it as far as I could spiritual and profitable. I think readers generally, and I may include among them spiritual readers, take much interest in the narrative of circumstances which, if providential, have yet a bearing on what is spiritual; for generally speaking, the dealings of God with us in providence and in grace are so connected that they cannot be separated. Take, for instance, the way in which you and your dear sister were brought to —. What an influence it has had upon your subsequent life, and I may truly add, has been made a blessing to others as well as yourselves. So my connection with William Tiptaft, through our meeting together at the clerical meeting, has had an influence on all my subsequent life. It was for this reason therefore, that I thought it well to give so much place to mere narrative. I did not wish even to name myself, beyond a passing notice; but I felt almost compelled to do so by the circumstances of the narrative, and I am glad you think I have not said too much.

William Tiptaft, in his later days, was much more reserved about himself than when I first knew him. This, I think, arose from his great cautiousness, lest he should in any way commit himself. But the effect has been much to diminish the narrative part of the memoir; and if my memory were not in some things rather tenacious, I could not have gathered up what I have written upon the early days of our friendship. But his letters, however good, needed a little relief as well as explanation, as it is somewhat wearisome to read a series of letters, and unless explained they are often obscure. I hope, as far as I may be favored with help from on high, I may go on with the memoir, but *The Gospel Standard* takes up so much of my time, and when that is finished my sermon for the Gospel Pulpit, that I have only a few days at the end of the month to attend to the memoir. I may also add that I have not now the strength of body and mind which I once possessed, so that I soon get weary and flag, which makes writing not only a burden, but what I write heavy and dull. Still I must go on, I suppose, like the ox laboring in the furrow until worn out with toil, and if my labors are blessed of God, it is my best reward.

Dear Richard's letters to his poor afflicted wife have been read, I understand, with much feeling and interest. There is heart in them. Like Paul's, in a sense, they were written out of much affliction and tears. The dear man knew what he wanted for himself and her, pressed after and at times enjoyed divine realities, and cast aside, in the earnestness and almost agony of his spirit, the rags and wraps of a wordy profession. There is also great tenderness of spirit and strong affection in them towards his poor suffering partner.

I do hope that his memoir, when it comes out, may be profitable to the church of Christ, and if spared, I shall hope to write a little Preface to it, and to insert what would otherwise have appeared in *The Gospel Standard*. . . .
Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

April 18, 1867

Dear Friend in the Truth, Mr. James Davis—Your handsome rug and the two muffs came safely to hand on the second of this month, and we beg to express our thanks for them; one of the muffs I have given to my dear wife, and my daughter begs to thank you very kindly for thinking of her and for sending her so pretty a present.

Your last kind letter came to hand this morning. I am always sorry that anything should appear in the *Gospel Standard* which can stumble any mind or hurt the feelings of any child of God, especially when it has any reference to the glorious Person of our adorable Lord. There certainly is no evidence that the blessed Lord ever actually wrought with His own hands, nor is it implied in the expression, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" which was but the expression of scorn and contempt in the mouth of the ungodly; and I am sure anything that in the least degree touches upon the holy humanity of our gracious Lord makes one who loves His name to shrink, and, as you say, shudder lest anything should be said derogatory to Him.

I am fond myself of Berridge's "Hymns," but there are many expressions in them, as in his other writings, of which I by no means approve. When, therefore, I edited, in 1842, his "Songs of Zion," though I did not feel warranted to alter much, yet I struck out some expressions or omitted some verses of which I could not altogether approve. But, dear friend, where shall we find anything like perfection in the creature? or any writer in whom there will not be expressions that we cannot approve of? I am very sure that I have written things, especially in times past, or rather dropped expressions, which I would not do now; and I dare say sometimes when you think of expressions that you yourself have made use of, you have had to wish that you could recall them. Indeed James tells us that "if any man offend not in word the same is a perfect man," which, I am sure, neither you nor I ever profess or expect to be.

I am glad that the Lord does at times encourage you still to go on speaking in His name. He accepts what a man has, and does not look for great gifts in setting forth His truth. A few broken words, which He is pleased to apply to the soul with a divine power, will be made a lasting blessing when all wordy eloquence falls to the ground like water spilt. The great thing is to have a single eye to the glory of God, a love to His dear people, and to know experimentally the things contended for. All the saints of God have to a certain extent the same teaching, the same experience, and the same feelings. Some indeed are more blessed and favored, but all in their measure are led into the same precious truth in the same blessed way. When, therefore, they hear a servant of God contending for those divine realities of which they have felt the life and power, it often sweetly revives the work of grace upon their

heart, and encourages them to hope and believe that they are rightly led and taught. But you justly observe that the chief thing is to have the inward witness, and I am well satisfied that there is no real satisfaction without it. The lack of this makes many a poor child of God sigh and cry, and when he gets it makes him rejoice.

I am sorry to find from your last letter that you are complaining of your chest. I thought that in your beautiful climate you had not those illnesses in the chest which we have in this damp, foggy country.

I am sorry to hear Mrs. C. is not well; please give her my love. How is Aquila? I wish the Lord would send you a real servant of His, but I have little hope of it. We are fast losing our best men here, and none are raised up to take their place. What a world it is of sin and sorrow! Oh to be saved from it and out of it with an everlasting salvation!

Yours affectionately, in the Truth,
J. C. P.

May 18, 1867

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry. . . As regards myself, you have been rightly informed, for I have had an attack of my old illness, from which I am but slowly recovering. Mr. Gadsby expressed a great wish for me to marry his daughter at Gower Street Chapel; and as I had known her from an infant, I did not like to refuse. I took however the precaution of having a brougham to take and bring me back, hoping I would in that way escape cold. But it was a remarkably cold day, the wind being in the east, and when I went into the vestry there was no fire there, and I seemed struck with a sudden chill. There was a large congregation to witness the ceremony, and I must say that I was much helped in conducting the service, and the whole was carried on in a very proper and becoming manner. I took the opportunity of showing at some length that marriage was a divine institution; and in giving an address to the newly-married pair, I took the opportunity of showing what were the mutual duties of husband and wife, addressing myself as much to the married in the congregation as to the bride and bridegroom. My wife and elder daughter were with me; we lunched with a friend, and came home directly afterwards. Unhappily however, I took cold, and it has been rather a severe attack, so that I have been obliged to defer my visit to Gower Street for two or three Lord's days, and indeed have had great fears whether I would not be obliged to give up all my engagements for the summer, and yours among them. But I am, through mercy, slowly recovering, and hope that it may please the Lord so far to restore me, that I may not wholly disappoint the friends.

How on every side we see the strides which death is making. In March, 1860, I was very ill, and as I was slowly recovering, a letter came one morning announcing the decease of our friend Isbell. About the middle of the same day our dear friend William Tiptaft, who was supplying for me, came to see me. He had not been long seated, before in came Mr. Grace of Brighton, bringing with him his friend Mr. Pickering. While we were conversing together on the best things, Mr. Brown of Godmanchester, who was then

staying in Stamford, also came in. Mr. Grace was struck with the circumstance, and said in a very solemn manner—"We four ministers will never meet again together in one room. Let us, before we part, read and pray together." This was of course done. William Tiptaft read, and Mr. Grace prayed. It was a solemn season with us all, and when we parted it was, I believe, in love and affection. Now since that date William Tiptaft, Mr. Grace, and Mr. Pickering have entered into their rest, and I heard yesterday, from good authority, that Mr. Brown is not expected to live. What a voice these dispensations have, and how they all say—"you also be ready!" How they call upon us to be as men whose loins are girt and lamps burning, and to be waiting for the Lord's coming. My desire is to have every stroke of affliction sanctified and blessed, and to hear the voice of God speaking in every dispensation, especially those which are trying and afflictive.

I hope that the Lord may bless Mr. Hazlerigg's visit, both publicly and privately, and that much of the presence and power of the Lord may attend his testimony. You will give him my love, and my prayers and desires for the blessing of God upon his visit.

We unite in love and sympathy with your family circle.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

July 30, 1867

My dear Friend, Mr. Surin—I can only write you a few lines; but I know you will be glad to hear that I have thus far been brought through my London labors. I never before came to London so weak, both in body and in soul; but have found the Lord's strength made perfect in my weakness. You know that I cannot take up with, and rest upon, such evidences and testimonies as many men seem satisfied with. I must have something *special*, or to me it is nothing. All the vain applause of mortals, and all that is called popularity, I think little of. It leaves an aching void, and often a guilty conscience. The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and all else is poverty, rags, and shame. I am thankful to be helped through, and to feel a little life and liberty in my soul. If the word be blessed to any, the Lord shall have all the praise.

I have been very comfortable here, although I much miss my dear old friend. The quietness of the house suits me well—no street noises as at —; so that I get better nights. Mrs. C. is quite nicely, and most kind and attentive. Of course we often talk of her beloved husband, and it seems to soothe and relieve her.

The memoir of Tiptaft is selling well. I had 3,000 copies printed, and about 1,600 are already gone. The dead man's letters speak for themselves, and remind many of his ministry. Beyond advertising it in the *G. S.*, I have left it to sink or swim, as it best deserved, and have no wish either to puff or push it. Not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends. And as with men, so with books. God's smile, not man's, is the only smile worth having.

I am not at all surprised about the Bedford services. If you were not to go there, it would soon drop to nothing. Mr. H. is a good man and a good preacher, but his ministry lacks that power and authority which are needful to bring together the Lord's people, far and near. He has been spoken of as a pastor for Zoar; but I believe he would not keep a London congregation together for a permanency.

We are all fast fading away, and must soon lie among the clods of the valley. May our last days be our best days, and our death the death of the righteous.

...

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

October 17, 1867

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—. . . I feel thankful to have returned to my own home in peace and safety, and to have been preserved during my absence as well as favored with a sufficient measure of health and strength to fulfill all my engagements and to preach for fourteen Lord's-days continuously. I hope also that I may say without presumption that the Lord helped me in soul as well as in body, and enabled me to set forth His truth as I have received it. I was glad to see my old friends, and to speak to them once more in the name of the Lord; and I hope there were those among them who felt the power and savor of the word of truth which I was enabled to bring before them.

No one I believe is more convinced than I am that nothing but the power of God accompanying His word can make it effectual either to kill or make alive, to wound or to heal, to pull down or build up. And from whomsoever's mouth words of grace and truth drop, whether educated or uneducated, whether learned or unlearned, the power is the same. Some despise learning and some despise the lack of it; but the people of God know what power is when they feel it to accompany the word; and those who know not what that power is are no judges of the matter. It is a day of small things well-near everywhere, and those who have life seem much overborne by darkness and the death that is in their carnal mind.

I had a pleasant and I hope profitable visit to Nottingham. The room was very full, and on the Tuesday evening we had quite a large congregation. Some young clergyman sat close to the pulpit. *What he thought of my discourse I can hardly conjecture, but he seemed to listen very attentively. One does not know what good is done on such occasions, or how it may please the Lord to bring His word home with power to some thoughtless sinner's heart.* I never saw Mr. — in better health, and we had some short but very sweet conversation upon the things of God. He is truly a spiritually minded man, and to be made and kept spiritually minded our dear friend W. Tiptaft used to say was one of the greatest blessings which we could have. The Memoir [of William Tiptaft] is nearly sold out, but I hope the second edition which is passing through the press will shortly appear. It seems to have been generally very well received, and the letters highly prized. By them, he being dead, yet speaks; for I hear it often remarked, "How vividly they recall the man."

My visit to Oakham seems almost like a dream, and you perhaps feel the same. It came and went; but I hope, unlike a dream, it has left some traces of its real existence.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 14, 1867

My dear afflicted and widowed Friend, Mrs. Brown—I desire sincerely to sympathize with you under your most distressing bereavement. It has indeed not come upon you unexpectedly, and thus your mind must have been in some good measure prepared for this desolating stroke. You have also the unspeakable consolation of knowing that your dear husband has passed away from this world of sin and sorrow to be forever with that dear Lord whom he so sincerely loved and faithfully served when here below. Still, with these sources of consolation, when such a bereavement comes, though they alleviate the shock, yet nature must ever feel the pain and grief of the loss; and, therefore, there is no use in friends trying to make a burden light, which cannot but be from its nature heavy.

Under such circumstances no one but the Lord Himself can administer support and comfort; and His way often is to allow the stroke to be deeply felt, giving just sufficient support under it, that it may do its appointed work. You may, therefore, not at present receive that strength and consolation for which you might look; but if the Lord grants you faith and patience, He will in due time appear for you and fulfill every promise which He has given to the widow, and to her especially who is desolate, and a widow indeed.

Few men have died more in the esteem and affection of God's saints and servants than your late dear husband. His great sincerity and uprightness of character, boldness and faithfulness in the declaration of truth, and the sweet spirit which more especially of late years accompanied his ministry, much endeared him to all who knew him, especially to those who sat under his ministry. I always found him a sincere and affectionate friend, and could only regret that for the few last years I have seen so little personally of him. But I most highly esteemed him for his work's sake. The Lord support and comfort you in your affliction.
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1868)

January 10, 1868

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake,

How we seem to stand, as it were, amid the dead and dying! How many of those with whom we have walked and talked on the things of God have passed away; and how, as each one is removed, it speaks as a personal warning, "You also be ready." But we know well that all our readiness must be in Him and from Him who gave the precept. What a gradual unloosening there is of the ties which bind us to life. And I believe for the most part the Lord makes His people willing to depart before He calls them up from this world of sin and misery.

I desire to sympathize with you both in your path of trial and affliction. Your dear sister has had a long and painful experience of an afflicted and suffering tabernacle, the trials of which those who enjoy health and strength have no idea of. And as regards yourself, such a weight of care, labor, and anxiety has been laid upon you as to tax to the utmost all your powers of mind and body. But in the world, and especially in the Church, there must be those who are willing and able to work and spend their energies on tasks laid upon them for the good of others; and, though sometimes they rebel at having so much cast upon them, yet they are made willing to work when they see and feel it is for the glory of God and the good of His people.

I am very sorry to hear so sad an account of poor Mrs. P—. No doubt she needs all the heavy strokes which have been laid upon her. She is a woman of good and choice experience, and has had greater manifestations of the Lord to her soul than most can speak of. The faith thus given her has to be tried by fire, and I have no doubt that she will come out of the great Refiner's hands with her dross and tin purged away. I know perhaps more of her experience than most do, and the remarkable way in which my writings, and especially "Winter afore Harvest," were blessed to her soul, when she did not know whether I was alive or dead, and then her being brought under my roof and ministry in a special way of providence have much knit us together. The Lord will surely regard the work of His own hands, and it will be well with her in life and death. I also much respect her husband, as I have long marked his consistent Christian conduct and bearing under very trying circumstances.

I am glad that you like the Address. It is very difficult year after year to write what shall be edifying and instructive to so many of the family of God, and so varied in circumstances, character, leadings, and experience. But my desire was to lay before them such things as I know from experience harmonize with the Scriptures of truth and the teachings of the holy Spirit. This I believe the Lord will ever bless.

My Christian love to all who love the Lord.
Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

January 30, 1868

My dear and valued Friend, Mrs. Peake—I feel much obliged to you for your kind feeling towards my ministry among you, and could say much upon the

point, if I could do so without seeming self-exaltation. The blessing of a sound healthy ministry is little appreciated, because, like our food, its influence upon the whole system cannot be always distinctly traced. To be kept from error which is so rife and so deadly—to have the eyes, heart, and feet guided and directed to the only true Object of real faith, hope, and love—to have all that is good in us by grace nurtured, strengthened, and encouraged—and all that is evil in us, worthless and unprofitable, to be exposed to view, beaten down, cast aside, or subdued—to have weak things strengthened, feeble things confirmed, and the grace of God and what we are by grace brought out of, and disentangled from, all creature admixture—this peculiar feature of a sound wholesome ministry is only valued by a few, who know that in it is their life.

My desire and aim from the very first of my ministry, with all its weakness and shortcomings, have been and are to exalt and trace out the special grace of God as manifested in and by the Three Persons of the glorious, undivided, and indivisible Godhead. And you, dear friend, in looking at and over my testimony, whether preached or written, from the earliest days in which I stood before the church of God, will be able to see that there has been a unity in it from first to last, whether by tongue or pen. Allow me to add that our dear friend William Tiptaft used to say that my writings would be more valued when I was gone. But I am sure of this, that if there be any value in them, it is because the Lord was pleased to show me from the very first, and to impress deeply upon my mind, the grand distinction between nature and grace.

The first sermon that I ever preached was from Romans 6:23, at South Moreton Church, in Berks., and a gracious godly woman, the late wife of Mr. Doe, who happened to be present and was considered a mother in Israel, I am told, said of me after it—"That is a good man, and he will leave the Church of England." She lived to witness the truth of her prediction, and has often heard me at Abingdon Chapel. Excuse this much about myself. . .
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

February 24, 1868

My dear Friend, Mr. Hoadley—I am much obliged to you for your kind remembrance of us in sending us your acceptable present, and I would have been glad to have thanked you in person, had you given me the opportunity yesterday, or looked in upon me this morning.

Like many others, you probably did not expect to see me in the pulpit yesterday, and indeed, as I then said, I would much sooner be a hearer than preach myself. I hope, however, you were not disappointed, or at least, if you were, that it was made up in the evening. My dear friend Mr. Covell and I fully, I believe, understand each other, and that our mutual desire is the profit and edification of the people of God. We are not striving which should be the greater, but believing that in the mouth of two witnesses every truth shall be established, are made willing so far to work together that the people of God may have all the profit, and the Lord all the glory. I told our dear

friend when I first came to Croydon that my desire was to avoid all party spirit with all strife and contention, and that I would, for my part, much sooner never step into his pulpit than be the least means of causing or strengthening any spirit of division or disunion.

I am, my dear Friend,
Yours, I trust, in the best bonds,
J. C. P.

March 20, 1868

My dear Friend, Mr. Godwin—I have been so very busy of late that I have been obliged to neglect my correspondents, and among them my old, faithful, and affectionate friend, to whom I am now endeavoring to send a few lines. Writing, however, is but a very imperfect mode of communicating with our spiritual friends. There is always something which we should like to say, but cannot, and which we could impart so much better in seeing them face to face. I feel this especially with respect to one or two things which you have named in your last kind letter. We have to be tried about ourselves, and we have to be tried about others, and for much the same reasons—that there are things in them and things in ourselves which we cannot make altogether straight with conscience and the word of God. And I am well persuaded that none but He who makes crooked things straight can make these things straight either as regards ourselves or others.

And there's another thing which you know as well as I do, that the more we know of people and the more we see of them, as well as the more we know of ourselves and see of ourselves, the less grace do we seem to see in ourselves and them. Now what does this bring us to, but highly to value the least mark of real grace; and I am sure it rejoices us to be able to find in ourselves and others any clear testimony that God is with us of a truth. I am glad therefore that you were able to speak so confidently at O— of a dear and old friend of ours, and I hope it may have a good effect. I quite understand an unwillingness to see friends when one is ill, for I have had, and still have, much of the same feeling myself; though when I have been enabled to break through the feeling I have been cheered and comforted by their company and conversation.

The memorial of our late dear friend Richard Healy is just published, and I think will be read with feeling by the Lord's family. I would like to insert in the *Gospel Standard*, as opportunity may occur, some of our late dear friend Carby Tuckwell's letters. The one which he wrote to you, giving an account of the special blessing with which he was favored last June, will appear next month in the obituary. I have often felt much union to him when we have got upon the things of God, and much esteemed and respected him; but he was, as you know, rather reserved, and not gifted with utterance of speech, as many are. We are losing our choice friends and companions, and where shall we find others to take their place?

Our dear friend at A. would deeply feel his doctor's death. What a mercy to be kept by the mighty power of God! What debtors we are to Him, both in providence and in grace, both for body and soul, both for this life and that to

come. My chief, my daily grief is to have sinned against so good a God, and my desire is ever to walk in His fear, and to live to His praise. It is His goodness which leads to repentance, His mercy which melts the heart, His truth which liberates and sanctifies the soul, and His grace which superabounds over all abounding of sin. What have we now, dear friend, to live for, but during our short span of life to know and enjoy more of His presence and love, and have clearer testimonies of what He is unto us and in us?

I am, through mercy, much as usual. Our good friend wishes me to take his place next Lord's-day morning. His annual collection on the 8th was £166 3s. 1d. You would think there must be both will and power in his congregation. But he sets a noble example of liberality, and the Lord honors him.

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

March 25, 1868

My dear Friends in the Lord, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris—In my prayers for you both, I feel led to ask of the Lord to give you faith and patience, for these two graces you much need in active and daily exercise. But that you may have them brought into your heart and there maintained with a divine power, tribulation is needed, for tribulation works patience (Rom. 5:3), as well as the trial of faith (James 1:3). And this patience must have her perfect work, that you may be made perfect and entire, lacking nothing. If then you had no trials or perplexities, no tribulation or temptation, you could not have your faith tried as by fire, and there would be no patience accompanying it, working with it, and perfecting it. Nor again would you have it made manifest to yourselves or others that you are possessed of the grace of love, for that bears all things and endures all things (1 Cor. 13:7).

I was thinking the other morning about Christian love, and I seemed to see that it was the first of all evidences, and the last of all graces. Let me explain my meaning. Love to the brethren is the first Scriptural evidence of having passed from death unto life. But this love, as we journey onward, and have to do more and more with the crooked ways of God's people, is the last of all graces, as well as the greatest, as having to live and thrive under well-near everything which serves to damp or quench it. As patience then is useless without burdens to bear, and trials and temptations to encounter, so love is useless unless it has to be maintained under all those circumstances, and all that chilling opposition, which seem so contrary to it. If the people of God were all we could wish them to be, and for ourselves to be kind, forbearing, forgiving, affectionate, unsuspecting, open-hearted and open-handed, prayerful and spiritually-minded, love would flow out so toward them, that it would not be a matter of any difficulty. But to love the people of God for what we see of Christ in them, in spite of all their crookedness, perverseness, ignorance, obstinacy, ill-temper, fretfulness, and deadness in the things of God this is the difficulty.

But the Lord does not bestow His graces to lie idle in the bosom; but to manifest their presence, their activity, and their power by what they have to

do. If then you are to be blessed with the graces of faith, and love, and patience, you must expect burdens, exercises, afflictions, perplexities, annoyances, and a variety of circumstances most contrary to your natural feelings and expectations. But if, in the midst of all these painful and perplexing circumstances, faith credits the word of promise, patience quietly and meekly endures its load, and love is still maintained in exercise in word and deed, you will find the approbation of the Lord in your own bosom, and will sooner or later prove that He ever honors His own grace and His own work in the soul.

The great thing that we have to dread is the giving way to, and being overcome by, our own spirit; or what is worse, mistaking our own spirit for a right spirit, and our own will for a right will. In these things we need to be instructed by the Holy Spirit, the promised Teacher, that we may have not only a right judgment in all things, but be enabled to speak, live, and act as He would have us to do. I think I know something of your perplexities and difficulties, and can see that to support you under them, and bring you through them, you need faith, and love, and patience; and this is the reason why I have ventured to lay before you a word of friendly counsel and encouragement, and I shall be very glad if you may find it suitable and supporting. I have endeavored to show you such a path as I would desire, if grace enabled me, to tread myself if placed in a similar position.

But, alas, it is one thing to give advice, and another to act upon it one's self. I remember, how many years ago, the words of Eliphaz (Job 4:3, 4, 5) came to my mind as sadly applicable to my case. But we have to learn our weakness, as well as where and in whom our strength lies, and the Lord is very merciful and gracious, never leaving us, nor allowing us to be led into any path in which His grace is not sufficient for us, if sought and looked to; for we have to confess that when it has been otherwise, it has been because we did not look to Him, nor lean upon Him; but looked to self either for strength or indulgence.

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
Jesus . C. P.

May 8, 1868

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—I walk every day when I can, and usually to the same spot, which is more than a mile from my house, to the top of a gentle hill, where there is a seat under a wide-spreading oak and commanding a lovely view of hill and dale, the latter wooded; and there I sit in the warm sun, sometimes meditating or otherwise engaged, perhaps not unprofitably, with soul matters, while the lark is singing just above me, or the thrush giving out its shrill sweet note. I think I never saw so much of the glory of God, and, I may add, His goodness and beauty, as manifested in visible creation. I was thinking in my walk today, when I looked round upon the beautiful face of nature, how beautiful must He be who has stamped so much of it on this present world—and yet what is all this beauty compared with the riches of His mercy, grace, and glory as manifested in the Person and work of His dear Son (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:6)! How grievous it is ever to sin, rebel against, disobey, or displease such a God; and it is my desire to walk in

His fear, live to His praise, and to glorify Him by knowing His will and doing it. There is no peace, rest, or happiness anywhere else, nor is it possible for God to make a man happy except by making him holy, sanctifying him by the power of His Spirit and grace, and conforming him to the image of the Son of His love. When this is perfectly done, he will be perfectly happy—but as long as sin remains in him, and it will do so to his dying day, he will ever find something to mar his peace. . . .

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

July 2, 1868

My dear sister Fanny—I am sorry to find from your letter that you are still so afflicted in body. I was in hopes you were gradually recovering health and strength, and, though weak, were able to come down stairs, or even get out into the open air. Unless much favored and supported by God, bodily illness is a great affliction; but you know where to look to for strength, and who has graciously said, "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." In times past He has been your stay, and "He is the same yesterday, today, and forever." To be so weak and helpless is a great affliction; but it is sent to wean you from this world, make life burdensome, and death desirable. You have had a long life compared with most, and for the most part a healthy one, and you cannot wonder if growing years bring with them growing infirmities. How many have we seen younger than we borne away—and we still remain. It is nearly twenty-one years ago since I came to Stoke from Malvern. Dr. S., your dear husband, and many others, little dreamt that I would survive them. But here I still am, "faint yet pursuing," in body and soul. . . .

The Lord support you under your trials and afflictions.

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

August 19, 1868

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—Having now a little respite from my labors, and an opportunity not being likely soon to recur to write to you again, I send you a few lines according to your request.

You will be desirous to know how my health is, especially as the season has been so very trying. In common, then, with most who are weak, I much felt the great heat, especially as being obliged to preach to large congregations at the very time when it was at its greatest height. I was, however, mercifully brought through my labors in London, and have now completed my engagement here. I trust I found the strength of the Lord made perfect in my weakness, in soul as well as in body, and that He gave testimony to the word of his grace. But, for the most part, the things of God are at a very low ebb everywhere, both in town and country, and the churches seem much sunk into a cold, lethargic, and apathetic state. There are, indeed, a few souls which seem kept alive, and are sensible of their own state and the state of others, and these the Lord seems from time to time to revive under His word. There are some of these whom I know at Gower Street, and who spoke of the

revival and renewal which they experienced under what one of them called the "sweet droppings of the Gospel." I cannot say that I felt any peculiar or extraordinary power resting upon my spirit as I have sometimes experienced; but upon the whole I was favored with some good measure of life and liberty. Some of the sermons were taken down; some perhaps of the best, and two especially, were not, as Mr. Ford was not there. I may, however, take the same words again when he is present, though, without special help, I shall not be able to handle them as I did then.

We had, I believe, on the whole, a good day at Calne, and the collection on behalf of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society was more than £30. Some of the friends said they had never heard me speak with greater power there. But the place was so full, the ventilation so imperfect, and the heat so great that I much felt the exertion, and did not get over it for several days. Mr. Taylor was not able to come on account of illness, which was a great disappointment.

I hope it may please the Lord to give me health and strength for the work which still lies before me; but this extreme change in the weather, from drought and heat to cold and damp, makes me feel very poorly. We are poor, dissatisfied creatures. When it was so hot I was impatiently waiting for the cold; and now the cold has come I could almost wish the heat were back. We have been favored in the weather as regards the Lord's-day, and I hope we have been favored also in the house of prayer, especially on the last Lord's-day, when the Lord, I trust, enabled me to speak with some life, feeling, and power. We had a large congregation, and gathered from distant quarters, some having come twenty miles, and there was a large collection of vehicles. .

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Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

September 3, 1868

Dear Friend in the Truth—I expressed in my last letter my inability to accept the kind invitation of the church to come among you, so as to have the opportunity of conversing with you upon your present trying circumstances. Indeed, there is scarcely any position more trying to a church than when it loses a beloved pastor, who under God has for many years been the honored instrument of feeding, guiding, and ruling it in the fear of the Lord. Such a loss, humanly speaking, is irreparable; for whatever gifts and graces his successor may possess, he can never be to a church what their own beloved pastor was. And it seems to me that in this day there is a peculiar dearth of men qualified for the pastoral office. They have neither the gift nor the grace to qualify them for that most important office. Even as Supplies, there is a great deficiency in the needful gifts and graces.

I wish that I could name any man as one whom it is likely you could receive as qualified to go in and out before you. Meanwhile you cannot do better than wait upon the Lord under a sense of felt weakness, that He would supply all your need out of the fullness which is in Christ Jesus. The great thing is to hang together in a spirit of love and union, and walk as far as you are enabled in the footsteps which your late lamented pastor for so many

years laid before you. Some among you will probably get weary of meeting together in weakness, and be crying out to get the pulpit supplied rather than have no preaching. If indeed you can get a gracious, humble, spiritually-minded, faithful, and experimental servant of God to speak to you as occasion serves, it would be a great blessing, and would, I doubt not, be highly prized by those among you who love to hear the Gospel preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven. But merely to desire preaching for preaching's sake, and to want the pulpit supplied because they cannot bear to see it empty, and think God has no other way of feeding his people when they meet together, is a great mistake, and often leads to very painful consequences. Strife and a party spirit come into the church and congregation. They are not united in one mind and in one judgment; they do not stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel, but have men's persons in admiration because of advantage; and this breeds strife and confusion, with every evil work. I have seen this again and again, and have observed how churches have in this way lost all their former spirituality and love to the Lord, His truth, cause, and people, and sunk down into carnality and death.

I hope therefore, dear friends, that you will cleave to each other in love, waiting upon the Lord in prayer and supplication, that he would send you a man after his own heart to feed you with knowledge and understanding.
Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

September 13, 1868

To the Congregation in Providence Chapel, Oakham

Dear Friends—It is a sad disappointment to me, and I doubt not will be so to many of you, that I am not able, from bodily indisposition, to stand up before you this morning and speak to you in the name of the Lord. But it has pleased the Lord to lay upon me one of those attacks of cold on my chest which so often, in times past, laid me aside, and which not only used so much to try my faith and patience, but yours also. Having been favored for thirteen Lord's days to preach His Word, I was greatly in hopes that health and strength might have been given me to speak once more to those who were so long my own people, that our union and communion in the Lord might be strengthened and renewed, and that meeting once more in the house of prayer, we might realize the power and presence of the Lord in our midst.

But we live to prove that our thoughts are not the Lord's thoughts, and that disappointment upon disappointment attends all our plans, even when they are made, as we hope, for the glory of God and the good of His people. You were looking perhaps too much to the instrument, and expecting that from the man which the Lord keeps in His own hands, the blessing which makes rich. It is a great trial to me that I cannot, as I hoped and expected, meet with you once more in the house of prayer, that heart might unite once more with heart in prayer and supplication, that I might preach to you again the Word of life, that our faith, hope, and love to the Lord might be strengthened, and our esteem and affection for each other renewed. It is however a great alleviation of my trial that our dear and esteemed friend Mr. Knill has so

kindly determined to forego his engagement and preach in my stead, and may such a blessing rest on him, and the Word of God by him, that all disappointment may be removed, and you well reconciled to the will of God in this trying dispensation.

The Lord be with you and bless you.

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. P.

September 21, 1868

My dear sister Fanny—It is now some time since I sent you a few lines, but we often hear of one another through the correspondence of our dear relatives. I was sorry to learn that the Lord had laid upon you His afflicting hand; but that is what we must expect at our time of life, and if these afflictions are blessed and sanctified to our souls' good, as we trust they are, they are rather marks of the Lord's favor than of His displeasure. But I know well that the poor coward flesh is fretful and impatient under the affliction, and would gladly have a smoother, easier path. I have myself been suffering for nearly a fortnight under one of my old attacks, and am not yet recovered from it. I was carried through thirteen Lord's-days, besides preaching in the week; but the great heat and exertion in London seemed at last too much for me, and when the weather turned suddenly cold the great change affected my chest and brought on one of my attacks. Being, however, not severe, and hoping it might pass off, which it does sometimes, I came down here to fulfill my engagement. But to my great disappointment, and that of the people, my illness increased so that I was not able to preach here, as engaged on the 13th. There was a large congregation gathered to hear me; but Mr. Knill very kindly consented to come and preach, which much alleviated the disappointment. Nor was I able to go to Stamford for the 20th, being at present confined to the house, and indeed to my two rooms up-stairs. I shall try, however, if I am able, to go to Leicester, as I have several times before disappointed the friends there from illness.

I long much for my own home, and what I call my winter quarters, when I am not obliged to preach, or even leave the house if the weather be unfavorable or myself indisposed. I was greatly in hopes that I might be allowed to fulfill all my engagements; but it was not the Lord's will and I must submit.

It must be a great comfort to you to be with your niece and so be relieved in good measure from those domestic troubles and anxieties which you must have had in a house of your own. I view it, therefore, as a special providence on your behalf, and doubt not that you, at times, have seen and felt it to be so. But such is our unbelieving infidel heart that, though we may see the Lord's hand at first in a circumstance, yet when difficulties and perplexities arise we get into a state of darkness and confusion, and almost fear it has been a wrong step.

Wherever we go, and wherever we are, we must expect trials to arise; but it will be our wisdom and mercy to submit to what we cannot alter, and not fret or repine under the trial, but accept it as sent for our good. You have had a

long and trying affliction, but I hope you see at times mercy mingled with it. To be taken aside out of the world, to have opportunity for meditation, that after you have done the will of God, which is as much by suffering as by doing, you may receive the promise. Do not give way to fretfulness, murmuring, impatience, self-pity, hard thoughts of God, unbelief, doubt and fear, and other such evils of the heart which obscure the light of God's countenance and bring confusion and darkness into the soul. Those whom the Lord loves He loves unto the end, and as you have had many proofs and marks of the Lord's love to your soul, let not Satan and unbelief rob you of your faith and hope. I commend you to His grace, believing that He will be with you to the end. My own path is often dark and cloudy, but I daily endeavor to do what I have been counseling you to do.

Accept my brotherly love in every sense of the word. Though I do not often write to you, I think of you and endeavor, in my poor way, to ask of the Lord to support and bless you and give you faith and patience to hold out and hold on.

It is more than thirty-two years since I first came to this place, and about four since I was obliged, from failing health and strength, to leave it. In the lapse of those years I have seen great changes. Many, very many, have died since I first preached to them, and most of those who professed to fear God, and believe in His dear Son, have died well—but their decease has left great gaps in the church and congregation, not likely, I think, to be filled up, at least not with equally gracious people. . . .

Your affectionate Brother,
J. C. P.

October 1, 1868

Dear Friend in the Truth, Mr. Parrott—it was a great disappointment to me not to be able to fulfill my engagement at Stamford on the 20th, and I have no doubt it was so to others who, like yourself, in times past have been blessed and favored in that house of prayer, and were looking forward for a fresh discovery of the Lord's goodness and love to their souls under the preached Word. It is very difficult to read the mind of the Lord in these dispensations of His providence. As regards myself, I feel willing and desirous to preach His Word, so far as I understand it, feel the power of it, and taste and handle its sweetness and blessedness; and I know there are those who desire to come under the sound of the Word as thus preached, from seeing eye to eye with me in the things of God, having felt, as we hope, the same divine power, and seeking after the same spiritual blessing. I know well that it is not a man's gifts or abilities which can profit or edify the Spirit-taught family of God. These may please and attract outer-court worshipers, but those who have seen the beauty of the Lord in the sanctuary desire His presence, His power, and His blessing. This is what I am ever seeking after, both in my own soul and in my ministry—for I am well satisfied that all short of this leaves us full of unbelief, darkness, guilt, and bondage. But the blessing of the Lord—it makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.

I am glad to find that you have been brought out of your long captivity. The Lord is faithful, and where He has begun a gracious work, He will fulfill it until the day of Christ. What a mercy it is to have a faithful covenant-keeping God, and a gracious compassionate High Priest who can sympathize with His poor, tried, tempted family, so that however low they may sink, His pitiful eye can see them in their low estate, His gracious ear hear their cries, His loving heart melt over them, and His strong arm pluck them from their destructions. Oh what would we do without such a gracious Lord and most suitable Savior as the blessed Jesus! How He seems to rise more and more in our estimation, in our thoughts, in our desires, in our affections, as we see and feel what a wreck and ruin we are, what dreadful havoc sin has made with both body and soul, and what miserable outcasts we are by nature, as helpless and forlorn as the poor babe spoken of in Ezekiel 16—"Cast out in the open field, to the loathing of its person, in the day that it was born."

But oh how needful it is, dear friend, to be brought down in our soul to be the chief of sinners, viler than the vilest, and worse than the worst, that we may really and truly believe in, and cleave unto, this most precious and suitable Savior!

Can we not say that we have laid at His sacred feet thousands and tens of thousands of earnest petitions, prayers, supplications, and importunities, that He would come into our heart with a divine power, speak to us words of peace, and commune with us from off the mercy-seat? And when He is pleased in any measure to discover the wondrous mystery of His Person and work, blood shedding and obedience and death, and to give us to know the power of His resurrection in raising up our souls from death unto life, and secretly inspires faith, and hope, and love toward Himself as the glorious and glorified Son of the Father in truth and love, what then are all earthly things compared with Him?

Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

October 1, 1868

My dear Friend, James Davis. . . I am sorry that you should have experienced so heavy a loss; but I have found myself more than once, when I have been calculating on some increase of income or some temporal advantage, that a sudden stroke has come and swept it away. We are thus taught not to trust in uncertain riches, which make to themselves wings and fly away; but trust in the living God, who has helped us so many years, and not allowed us to lack any good thing. Those words of our Lord, Mark 10:29, 30, were once made very sweet to me, for I could see them all fulfilled in my experience; but the sweetest of all was, "and in the world to come, eternal life." That crowns all. We might have all the gold that ever was dug up in Australia, and what would that profit us on a dying bed, or in the great judgement day, if gold were our god, and we had no other to look to, believe in, or love?

It has been with us a summer almost unparalleled for heat and drought, the thermometer being for several days at 92E, and in some places 94E. The

whole country was burnt up, and the grass fields almost as brown as the road. I very much felt the heat and the exertion of preaching, and it very much prostrated my strength. I was at the Calne anniversary, and it was one of the very hot days, though not the hottest of the season. The heat of the chapel was very great, as it was much crowded; but I was much helped in speaking, and many of the friends spoke of it as having been a blessed time to their souls. My text was Jer. 32:14, and I endeavored to show from it the two kinds of evidences, which we must have to know that we are redeemed—sealed evidences known only to the happy possessor, and open, which are to be known and read by others. I said that these were put into an earthen vessel—our poor, frail, mortal bodies, and that they are in a sense buried with us, and will rise with us in the resurrection morn. Your old friend Hicks was there, and friends from Bath, Castle Cary, Malmesbury, and a long way round. It was at the anniversary that I first saw you, as no doubt you remember. Our friend Mr. Parry was better this visit, and able to hear me each Lord's day. He sadly misses our dear friend Mr. Tuckwell, and indeed all do who knew him and esteemed him for the truth's sake. He made indeed a good end, and as dear Tiptaft used to say, was well laid in his grave. I saw there many old friends, but it was the middle of harvest, and that and the great heat kept some away.

I hope you find the Lord with you in speaking to the people. You would find it a great trial to be laid aside. . . .

Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

October 12, 1868

My dear Friends, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris—We were highly favored in our journey home, not only in the day, but in the comfort of the transit, being by ourselves all the way, and passing from Leicester to London by the new line without once stopping. Still I felt very tired before I reached my own home, and though preserved from taking fresh cold, yet I have felt greater weakness than when at Oakham. I trust however that, through mercy, the attack is passing off, though I expect it will be some time before I regain that measure of health and strength, never very great, which yet enables me to go through the various tasks that lie before me, with some tolerable comfort.

I do not think I ever felt the disappointment so great as being laid aside on this present occasion. I wished so much to be allowed to speak once more in the Lord's name to those who I knew were desirous again to hear my voice. It is indeed to me a mysterious dispensation, and yet I hope it has in some measure been sanctified to my soul's good. I have felt, through infinite mercy, much of the life and power of divine truth in my heart, have had much of a spirit of grace and supplications, and not been allowed to drop into carnality and death, or be filled with murmuring, fretfulness, self-pity, or rebellion. The flesh indeed has felt, and sometimes almost fainted under the burden, but the spirit has been made willing, has cleaved to the Lord with purpose of heart, and hung upon Him and Him alone, as a nail fastened in a sure place. It has been with me a sowing time, and I hope in due season to reap, if I faint not. It is very sad in old age to sink into worldliness, carnality,

carelessness, and deadness; and though the flesh may writhe under the afflicting strokes of God's hand, it is a mercy to have the life of God stirred up thereby, to be separated in heart and spirit from carnal earthly things, and to have the affections set where Jesus sits, at the right hand of God.

I felt anxious to know about Leicester, and am glad to learn from Mr. Knill's letter, that the Lord was with him and granted him a sweet sense of His presence, with an opening of the heart and mouth to speak in His name. The Lord very frequently overrules these disappointments, and not only displays in them the sovereignty of His will, but also the power of His grace.

You will be glad to hear of my son's recent success. . . . Surely I have much reason to be thankful that at present my family turn out so well; especially when I look around me and see what a trial unruly children have been and are to gracious parents.

I am, my dear friends,

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,

J. C. P.

October 28, 1868

My dear and much esteemed Friend, Mrs. Peake—I have often admired the spirit in which Mr. — acted when he had to curtail his expenses. He said the question was whether he should give up two extra carriage horses, or give up his donations for various religious end benevolent objects, and he at once preferred the former course. What we are enabled to give to the Lord's cause and the Lord's poor sanctifies, so to speak, the whole of the rest, and no one can expect to see the hand of God in providence stretched out in his behalf who from a spirit of covetousness or self-indulgence diminishes, unless actually compelled, what he has thus consecrated to the Lord's service. I have proved again and again, in providence, that the Lord will abundantly make up to us, any sacrifice that we may make, or any act of kindness and liberality that we may show to the members of the mystical body of Christ.

I was much pleased and struck with E.'s letter. There is so little in our days of that sweet communion with the Lord of which she speaks, that I have thought that its insertion in the *Gospel Standard* might be both a stirring up, as Peter speaks, of the pure minds of others, as well as a tacit reproof and rebuke to the cold and carnal state in which Christians are for the most part so deeply sunk. . . .

The feeling of weakness, when one has so much to do which demands energy and strength, is in itself a severe trial. Only those who know how exhausting mental labor is can form an idea of the trial which there is in weakness even where there is no pain; but when pain is mingled with it, it makes the trial severe and the burden of the daily cross heavy. But I trust I am deriving some spiritual benefit from it. We need trial upon trial, and stroke upon stroke to bring our soul out of carnality and death. We slip insensibly into carnal ease; but afflictions and trials of body and mind stir us up to some degree of earnestness in prayer and supplication, give a force and reality to the things of God, show us the emptiness and vanity of earthly things, make

us feel the suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus; and as we taste any measure of sweetness and blessedness in Him He becomes more feelingly and experimentally all our salvation and all our desire. The Lord has His own way of dealing with us. None can lay down lines for Him, and though His dealings with each seem to differ widely, and few at the time can read His purposes, for He brings the blind by a way which they knew not, yet in the end all His ways are found to be ways of mercy, truth and peace—all stamped with the impress of infinite wisdom, and tender mercy and love. . . . Yours very sincerely and affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 5, 1868

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—You have been very kind in communicating to me the tidings of our dear friend Miss Wild's death. It has taken place somewhat sooner than I had anticipated; but considering that the winter is coming on, which would no doubt have severely tried her weakened frame, I cannot but view it as a mercy that she is removed to that happy land of which the inhabitants shall no more say 'I am sick'. She was one of the most honest people that I ever knew in my life, and though there was a roughness or rather abruptness in her manner, yet it was so mixed with good feeling, as well as softened by grace, that there was nothing in it repulsive or annoying. I always liked her from my first acquaintance with her, when I used to go to S., and afterwards to the farm on the hill. She was a very tender and affectionate daughter, and she and her poor mother, with many points of roughness in each, yet were much united in the things of God, and were, I believe, especially in latter days, a comfort to each other. There was one thing very satisfactory in her religion—that you could depend upon all that she said, and that she would rather keep back the marks and evidences of God's manifested favor than put them forward, or wish you to think well of them. I consider that the Lord was very gracious to her in the latter portion of her life; and though she had a rough and thorny path, yet her afflictions and trials were much blessed and sanctified to the good of her soul. I wish there were more like her, whose religion bore so clear a stamp of being a divine work, and one which the Lord so owned, crowned, and blessed.

I hope, through God's mercy, I am slowly recovering from my late attack; but though not severe, it seems to have laid deeper and firmer hold of me than almost any one that I have had since I left Stamford. I think the heat and exertion of preaching during the last summer had enfeebled my frame, and therefore when I took cold, it seemed to lay firmer hold of me. I much feel being shut up so much in the house, as I have not been out of the gate even to chapel since I came home. I hope however that the affliction and trial has not been sent altogether in vain, and that I have reaped some small measure of spiritual profit from it. Hart well and wisely says, "Affliction makes us see what otherwise would escape our sight".

It seems to bring us to book, to make us consider our latter end, to wean and separate from the world, to give power and reality to divine things, to stir up the grace of prayer and supplication, to show us the emptiness of all natural and creature religion, to make us look more simply and believingly to the

blessed Lord, to feel how suitable He is to every want and woe; and that in Him, and in Him alone, is pardon, acceptance, and peace. It also discovers and brings to light many past sins, and working with the grace of God brings us to confession, self-abhorrence, contrition, brokenness, and humility before Him, against and before whom we have so deeply and dreadfully sinned.

We cannot choose our own path or our own trials, and usually do not know what the Lord is doing with us by them, until after-light discovers them. He brings the blind by a way that they knew not, but sooner or later He will make every crooked thing straight, and every rough place smooth. When we look back upon the way by which we have been led, how many things we see which should indeed humble us into the very dust. And yet how wonderfully has the Lord at various times appeared for us, and in various ways stretched forth His blessed hand.

My desire is, and never was stronger in my life, to walk in the fear of God, and to have the manifestations of His mercy, goodness, and love. There is a divine reality in true religion, as our dear friend Miss Wild found upon a dying bed; and if we have not a little of this divine reality, we have nothing. For this, you will bear me witness, I have always contended, from the day when you first saw my face and heard my voice in Stadham Church; and it was this which gave me a place in your esteem and affections, because you had a testimony in your own conscience that it was a solemn and saving truth, and that in it lay the sum and substance of all vital godliness. You have had many testimonies to the power and reality of this real religion in those at Allington, who have lived and died in it, as our dear friend Mr. Tuckwell and many others; and I consider your little place highly favored, that the Lord should have had many living witnesses, that His eye has been upon it for good, and that He has honored, owned, and blessed the Word of His grace preached therein. It is a sweet confirmation of the past, and a blessed encouragement for the future—for Jesus Christ in whom we believe is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 19, 1868

My clear Friend, Thomas Godwin—I have often thought what a mercy it is that the people of God are not dependent upon one another for the supplies of grace whereby they live unto God. The ministry is useful, the conversation of friends is useful, correspondence by letter on the precious things of God is often useful, and from each and all of these we have derived or communicated profit. But how soon these cisterns may become dry, and indeed, unless supplied immediately from the Lord Himself, all the water contained in them is soon dried up and gone.

What a mercy then it is for our souls that there is a most gracious Lord, in whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, that we might receive of His fullness, and grace for grace! How blessedly suitable He is to every want and woe, and how the poor soul is ever looking unto, longing after, hanging upon, and cleaving to Him as all its salvation and all its desire.

Friends live apart, those whom we have known and loved are taken home, there are few opportunities for union and communion among Christian friends; but the Lord is ever near, ready of access by night and by day, full of pity and compassion to poor sin-sick souls, and able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. He never disappoints any who trust in Him, is more willing to hear than we to pray, and more willing to give than we to ask. The great, the only real grief of the soul is, that it should sin against Him, be denied His presence, not get a word from His lips, a smile from His face, or a touch from His hand.

We, my dear friend, are fast traveling down the valley of life; our lease will soon be run out, and after that, every year is beyond Scriptural limit of the appointed life of man. My desire is that my last days may be my best days, and I much dread sinking down into carnality and death. I have many things to try my mind; indeed some things, I may say many things, which try me most I have never named, and probably shall never name to any living soul. Every heart knows its own bitterness, and the wormwood and the gall which lie at the bottom of the heart do not always or often come to light; and yet it is felt that nothing but a word from the Lord can purge them out or sweeten them.

But I have proved this, that trials and exercises of body and mind keep the soul alive unto God, and thus I hope I have reason to bless Him, among other mercies, that He is pleased to keep my soul more or less alive unto Himself, and that chiefly through circumstances which in themselves are painful and distressing. Among the wonderful mysteries of the kingdom of God, this is not the least the way in which He makes even those very sins which cause shame and sorrow to work together for our spiritual good. It is a wonderful thing to be a Christian, and the longer I live, the more I see how few there are, and what little real grace the very best Christians possess or manifest. In this life it is as it were the bud; the full fruit is reserved for a state of glory. . .

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

November 23, 1868

My dear Friend, Mrs. Clowes—I have often reproached myself with not writing to you, and I fear you must have thought it not only neglectful but ungrateful on my part, and a poor return for the great kindness and hospitality which I have received at your hands. But you know, my dear friend, how much my time is engaged, and that my silence does not spring from any lack of gratitude or affection. I take, then, the opportunity of a little leisure to send you a few lines. . . .

Now, my dear friend, as regards yourself. You found things at Y—, some of which gratified and some of which pained your mind. You were glad to find there was a pleasing recollection of your deceased brother, and yet how many things recalled to your mind the memory of the loved one whom you have lost. It was his native county, and I have always observed that Norfolk men have a singular affection for the place of their nativity. It was the case with

your dear husband, who, though so long separated from it, still retained a good deal of his native affection for it. When you sat upon the pier, looking out on the wide sea and inhaling the healthy breeze, how you longed to have him again at your side, and the silent tear trickled down your cheek, or a convulsive sigh burst forth at the recollection of the past, and the feeling that you would never again in this life see him more. But you have found that the sorrow of this world works death.

A heart devoid of feeling and affection is repulsive and disgusting in all, but in none more than in a widow, who, in losing her husband, has lost her earthly all. But this earthly sorrow is, for the most part, so often mingled with self-pity, murmuring, fretfulness, unthankfulness, creature-idolatry, and hardness of heart towards God, that it is often, if not sin, yet an occasion for sin. And I would ask you if, after you have had one of your bursts of sorrow and passionate grief, whether, unless the Lord has blessed and supported you under them, you have not found darkness of mind, hardness of heart, and unbelief to get sensible prevalence. This is what the apostle means by telling us that the sorrow of this world works death, as opposed to that godly sorrow which works repentance to salvation not to be repented of.

Do not think me unkind in writing thus. I know and feel for your desolate state; but that is the very reason why you should not, by brooding over your sorrows, increase their weight and make you feel every day more desolate still. I do hope that the Lord will draw you near unto Himself, and, using this affliction as a means of weaning you from all earthly happiness, will fix your heart more upon Himself. If you could see it you have many mercies to be thankful for, and would even find that there was a blessing couched in your bereavement.

. . . As regards myself I hope I may say I am better; but my recovery has been very slow. At present I continue in the house, and fear I shall be a prisoner most of the winter.

My dear wife and daughters unite with me in love.
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

December 22, 1868

My dear Friends in the Lord, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris—I am thankful to say that I feel somewhat better than when I wrote last. Twice I have been for a little walk, and was able last Lord's day to go to chapel for the first time since my return home. I was glad once more to meet with the people, and they seemed glad also to welcome me again in their midst. The text was from Isaiah 12:2; but I did not hear my dear friend quite so well as I hoped, and as I have sometimes heard him. But we well know how much we vary in our hearing, and how dependent we are upon the Lord to make His Word spirit and life to our souls. The disciples, who heard the gracious words that fell from our Lord's lips in the days of His flesh, knew and felt but little either of their meaning or their power. It was only after His resurrection and His ascension on high, when He sent the promised Comforter and Teacher, that

what they heard Him speak was brought to their remembrance, its meaning unfolded, and its truth and power impressed upon their souls. Not only must the seed be good, but there must be a prepared and good soil for it to fall into; and even then showers and sun are needed to make it spring up, and grow, and bear fruit.

It is a great mercy when those words of the Apostle are fulfilled in us—"Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom." Our heart must ever be full of something—either sin, worldliness, vanity, and folly, or the solemn realities of eternity. And it is according as our mind and thoughts are occupied with one or the other, that we are what we are, either before God or man. If sin, carnality, worldliness, and all that is vain and foolish, occupy and possess our minds, the growth of these weeds choke what there may be of the life of God in the soul; and we are barren, unfruitful, unbelieving, and worldly-minded, both inwardly before God and in our conversation, walk, and conduct before men. But when the Word of God strikes deep root in the soul, then, as by it alone do we know anything of divine realities, there is more or less of fruitfulness before God and man.

All the truth that we know profitably and savingly, all the experience that we have of the things of God, all the acquaintance, union, and communion that we have or can have with the Father and the Son in this time state, can only be through the Word of truth as opened by the Spirit to the enlightened understanding, and applied by His power to the heart and conscience. And there is this great blessedness in this sanctifying light and life, which come into the soul through the Word, that they draw the heart upward into heavenly things, and thus subdue and keep out the power of those worldly things, of which our mind is naturally full, and in which our carnal nature lives. But the wonder is, what strange and sudden changes and mutations take place in the mind; so that in one half-hour we may seem so under the power of eternal things, as if there were nothing else worth seeking or desiring, and yet in the next half-hour we may seem in our feelings as carnal, worldly, sinful, and sensual, dark, ignorant, and unbelieving, as if there were not, and never had been, one grain of grace or godly fear in the soul.

But amid all these changes it is our mercy that we have to do with the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, and with His Word, which endures forever. May we highly prize it, read it with profit and pleasure, feel its power and influence, be cast into the mold of it, and ever find it to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. It is a treasure of which nothing can deprive us, and though we should ever highly prize a preached Gospel as being an ordinance of God, and be thankful for having our lot cast under it, yet the Lord may be pleased to feed our souls in private as much, if not more, by reading and meditating upon the Word of His grace. Nor does this at all interfere with, or militate against the preached Word, for the best hearers are those who are best instructed out of the Word in what they get alone, and their souls when watered by private reading, prayer, and meditation are most fit to receive the Word in its public ministrations. Next to being quickened and made alive, is to be kept alive and lively in the things of God; and this cannot be by negligence, sloth, and carelessness, as if God would give the blessing independently of our seeking

or desiring. But I will not run on further in this strain, lest the whole of my letter should be too much on one subject.

I send you some letters, among them one from the French lady whom I named to you. I had asked her to spend a part of her holidays here, and at the same time expressed my wish that she would write down some of the dealings of God with her soul; and I told her that she might write to me in her own language, if she felt more liberty in doing so. This will explain some things in her letter. I have often thought of several things which she named in the account that she gave of the Lord's dealings with her soul. There was something in it so real and sterling, so original and fresh, so evidently the teaching and work of the Lord, that it made a deep impression upon my mind, and her manner was so simple, humble, and modest, that what she said commended itself so much to the conscience. Most of us old professors are so covered over and muffled up in a kind of traditionary religion that, when we meet with one who has been led in a peculiar, and yet unmistakably gracious path, it seems to come with a peculiar weight and freshness to the mind.

And now, my dear friends, I wish you the enjoyment of all those blessings which are connected with the season of the year—assuming that it was the season in which the Lord came into the world; and may we never forget why He came, for it is most suitable to us. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance", and therefore of yours and mine, "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners", and can we not add—I am sure I can, and that with great reason—"of whom I am chief"? And again, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save those who were lost." And were we not lost, to all intents and purposes, completely ruined, without hope or help? And have we not a thousand times over destroyed ourselves, so as to need above most Him in whom is all our help? I am well persuaded that a knowledge of sin and of the depths of the fall is necessary to any right view or feeling of salvation by the blood of the Lamb. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

December 30, 1868

My dear Mrs. Gadsby—We all desire much to sympathize with you in your present affliction, and sincerely hope that you may soon recover from the shock and suffering which must have been caused by your unhappy overturn. I well remember what a sufferer you were, a year or two ago, from being knocked down in the street; and without sanctioning any such thought or expression as "fatality", it would almost seem as if it were your lot to get the heaviest part of such visitations.

I remember well also, a few words which dropped from you in the vestry at Gower Street, when I expressed my sympathy with you in your long affliction and trial; and indeed it greatly rejoiced my heart to find that the sweetness of manifested mercy had so dropped into your cup, as to reconcile you to its often bitter draught. Oh, what is this wretched world, and this poor vain life of ours, which every day is shortening and bringing to its appointed close! Surely, well has it been said of it, that it is all "vanity and vexation of spirit."

But to be able, in sweet hope and confidence, to look beyond this wretched life to a state of eternal bliss, where there is neither sin—the greatest of all ills, nor sickness—of which you have had a large portion, nor sorrow—of which no doubt you have had your share, will not this make ample amends for all?

Salvation is for sinners; for "it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." As such therefore, and as such only, must we be saved.

We all unite in very kind regards and the best wishes of the season to Mr. Gadsby, Mrs. Wright, and Mr. Alfred.
Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

LETTERS of J. C. Philpot

(1869)

January 8, 1869

My dear Mr. Copcutt—You speak in your letter of a sermon by the late Mr. M'Kenzie. He was indeed a very gracious godly man, and was for several years co-editor with me in conducting *The Gospel Standard*. He died in the year 1849, comparatively a young man, was much esteemed by the church of God as a minister of truth, and was taken away, as appeared to us, just in the midst of his usefulness, making a very good end, and leaving behind him a cherished memory.

Mr. Tiptaft was indeed a most remarkable man, and my memoir gives but a very imperfect account of the life of self-denial, separation from the world, devotedness to the work of the ministry, nobility and liberality of mind, which he displayed ever since I first knew him. It is remarkable how the Lord owned and blessed his ministry. No man in my day was so much owned, both to the calling of sinners, and the consolation of saints. He was not highly gifted as a minister in the ordinary sense of the term; but what he spoke was with authority and power, as what he knew for himself by divine teaching and spiritual experience; and it was so backed and confirmed by the power of his life and his upright godly walk. He was thus a striking instance that it was not by might, or by power, that is of the creature, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts, that all real work is done. What is effected by mere eloquence only touches the flesh and passes away; but what God does in the soul by the power of His grace is saving and permanent.

I would like you to see some of the back volumes of *The Gospel Standard*, published now many years ago, as there are many papers, letters, obituaries, etc. in them which are very edifying.

Yours very sincerely,
J. C. P.

January 27, 1869

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake. . . In all who truly fear God and believe in His dear Son; in all in whose hearts the blessed Spirit is graciously at work, both to bring down and raise up, lay low in their own eyes and make Christ precious, show the evil of sin, give them repentance for it, creating a love for true holiness and spirituality of mind, with meekness, simplicity, sincerity, tenderness, brokenness of heart, and contrition of spirit—I say, where the blessed Spirit is thus at work, there and there only will there be true union in the solemn things of God. True union lies deep, and its foundations are out of sight. There is nothing in it earthly or carnal; and as what is earthly and carnal in us ever floats, so to speak, at the top, everything truly spiritual, holy, and gracious, being weighty and solid, lies at the bottom.

If you will examine your heart, as seeing light in God's light, you will see that the best part of your religion lies the deepest. No man therefore can know anything of the mysteries of true religion and the secrets of vital godliness, who is not well brought down in his own soul. And thus a Christian, to his wonder and surprise, finds that the lower he sinks in himself, the more that he is abased, humbled, and brought down in his soul before the Lord, the nearer he is able to approach Him. In this way a sight and sense of our dreadful sins, the evils of our heart, the iniquities which are more in number than the hairs of our head, when attended with a feeling of the infinite forbearance of God, His tender mercy in Christ, the riches of His superabounding grace, the depths of His wondrous love, are made most profitable.

Until we are really humbled and brought down before God, with a view of His mercy and grace in Christ Jesus, we cannot bear to deal honestly with ourselves, or for others to deal honestly with us. It is our pride, our self-righteousness, our presumption, and our hypocrisy, our double dealing with God and our own consciences, which make us shrink from being searched by His Word and the light of His Spirit. As long as a man stands in his own strength or goodness, all the curses of God's law strike at him as a sinner; but when he falls flat, as it were, on his face, confessing his iniquity, loathing himself in his own eyes for his baseness, and looking up in faith, hope, and love to the Lord of life and glory, as putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, then all the storm is ceased, and the blessings, promises, and mercies of the Gospel fall upon his soul like the still small rain and the refreshing dew.

And as these mercies enter into his heart, they bring forth in him every Gospel fruit. Prayer, and sometimes praise, spirituality of mind, love to the Lord and His truth, earnest desires to walk in His fear and live to His praise, separation in heart and spirit from an ungodly world, an understanding of the heavenly meaning of the Scriptures, and a stretching forth of the cords of love and affection toward the dear family of God—these and other fruits spring up and grow in the heart which is truly brought down by grace.

On the contrary, where the evil of sin is little seen or felt, where there is no abasement of spirit or humility of mind before the Lord, as being so utterly

vile, and no corresponding sense of the infinite mercy and goodness of God, there religion for the most part is only in name. In that soil pride, self-righteousness, presumption, hypocrisy, worldliness, carnality, and covetousness, a spirit of strife and contention, a name to live when dead, a trifling with God and conscience, an indulgence of secret idols, and walking in many things which are highly displeasing to the Lord, will be found rife and strong.

Be not afraid therefore, dear friend, of seeing the worst of yourself. You have not seen half or a tenth part, I may say a hundredth part, yet. With all your experience of many years, and all the sight and sense which you have had of the evil that is in you, you have really seen and known but little of what a fallen sinner is in the sight of God. Indeed none of us could bear to see it. The sight would sink us into despair, unless specially held up by the power of God.

But I would say to you and to all my friends in the Lord, be not afraid of sinking too low in your own eyes. Dread presumption, pride, self-righteousness, vain security, a dead assurance, and empty formality; but covet sweet humility, brokenness of heart, contrition of spirit, tenderness of conscience, spirituality of mind, meekness, and quietness; and above all things covet earnestly precious manifestations of the Lord to your soul, sweet glimpses of His Person and work, and breakings in of the light of His countenance, and of what He is in Himself as the Son of God, and as the Mediator between God and men, the risen and glorified Intercessor, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

The Lord means to teach us that grace is grace, and that we can be saved in no other way. It is a lesson easy to learn in word, but to know it in its blessed reality and truth is no such easy matter; for it can only be known by knowing experimentally the depths of sin and guilt out of which it saves. When then we are being led down into these depths, there seems to be little before the soul but ruin and despair. It does not see that this sight and sense of sin is a needful preparation, to know what grace is and what grace can do; but when grace is manifested in its fullness and its super-aboundings, then the wonder is that grace so rich and free should ever be extended unto, or should ever reach, a soul so vile. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

February 16th, 1869

My dear Friend, Mrs. Clowes—I have felt desirous to send you a few lines of affectionate sympathy on the recurrence of the mournful day which took from you the delight of your eyes; and though I would not wish to encourage you in feeding that sorrow which often works death, yet would I wish to feel for you and with you under the weight of your distressing bereavement. How rapidly has time passed away since that dark and gloomy day, and I trust that it has mitigated the keen edge of your sorrow, though the only true balm is to be found in those sweet consolations which can bear the soul up under the heaviest load. As I trust the keenness of your sorrow has been thus

mitigated, you will be able to see with clearer eyes, and to feel with more abounding and abiding gratitude the unspeakable mercy that your late dear husband left behind him so sweet a testimony of his saving interest in the precious blood and righteousness of our gracious Lord. This is an enduring consolation when you can realize it by faith, and is the best remedy against all murmuring and rebellion under the painful dispensation.

Great and many are your mercies if you could but clearly see and realize them. How many poor widows have deep providential trials from which you are exempt. How afflicted others are in body or mind, and how many godly women have no clear evidence that their husbands died in the Lord. Nor are you without some sweet testimonies and gracious visits of the Lord to your soul, all which are or should be matter of thankfulness and comfort.

Yours very affectionately,

J. C. P.

March 1, 1869

My dear Friend—I much fear lest, if I do not send you a few lines, you will think there is some reason why I have been so long silent, beyond being prevented by my usual work. But somehow or other, I have been more than usually occupied of late, and have only just now obtained a little release. You have sometimes said that my work is like a woman's work, ever beginning and never ending—and so I still find it, until sometimes I feel quite weary, and would be glad to lay it down, could I conscientiously do so. Every now and then also I get a testimony that my labor is not in vain in the Lord. This encourages me still to go on while it is day—for the night comes when no man can work.

Many years have rolled over our heads since we first met; and as regards myself, having had at various times so much illness, I begin to feel infirmities of advancing life, and must expect to find them more and more. Still upon the whole, I have been brought through the winter thus far, without suffering any attack of my illness; yet have been a good deal confined to the house, which I find suits me better than going out of doors when the weather is cold.

...

You will perceive from the date that this was written yesterday, before I received your kind letter this morning. When I saw your handwriting, I made quite sure that your letter would be to scold me for my long silence; but with your accustomed kindness and affectionate feeling, you do not take the whip in hand, as I may say I deserve. Forgive me this wrong.

I am glad to hear, for various reasons, that you are going from home for a short time, and to preach at Hastings and Brighton. The change will, I hope, be made a blessing to you, in removing that low fever which, no doubt, springs from your present damp locality; and the seaside is just the place for you. I am glad also that you are going to Hastings among Mr. Fenner's people. Though I never knew him or them, yet I have long felt much union of spirit with them, as a people who have so long contended for the power of vital godliness. I understand they hang together very comfortably. They

much wished me to go down among them after Mr. F.'s death, not so much to preach to them, but as desirous to see and converse with me face to face, *knowing me so well by my writings*. I hope the Lord will be with you and bless you and them together.

Poor White's illness is a great trial to the friends at Brighton. I felt convinced, when I saw him here, from his appearance, that he was consumptive, and I have little expectation of his eventual recovery. Like many others similarly afflicted, he may ebb and flow, be sometimes better and sometimes worse—but to my mind, he is not a man long for this world. I hear a good account of his ministry, which makes it all the more trying to the people. I was thinking this morning what a trial it would be to the people here, if our dear friend Covell were laid aside from the ministry; and since I have been a hearer, I can enter more into the privation which is felt by a church and people, who are deprived of the benefit and blessing of a feeling, experimental, godly ministry, by the death or removal of their esteemed and beloved minister. I find his ministry edifying and profitable; sometimes very searching, and sometimes very encouraging. He seemed all alive last Lord's day morning, and I think I never heard him more earnest and fervent in prayer, though I have had more feeling under it.

I shall be glad to see you and your dear wife also on Friday, as we do not often meet now, and time is passing away quickly with us. We are all, through mercy, pretty well in health, and my two boys working hard.

We unite in love to yourself and your dear wife.
Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

March 3, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris. . . Among the trying and painful parts of our experience, we have to learn the dryness and deadness of our souls when not under any felt divine influence, and that at such seasons, if we attempt to speak or write upon the things of God, barrenness and death seem to rest upon all that proceeds from us. Truly our gracious Lord said—"Without Me you can do nothing." He is and ever must be everything in us, as well as everything for us, and everything to us. Without His divine communications we can neither pray, nor read, nor meditate, with any faith in living exercise; and therefore as all our springs are in Him, and as all communication from Him is through faith, the suspension of His gracious influences through the Spirit leaves us dark, barren, dry, and as if dead. But what a mercy it is for those who have an interest in the love, and blood, and grace of the Son of God, that He changes not, but rests in His love, is of one mind and none can turn Him, and is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

When we take a review of all the temptations, trials, sins, backslidings, wanderings, and startings-aside that we have been guilty of, all the hard thoughts, peevish and rebellious uprisings, with all the sad unprofitableness, backwardness to good, proneness to evil, determination to have our own will

and way, and all that mass of inconsistency which sometimes seems to frighten us in the retrospect, lest we be deceived altogether—I say, when we look over these things, what reason we have to cling close to the precious blood and righteousness of the Christ of God, that we may find in Him a refuge from our sinful, vile, and guilty selves!

It seems sad that, after so many years' experience of the goodness and mercy of God, and after all we have seen, known, tasted, felt, and handled of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, of His suitability, beauty, blessedness, grace, and glory, we should still find so much sin, carnality, unbelief, infidelity, and every other evil, alive and lively within. How it shows the depth of the Fall, and the incurable corruption of our nature, that neither time, nor advancing years, nor bodily infirmity, nor any other change of circumstances can alter this wretched heart, turn it into a right course, or make it obedient and fruitful; but that like the barren heath, no cultivation can bring out of it either flower or fruit.

But on the other hand, what a rich and unspeakable mercy it is for those who are born of God, that they are possessed of a new and divine nature, in which there have been planted, by an Almighty hand, the precious graces of faith, hope, and love, with everything which can qualify and make them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

Perhaps, as we advance in life and become established in the truth, we see and feel more clearly and distinctly the difference which separates these two natures, and look with almost equal surprise on the dreadful depravity of the one, and the spiritual character of the other, groveling in the one in all the dregs of earth, and I might say, all the sins of hell, and rising up in the other to all that is holy, heavenly, and good. Mr. Huntington says that he was three men, though but one coalheaver—(1) as a man—(2) as having an old man—and (3) as having a new man. This witness is true. We have our natural body, which often makes us sigh under the sicknesses and infirmities which attend it—then there is that corrupt nature which has so long been, and still is, such a plague; and then there is that new and divine nature, we trust, which is born of God, and which sins not, dwelling as it does in the midst of sin and corruption.

Now as the natural body is sustained by food, and our corrupt nature is fed and strengthened by all that is evil, so the new man of grace is sustained by the pure truth of God, and especially by communications of grace and life, out of the fullness of the blessed Lord. It is to Him that the new man of grace looks, listens to His voice, hears His word, delights in His Person and work, longs after the visitations of His presence and the manifestations of His love, and oh, how at times it longs for, presses after, and cries out for His visits, "Oh, when will You come unto me!" And how gladly, as Hart says, would it entertain Him and give Him the best room!

But how soon again all these earnest desires and pressings forward seem to droop and die; and our wretched heart again grovels in the dust, just as if there never had been, nor was one grain of grace or one spark of divine life. How earnestly at times do I desire and pray for the Lord to rend the veil, break in with His own most blessed and glorious light, and come Himself into

my heart in His risen power and glory. There is much truth in Mr. Hart's words and the connection, "We pray to be new-born, and know not what we mean".

But what an unspeakable mercy it is for us, that the Lord changes not as we change, and that He views us, not as standing in all our rags and ruin, all our filth and folly, but in the Person of His dear Son, in whom He is ever well pleased.

I desire to commend you both, with all whom we know and love in the Lord, who worship among you with your dear pastor and his wife, the deacons and members of the church, to the Lord.

Yours very affectionately in Him,

J. C. P.

April 19, 1869

My dear Friend, Mr. Tips. . . I dare say you have not forgotten your visit to Stamford, and what you saw and heard there, though we were not able to converse so much as we could have done, if we had understood one another's language. But I hope we understood a better language, even the language of Canaan. I have no doubt you have had your share of trials and afflictions since we parted, and I hope that they have been blessed and sanctified to your soul's spiritual good. It is through much tribulation that we enter the kingdom of God, and many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all. This makes all the difference between the afflictions of the righteous and of the ungodly, that to the one the afflictions are a blessing, and to the other a curse; for they soften the heart of the one, and they harden the heart of the other. In the case of the righteous, they instrumentally bring forth prayer and supplication to the Lord, and wean the heart from the world; but in the ungodly they only produce sullenness, self-pity, and rebellion.

What a mercy it is to have a God to go to, and to know that we have a merciful, sympathizing High Priest at the right hand of the Father, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. When we look at the majesty, holiness, justice, and purity of God, and seeing light in His light, see also our own sinfulness and depravity; when we think of the numerous, yes innumerable, sins and crimes which we have committed in thought, word, and deed; when we see also our helplessness and inability to save or deliver our souls from the wrath to come, the sight and feeling of all these things is enough to sink our souls into despair!

But when we see by the eye of faith what a Savior God has provided for poor lost sinners in His dear Son, what a mighty Redeemer, ever-loving Advocate, and all-prevailing Mediator, then it raises up sweet hope and blessed encouragement, and the heart goes out after this divine Mediator in faith and love as feeling how suitable, how precious He is to those who believe. We thus learn that there is no salvation but by sovereign grace; that the Son of Man came to seek and to save those who are lost. We are very unwilling to see,

much more to feel ourselves to be sinners—but it is only as sinners that we can be saved, for "this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners".

Yours in Christian affection,
J. C. P.

April 21, 1869

My dear Friend in the Lord, Mrs. Peake—The tidings contained in your letter of the removal of Mrs. Prentice from this valley of tears were somewhat sudden, but not altogether unexpected, for your last kind communication prepared me to anticipate such a change. It would indeed be a blessed exchange for her, for her sufferings during the last few years have been great and complicated; and perhaps she was not constitutionally able to bear suffering as some can who are similarly afflicted. I consider her, viewing what God did for her soul and the circumstances under which it was done, as one of the most remarkable instances of the power of God that have come under my personal observation. My memory is not what I may call a verbal one, which I have often regretted; that is, I cannot distinctly remember the exact words of a conversation related to me; but if I could do so, the relation which she gave me of the dealings of God with her soul would indeed be very marked and memorable. I have always considered her deliverance as the greatest that I ever heard with my own ears, and for clearness and power very little short of what was given to Hart and Huntington. But it was something to this effect—she was in very deep distress of soul, and went into a dark closet where she threw herself flat upon her face. All of a sudden, the dark closet was lighted up as if with a heavenly glory; she looked up astonished at the sight, and it seemed to her as if she saw God the Father sitting upon His eternal throne, and He spoke to her these or similar words—"You cannot be saved by the works of the law. Outside of my dear Son, I am a consuming fire; but for His sake I have forgiven you all your sins, past, present, and to come, and you shall be with Me forever; live to My glory." This is the substance, and I think very near the exact words. I need not tell you what a wonderful revolution they wrought in her soul; but what seemed to make almost the deepest impression was the words, "Live to My glory", for there she found the great difficulty, and her inability except by special grace. But it made, and kept, her conscience tender, and was ever set before her as the guiding rule of her life.

I think it was after this that she got so dreadfully entangled in legal bondage through sitting under a legal ministry, that she almost lost sight of this great deliverance. I believe it was about this time that my sermons first fell into her hands, and one of them, I think it was *Winter before Harvest*, was the means of bringing her out of this legal bondage. I have heard her say that the first time she read it, it seemed to her as if a light from heaven shone upon one special page, and from that was reflected into her heart. So blessed was this sermon to her soul, and so fond was she of it, that she carried it in her bosom until it was quite worn out. I have seen it, and tattered it was. She had no idea that the writer was alive, but thought he had been dead many years ago, and to use her expression, was with Abraham. Through her master's son, who I believe heard me in London, she learned that the writer was still alive,

and that there were more sermons to be had by him. Some of these she somehow procured, and finding they were preached at Eden Street sent me a letter directed there, which somehow reached me.

I cannot go through the remarkable steps in providence whereby she came first to Stamford, and then under my roof; but Mrs. W. knew all the circumstances and could tell you, and very probably remembers much of her experience which I have forgotten. Like most others she had her defects and failings, and these often obscured the work of grace; but taking her as a gracious character, I consider that there are few among you who were so well and deeply taught in the things of God, or who knew so much of the power and reality of the thing she professed. I had much union of spirit with her, and believe I can say I never heard her drop a word on the things of God which was not commended to my conscience. As regards spiritual things we never had a jar, and she always treated me with great respect and affection. But you know, as well as most, that generally there are trying circumstances when master and servant both profess, and we hope possess, the truth and fear of God. I have heard her say however, that she found it profitable to her soul to be under my roof, and though I dare hardly add it, that my example was good for her soul. . .

I enclose a letter of Mr. Parry's, which you will hardly understand, from not knowing the people of whom he speaks. I am utterly unworthy, and ever was, of such a favor and such a distinction; but I would lie if I did not believe that God had wrought by me, and at one period very specially. This is the time of which Mr. Parry speaks, when I first went to Allington. There was a power put forth at that time inferior, I admit, but almost similar to that shown at Oakham when William Tiptaft first preached there, and the effects of that power are visible to this day, though nearly thirty-four years ago.

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

May 31, 1869

My dear Friend, Joseph Parry—I have reason to believe, from all I have heard, that the obituary of the Wilds has been generally well received. What people want is something real, something genuine, something that they can depend upon—and you will find that, for the most part, it is not great things which comfort and encourage the people of God, but that peculiar line of trials and exercises every now and then lightened up and delivered from by the Lord's appearing, such as is marked out in the obituary. There is also some biography connected with the spiritual part which always gives an interest to obituaries, and when connected with the experience throws a light upon it.

I am not surprised that you look back sometimes to those former days going on for 34 years ago, when certainly there was a marked power attending the word at Allington. Besides those whom we remember with so much affection, some of whom you have named in your letter, there were doubtless others powerfully wrought upon, of whom we knew little or nothing; for the work was not confined to a few years, but was spread over many at my annual

visits, when we used to have such gatherings from all parts. I have had, and still have, many exercises both about my personal standing and my ministry; but I cannot doubt that the Lord has wrought by me, and indeed on several occasions in a very marked way. I have often thought of the words of the great Apostle, 1 Cor. 9:27, latter clause; and indeed, but for sovereign and superabounding grace, should find it so. I often tell the Lord what a theme of thankful praise, what a debt of eternal gratitude, I shall owe Him for saving my soul. People say, but I can more than say, I am sure that no greater sinner will enter heaven.

Mr. Hazlerigg was here on Wednesday evening, and preached from Phil. 3:10, 11. I am glad to say that I heard him very sweetly. He preached not only a very able, but a very experimental and faithful, sermon; indeed, a superior sermon, and with a good deal of real vital experience, and such things as I could set to my seal were not only sound Gospel truth, but the real feelings of a living exercised soul. It happened to be what is called the Derby day, and the cab which I ordered did not come until 7:20, so that I only got in after he had begun prayer, in which I thought him very nice. He called in the afternoon, when he spoke of the late Mrs. —, and was well persuaded of her safety. He visited her in her illness, and said that on one occasion when he left her, she had spoken with so much brokenness, contrition, and with such sweetness upon the dealings of God with her soul, that, to use his expression, "he had never left a sick room more exhilarated or persuaded of the reality of the work." We both felt that what once looked well in her had been sadly buried by prosperity, &c., but, as he remarked, the Lord would not let her enjoy this world—for she had little else but bodily suffering, and I believe at the last very great. I understand that on one occasion she was so blessed that, not being able to sing herself from weakness, she had her maids into her room and made them sing for her. What a sovereign God is, and how, as poor Mrs. Wild said to Mary, the work of the Lord upon the soul can never be extinguished, however weak it may seem for a time to appear. . .

Yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

June 3, 1869

My dear Friend in the Lord, Mrs. Peake—I have been so much occupied with preparing for publication my little work on the *Advance of Popery*, that I have scarcely found time to attend to my private correspondence. This must plead my excuse for not taking earlier notice of your kind and interesting letters. I have now however nearly finished it, and hope to be able to get it out before the end of the month. It has cost me some time and trouble, as I had both to re-write some parts and re-arrange others; and after all, having been written at various times and in detached articles, I fear it will be found to lack unity of thought and language, as well as arrangement, and to have too much repetition.

I have received several communications like your own, requesting me not to abridge the sermons, and therefore I feel bound to listen to what seems to be the general feeling and voice of its readers. The Lord works by whom He will work, as He sends by whom He will send; and thus if His gracious Majesty is

pleased to make use of my printed sermons for His people's good and His own glory, what can I say? I did not commence their publication, nor have I derived the slightest profit from them. All the labor that I have bestowed upon them, in revising and preparing them for the press, has been on my part wholly gratuitous, so that I have received nothing for my trouble, but the pleasing thought of their being made profitable to the church of God, which is far better pay than all that gold or silver could bestow.

I am glad that you, as well as others, have read with such interest and feeling the account which I have been enabled to give of the Wilds. They were indeed most worthy and excellent people, so honest and sincere in word and deed, so afraid of presumption and hypocrisy, and so deeply tried and exercised in almost every way—body, soul, family, and circumstances. I would think there was scarcely a trial or temptation, come from what quarter it may, which poor Mrs. Wild had not some experience of. But perhaps the account of her trials and sufferings, which I have recorded in *The Gospel Standard*, may be made a means of comforting and encouraging others who are called to walk in the same path of tribulation. She was a very sensible woman, and if I may say so, was very much attached to me and my ministry; indeed much more so than I could publicly mention.

It is at Allington as at Oakham—the old wine is better than the new. Though there are still many gracious people in that church and congregation, there is not now the life and power that there was in years past, nor the gatherings from all parts which there used to be in my former annual visits. But it seems to be everywhere the same—there is a gradual declension of the life and power of godliness. The work of grace upon the people is not so deep, clear, or decided, nor is the power of the Lord so present to heal as in days gone by. And I fear it will go on getting worse and worse until, according to the prophecies of the last days, men will have the form of godliness while they deny the power thereof.

The way of the cross is hateful to flesh and blood, and therefore a smooth easy path securing, as they think, the benefits and blessings of salvation without self-denial, mortification of the flesh, painful exercises, and many trials, is eagerly embraced and substituted for the straight and narrow way which leads unto life. And by this, or some other deceit of the flesh or delusion of the devil, all would perish in their sins, unless the Lord had chosen a peculiar people in the furnace of affliction and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His dear Son, here in suffering, and hereafter in glory. They, like all the rest, would gladly, as far as the flesh is concerned, stretch themselves on a bed too short, and wrap themselves up in a covering too narrow, and thus make a covenant with death and hell that they might be disturbed by fears of neither.

But this the Lord will not suffer, and therefore lays judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and then they find that they have made lies their refuge, and under falsehood have they hidden themselves.

Now until this covenant with death and hell is broken up, there will be no view by faith, no being brought unto or building upon the foundation which God has laid in Zion, even that stone, that tried stone, that precious corner-

stone on which the church is built. We may thus bless the Lord for every conviction, pang, trial, exercise, sorrow, distress, or temptation, which may, so to speak, uncase us of our self-righteousness and hypocrisy, and bring us to cleave to the rock for need of a shelter. And this not only at first, as if when peace was obtained by faith in the Son of God there were no more convictions of conscience or distress of mind to be undergone, but it was through more or less the whole of the divine life, one may say, to its very close.

I have been reading lately, and indeed read most evenings, Bourne's weighty letters, and I find them profitable, as pointing out so clearly the way of tribulation with its benefits and blessings. I would like you and your dear sister to read sometimes these truly experimental letters, and believe you would find them instructive and profitable. They and Huntington's Posthumous letters are, with the Scriptures, my chief reading. . . .
Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

June 11, 1869

My dear Friend, Mrs. Kershaw—I am sorry to find from a letter just received from Mr. Gadsby, that dear Mr. Kershaw is gradually sinking into the arms of death. But oh, what a mercy and a blessing it is for him and for you, and may I not add, for all his friends and the church of God, that he is so favored in his soul, and that the blessing of God rests like the dew upon the branch! It is indeed a fitting crown to his long and laborious life, a sealing testimony of the Lord the Spirit to the precious truths which he has so long preached, and a confirming evidence that the Jesus, whose name, blood, righteousness, and dying love he has so long labored to exalt, is now smiling upon His aged servant before He takes him home to Himself.

Amid all your present cares and anxieties, and the fatigue of nursing the dear invalid, I could not ask you to drop me a line how he is, but if S. J. would but write me a few words I should feel much obliged. Truly she said in her note to Mrs. Gadsby that his removal will be an indescribable loss to you and her. But oh, my dear friend, what a blessed thing it is for you to have such a testimony on his behalf! And though when the stroke comes, you may feel as if it were tearing body and soul asunder, and may sadly mourn your desolate state after so many years of wedded happiness and spiritual union, yet it will be a sweet balm to your bleeding heart, that he whom you so long and so justly loved is forever with his dear Lord. Please give him my Christian love. We have always walked in love and union for many years, and no cloud has ever come across our communion with each other.
Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

June 18, 1869

My dear Friend in the Lord, Mr. Tips. . . It is indeed a wonderful mercy to have divine life communicated to the soul, to have any living faith in the Lord

Jesus Christ, any hope in God's mercy, or any love to Him who is the altogether lovely, or any affection to His people as bearing His image and belonging to Him. This hope, faith, and love the Lord seems to have given you, my dear friend; and it is because He has wrought these graces in your heart by a divine power that you love His truth, His ways, His Word, and those who faithfully preach and write it. It never was an honor that I sought, to be made a blessing to His people by my sermons and writings; but it was the Lord's will, and the Lord's work. Nothing belongs to me but sin and shame. I have no good works to plead, but on the contrary, have to confess my sins, which have been great and grievous, and have no hope but in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which cleanses us from all sin. Most probably we shall never meet again on earth, but it will be the greatest of all our mercies to arrive safe on the heavenly shore; and I am very sure that it must be the free, rich, and superabounding grace of God which alone can bring us there. We live in a world of sin and sorrow; our wicked hearts are continually entangling us in sin and evil. It is very easy to depart from the Lord, but very hard to return to Him. Repentance, reconciliation, pardon, and peace are the free gifts of His grace, and indeed, it is a mercy that the Son of Man, who is the Son of God, came to seek and to save those who are lost. . . .

**Yours in the love of the Truth,
J. C. P.**

June 24, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris. . . I took the whole morning service at Gower Street last Lord's day, and was comfortably brought through, feeling life and liberty, both in prayer and preaching. From Isaiah 4:2, 3 I meant at first to take also verse 4, but found on meditating on the subject, that it was, so to speak, covering too much ground. The reporter was there, and thus you will (D.V.) see what I was enabled to preach. I may perhaps take verse 4 another day, as there is much deep experimental truth in it, if I could bring it forth. I was tired and exhausted afterwards, but this is only what I must expect. I had reason to be thankful that I scarcely coughed the whole time, and my voice was clear and strong.

Mr. Kershaw is on his dying bed, but to use his own words, "as full of heaven as he can hold." It is a fitting termination to his long, laborious, and godly life. I send you some letters which will tell you how he is or was, both in body and soul. He has a strong constitution, but I greatly doubt whether he will be here many days.

Mr. Garner is supplying at Gower Street. The friends admire his kind feeling toward me in not being jealous, because I take a service as if over his head. I told the people Lord's day morning that he had been a hearer and transient member of mine for several years, and had always shown me great esteem, respect, and affection, and that I could therefore, without hurting his feelings or wounding his dignity, take his place, but that there were very few ministers to whom I could even propose such a thing.

I hope I may come among you in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. But do not look to me, or you will surely be disappointed. The Lord is a jealous God. I fear you will see me weaker in body, as I have never really got over the attack I had last September, and the cold wet Spring has robbed me of my grand tonic—my walks. My daughter Sarah, who is at Plymouth, gives a poor account of Mrs. Isbell; she reads to her twice daily and is, I doubt not, a comfort to her. My sister has found a blessing in my *Meditations* on 1 Pet. 1, especially about the incorruptible inheritance, and has had them read three or four times to her. With kind love to all my dear friends,
I am, yours in the Lord,
J. C. P.

July 19, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord,—You will be desirous to hear how I am and how I was brought through my labors yesterday. It was very hot and the congregation large, but on the whole I was brought comfortably through. My texts were, Jude 20, 21, Jer. 17:7, 8. Mr. Ford, the recorder, was there both times. I felt dry and shut up in the morning, but was more at liberty in the evening. I slept but little from fatigue and heat, but on the whole am pretty well today, and have had a nice refreshing walk. I preached at Stamford from Heb. 4:1, and spoke much of what the rest was, "my rest," *that is*, God's rest, what it was to come short of it, either for a time only, or fully and finally. There was a good congregation, and great attention paid to the discourse. I felt liberty in speaking, and had some solemn feelings which, I think, showed themselves in the sermon. I would like you to have heard it.

I was quite comfortably lodged and well waited upon, and treated with the greatest kindness and affection.

Many thanks, dear friends, for your kindness to me and mine. The Lord repay it a hundredfold into your own bosom. I am not sorry for my visit, and the friends here tell me how much better I am looking.

Yours affectionately,
J. C. P.

July 27, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord,—I received and have acted on your kind orders for the books to the three places, which will no doubt be executed with the usual care and punctuality.

I was helped through last Lord's-day, though the heat was great and the congregations large; my texts were, Rom. 6:21-23, Ezek. 34:15, 16. The recorder was there both times. I cannot say much about the sermons, but they were listened to with great attention. We had a collection for the Aged Pilgrim Friend Society, and raised, I think, about £47. I contrasted the lowliness of some of the collections with the liberality of others, and named my dear people of Oakham as standing third or fourth on the list. The

secretary told me that in some of the Church of England collections the 'operating expenses' swallowed up the whole or nearly the whole amount.

Dear Rebecca! I felt much for and with her, and could weep with those that weep—at least in some measure. How much better her state than a dead calm. I cannot add more as I have to preach this evening, and expect a large congregation.

The Lord bless you both with much of His manifested presence and love.
Yours very affectionately in Him,
J. C. P.

August 6, 1869

My dear Friend, Mrs. Peake—We had, I trust, a good day at Calne Anniversary on Wednesday. The large chapel which was lent to us was thronged with people, and the collection for the Aged Pilgrim Friend Society was £30 12s. 4d., reduced by necessary expenses to £27 17s. 6d. Mr. Taylor preached an able and faithful sermon from Micah 6:8. I had preached from the same text at Gower Street this visit, and W—, who heard both sermons, said how much we ran in the same track. I preached from my old text, part of Jer. 15:19, and had some life and liberty. My texts here on Lord's-day were, John 16:33, Exod. 33:15, 16. It was generally considered a good day, one of the best we have had at Allington for some time. I may, D.V., preach from the texts in London—so that they may be published, as I had some sweet thoughts and feelings on and in them. I seemed to see, as I never saw before, the connection between our dear Lord's overcoming the world—and the path of tribulation.

Tell dear — that, in overcoming the world, the Lord has overcome *all* in it, therefore her *bodily* tribulation, which He holds in His hands as a conquered foe and lets out just enough of its power to afflict but not overwhelm.

Such a desire was expressed at Calne for the publication of my "Meditations on the Ephesians," that I think of doing so. I found the same feeling in London.

Yours in love,
J. C. P.

August 27, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord,—In reply to the kind inquiry I am thankful to be able to say that through mercy I am recovering from my late attack, which indeed was brought on more by fatigue and over-exertion than from taking cold. As then I have obtained a little rest, it has been blessed to my relief. I need not tell you that it is a great trial to me to be again obliged to disappoint the friends who in various places were looking forward in expectation of once more hearing my voice. It was, however, so widely made known that I could not come to Abingdon, that there was not so much

disappointment there. The chief difficulty is how my place is to be supplied at Gower Street on so short a notice. . . .

I wish I could send you a favorable account spiritually to counterbalance what I have said of myself naturally; but I have felt very flat and lifeless during this last visitation, with more peevishness and fretfulness under the weight of the cross than last year, when there seemed to be much more life and feeling under its pressure than now. This lack of divine support and the movements of divine life, makes me less able to bear the cross with submission to the will of God. It also very much spoilt my visit at Allington, for I could neither walk nor talk, and spent most of my time alone after the first fortnight. It teaches me, however, my dependence for every spiritual movement upon the Lord, and that without Him I can do nothing.

I preached only on two Lord's-days at Allington; but they were days to be remembered, especially the first, and the blessing of God upon the word was somewhat remarkable from its being so generally felt by the spiritual part of the congregation. The second Lord's-day was very wet and cold, and I preached twice, with my chest in pain, and was much exhausted afterwards. But I believe it was a good day for the people, as my mind was much weighted and solemnized by the load I was carrying. I feel thankful I have reached my own home; though in this large town, we are almost as quiet and as retired from noise as if we were far in the country.

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

September 16, 1869

My dear Friend in our gracious Lord, Mrs. Peake—I feel much obliged to you and your dear sister for the kind and affectionate wishes and prayers for me; but I must say that I feel also utterly unworthy of your kind opinion of me, for I think if you knew me such as I see and know myself to be, it would alter your judgment. Still, if the Lord is pleased in His sovereign grace to make use of me in any way for the good of His Church and people, to Him be all the glory.

The obituary in this month's *Gospel Standard* is certainly a very marked instance of the power of sovereign grace. Dr. D., of the "Gospel Magazine," was so blessed in reading it that he wrote to me a letter which you will see in our next number. Surely it is very gracious of the Lord, and shows His tender care over His people that He should give the *Gospel Standard*, with all its infirmities, such acceptance and such a wide circulation among those who fear His name. Our Lord said, "That which you have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the housetops." And thus letters like those of Miss V., and the experience of E. W., come abroad and reach the ears and hearts of thousands.

I am sorry to say that I still continue very poorly, and do not seem to shake off my illness or to regain strength. It appears as if there was some irritation going on which makes me very short-breathed, and at times feverish. But C.,

who listens very carefully to the sounds of my chest, thinks it is gradually subsiding. At my age, and after so many attacks of the same illness, I must naturally expect slower returns to convalescence. I was enabled to get through my sermon for Mr. Ford before it came on, and the obituary for *Gospel Standard*, which I could hardly have attended to otherwise. One trying effect of illness is that it weakens the mind as well as the body, impairs the power of close thought and attention, and but for special help seems also to weaken faith and waiting on the Lord.

Had my visit to Oakham been deferred to this month, it would have been impossible for me to come among you. There was, therefore, a mercy so far that I was enabled to visit you at a more favorable season, and when I was better and stronger.

I was much pleased to hear that Mrs. S. had been blessed lately in hearing our dear friend Mr. K. It was what she had much longed and prayed for, but felt that it was not in her power nor his to bring the desired blessing. I have much union with her in the things of God, and much admire her general spirit, singleness of eye, and spirituality of mind. I wish there were more like her; but God is able to raise up, both at Oakham and Stamford, a fresh crop when the present shall have been gathered into His garner. But no man having drunk old wine immediately desires new, for he says the old is better; and I do not think we shall ever feel the same union with the new as we have had with the old members and saints, so many of whom are now gone home. Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

September 29, 1869

Dear Friend in the Truth, Mr. W. Harrodine—I can only send you a few lines in answer to your kind and interesting letter. I remember very distinctly your speaking to me in Gower Street vestry, for I was struck with what you said about hearing Mr. Pym speak of praying over the Bible, and what conviction it wrought in your mind. I have frequently thought that Mr. Pym's last few letters contain some of the sweetest and clearest Gospel truths that I know; he had such clear and blessed views of the Person, glory, and work of Christ as are rarely met with, but which found a blessed response in my heart. Of all the Church of England ministers in these last days who preach the truth, I think he was the clearest, soundest, most separating and experimental.

But I must now answer your two questions—1. As regards the sermon which I preached at Gower Street from Heb. 10:35-37; it was not taken down, nor do I remember at this moment whether it is to be found in any other of my sermons published by Paul or Justins. 2. As regards my health, it is not very strong at this present time, as I have had an attack lately of my old illness, a kind of chronic bronchitis, which has pulled me down a good deal, and made me very susceptible of the least external cold. But all these things I desire to take as so many warnings that my race will soon be run; at present my mind seems very dark, but I am still looking up to the Lord that He would shine upon my soul and dispel every dark cloud of night.

I cannot add more this evening; but wishing you the enjoyment of every new-covenant mercy,

I am, Yours affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

October 15, 1869

Dear Friend in the Lord, Mr. James Churcher—I had not heard of the removal of your late partner in life until the receipt of your kind and affectionate letter. You have indeed sustained an irreparable loss, but you have the sweet satisfaction of knowing that she is with that dear Lord whom she believed in and loved while here below. I will, as far as my health and time admit, look over any account which you may send to me of the Lord's dealings with her in providence and grace. I shall then be able to form a better judgment how far it may be desirable to insert it in the *Gospel Standard*. You can, if you like, write copiously, though I think for the most part that a concise account is preferable, as many things which may appear of importance to relatives may not appear so to general readers, and it is difficult to abridge and suppress a long account, not only as requiring judgment and giving trouble for the pen, but also as breaking the links which often connect the whole into one chain. Though, therefore, I have said you might if you like write copiously, yet if you could compress the best parts of her life and experience into a smaller compass it would be desirable. In fact, most writers are too lengthy and verbose, and spoil what is really good by mixing up with it what is of little value; for it is in writing, and indeed in religion and in everything else, that what is most valuable is most scarce, and lies usually in a very small compass.

Give my love to all the friends with whom you stand in union.
Yours affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

October 20, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris—You will perceive from the handwriting that I have got back my junior secretary, and very glad we all are to welcome her home after her long absence; nor could I have spared her so long had it not been for the sake of my poor invalid sister, to whom she was a great comfort in reading to her out of the Word of God, Bourne's Letters, etc. She is quite confined to her bed, and says that she has little wish to live. She has at times been much favored with the presence of the Lord, and taking her experience throughout, has known more of His gracious visitations, applications of the Word with power, marked answers to prayer, etc. than many have enjoyed. She has not indeed much to live for, though much attached to her relatives and taking great interest in their welfare.

I have just finished my *G. S.* work and revising the sermon, and generally feel for two or three days afterwards a need of almost absolute rest. The

mind, and its organ the brain, will not endure more than a certain amount of labor, and to go beyond that sooner or later is sure to wear upon it. I have, so to speak, conserved my mind for many years, never pushing it beyond a certain point, and then by exercise, or rest, or sleep, endeavoring to fit it anew for fresh labor. By doing this, and the blessing of God resting upon it, I have been enabled to do a great deal of work, and to do what I have done carefully and thoughtfully, without which nothing can be really well done. I am sure, my dear friend, you can sympathize with me in this, as your own mind being so much occupied is often jaded and worn out and needs rest.

But of all rest the best is that when we can rest where God rests—in His dear Son; to cease from our own works and rest wholly and solely in the blood and righteousness and finished work of the blessed Lord. And how graciously and tenderly He invites us to do so! (Matt. 11:28, 29). We are often poor restless creatures, looking here, and there, and everywhere, but to Him who has said—"O Israel, you have destroyed yourself, but in Me is your help!" And we well know that all the rest and peace that we ever have got in times past, or get now, is by believing our interest in Him, and in what He has done and suffered to save poor sinners from death and hell. How suitable He is to all who from sheer necessity cleave to Him, and find at times a blessed sweetness in looking to Him and leaning and hanging upon Him!

There often is, for a long time, a contention in the soul against God's way of salvation, either from self-righteousness or gloomy despondency. We are unwilling sometimes to see the worst of ourselves, or to believe we are as bad as Scripture and conscience tell us; and then again, when some light shines into the mind to show us what we are, the greatness of our sins, and the dreadful nature of sin generally, then it seems as if there was scarcely ground for hope. Sometimes unbelief, or infidelity, or impenitency, or rebelliousness, and various other startings-up of the carnal mind stand as obstacles to salvation, which nothing can remove but the power of the Lord subduing the heart into faith and repentance. When then we can come out of our wretched selves and receive God's salvation as a free gift of His unspeakable and superabounding grace, then, and then alone, is there rest and peace.

I have been obliged rather to curtail my *Meditations*, as I wished to finish the chapter by the end of the year, and shall therefore have to pass over much that otherwise I should like to unfold at greater length. But it is not well to tire readers, for long meditations are like long sermons, which weary when they should edify.

My little work on Popery is, on the whole, going off pretty well. There have been some favorable reviews of it, one of which, in the *Morning Advertiser*, I send herewith, and as I think you do not see the *Gospel Magazine*, I will also send that. . . .

Yours very affectionately in the Lord,
J. C. P.

October 25, 1869

My dear Mr. Copcutt. . . I added to your order one or two books which you had not named, and instead of sending you Berridge's *Christian World Unmasked*, sent you the whole of his works, as I thought you would find them interesting. Though there is a great deal of quaintness and almost levity in most of his writings, he was a man well taught in the things of God, and a burning and shining light in his day and generation. His *Songs of Zion* I consider peculiarly valuable as containing so much true Christian experience, and unfolding both sides of the question—I mean what we are by nature, and what we are by grace, with the varied phases of the life of God in the soul. They were written during various illnesses, when he could not get out to do his beloved work of preaching the Gospel—and though they were written out of his heart, and have proved such a treasure to the people of God, yet he himself thought so little of them that he was minded again and again to throw them into the fire.

England has no such men now as appeared in that day; for we are sadly sunk in all that pertains to vital godliness, and I fear much resemble the state of that church of which we read, that it had a name to live but was dead. The most active men in the Church of England, or the Established Church, are the Ritualists, who in fact are disguised or rather undisguised Papists, and who would very gladly join the Church of Rome, if they could be received on equal conditions, or take their preferments with them. But I think there is almost more danger to be apprehended from a small but powerful party, called the Broad Church, but who in fact are secret infidels, as doubting the inspiration of the Scriptures, the miracles, the prophecies, and everything in the Word of God of a supernatural kind. These men avail themselves of every discovery in science, to oppose thereby the Word of God as a divine revelation; and as infidelity is deeply rooted in the human heart, and their views and arguments are very plausible, there are very many no doubt who are deeply tainted with this infidel spirit, who for various reasons dare not give full expression to their inward sentiments. In fact, true religion is as much a matter of divine inward revelation as the Word of God of divine outward revelation; and thus where there is no spiritual work of God's grace in the heart, there is no real means of proving the Word of God to be His inspired revelation. But it is impossible for an enlightened mind and a believing heart not to see that the historical and supernatural parts of God's Word are so blended and intertwined that they must stand or fall together. And indeed, I may say that the same spiritual light which discovers the emptiness and hollowness of a mere ceremonial religion, such as Ritualism, discovers also the fearful character of infidelity—and thus the Christian finds no rest except in believing God's testimony in the Word, and through the Word in his own heart. But I almost forget that I am writing a letter and not an essay, though as you are surrounded by the same or similar evils, you may perhaps find something not uninteresting in the above remarks. . .

You ask me if I know when Mr. Huntington's first wife died. I do not know, though I have often tried to obtain it from his works. She never rose with him, if I may use the expression, but always continued in mind and manner an uneducated woman. He, on the other hand, was one of nature's gentlemen, and in advanced life quite courteous and dignified.

I was at Stadham from the year 1828 to 1835, preaching there and at Chislehampton, a village near. I have had hearers there from eighteen different parishes, counted as such, besides others probably unknown.

Mr. Abrahams made a good end. He was sound in the truth, especially on such grand points as the Trinity, the Sonship of Christ, etc. He suffered a good deal in his last illness, but was much supported and often spoke of the wondrous grace of God in bringing him, a poor Jew, from Poland to this country, and calling him to a knowledge of Himself.

I have just published a little work on the *Advance of Popery*, consisting chiefly of articles which have appeared in *The Gospel Standard*, but partly rewritten, and much rearranged. It is selling pretty well; but there is a general apathy in this country about the advance of Popery, which seems likely much to favor its progress. It is coming in chiefly through the medium of the Established Church, hundreds probably of its ministers being deeply infected with it. . . .

I am, my dear Sir,
Yours very sincerely for truth's sake,
J. C. P.

November 5, 1869

My dear Brother in one common hope—I feel sorry to be obliged to return the MS. which you have kindly sent me for insertion in *The Gospel Standard*. I do so reluctantly, but there are various reasons which have induced me to come to this conclusion; and I trust that I shall not, in briefly naming them, say anything which may wound your mind or hurt your feelings.

1. And first let me drop a few remarks upon the communication itself. I cannot at all understand, or at least see, with you in the first case which you have brought forward as a victory over death. The lady, whom you name as so smiling before the king of terrors, was evidently not doing so under the smiles of the Lord, as her experience, if it be worth the name, was but at least a faint hope in God's mercy; and I can hardly understand how she could say, "I am very low-spirited", and acknowledge her lack of more faith, and yet smile and almost laugh at death. At any rate, I feel that I could not bring it before my readers as a proof of triumph in death, whatever secret encouragement it may have administered from other causes to your soul.

2. But apart from my objection to the insertion of this particular article, I have other reasons which I trust will not pain your mind when I say they have induced me to decline its insertion.

I have hitherto for many years maintained a separate position from all other religious periodicals, and chiefly for this reason, that I have felt to obtain thereby greater liberty in thought, word, and action. I inserted your last communication as a matter of simple equity and justice; but if I were to go on inserting your communications, however excellent they might be, it would appear to many like a coalescing with you, and to do so would seem to involve on my part a sinking of many and wide differences which still exist

between us, and would so far almost nullify, and as if stultify, not only those differences, but much of what I have publicly said and written connected with my secession from the Establishment.

3. I have therefore to consider also my numerous readers, and that large body of churches of truth, including both ministers and members, of which *The Gospel Standard* is the usually recognized representative and organ, many of whom might thereby be much led to feel that I was departing from that peculiar and separate position which I have so long occupied, if I kept inserting pieces by editors of other magazines, and especially of any connected with the Establishment.

At present we have each our own peculiar work to do, each our own circle of readers, each our circle of friends and adherents; and in that circle we can move with more freedom than if we went out of it to unite with any other under the idea of Christian union, which often involves, if not a compromise of principle, yet a sacrifice of freedom of action. I feel therefore that I must not do anything which would at all imply that I am abandoning my present ground to occupy one different from that on which I have so long stood.

I greatly fear that I shall not succeed in conveying to your mind my exact feelings upon this point, and that what I have written may seem to you to spring from an unChristian narrowness of spirit, or even an exclusive "stand-by-yourself" feeling, which is very foreign to my inmost mind. Thus I may wish a man well in the name of the Lord, and desire that the blessing of God may rest upon him and his ministrations, with whom on other grounds I could not unite.

Take for instance, the late Mr. Pym, or the late Mr. Parks. There are very few men with whom I have felt more union of soul and spirit than with the former, some of whose letters I consider to embody in the sweetest experimental way the precious truths of the Gospel. On such a man, I could wish with all my heart that the blessing of God might rest, both in his own soul and in his pulpit ministrations; but I could not unite with him as a minister in the Establishment without falsifying all my own experience when I was in it, and by which I was brought out of it. They, like you, had their special work to do, and God owned and blessed them in it. Nor would I, if I could have done so, have brought them out of the sphere of their labors by a move of my hand, though I would not myself have done what they did, and as you must do, by continuing ministers in it. In their own sphere of labor they were most useful, and met with the usual reproach of faithful laborers. As such I honored and esteemed them, though I could not unite with them; and in a similar way, I desire that the blessing of God may rest upon you and your ministry, both by tongue and pen, though I could not unite with you in either.

After this, which I fear may be to you a somewhat painful explanation, allow me to add that I am very glad to recognize in this month's *Gospel Magazine* various indications which to my mind prove that you have received much benefit from your late painful and trying experience. I was especially glad to read what you say on page 563, upon the Lord's servants being "called to encounter dark and dismal depths, in order that a clearer, closer, deeper,

more Scriptural line of teaching and personal experience should be the more earnestly and perseveringly insisted upon." It is from lack of this searching ministry that there has been so much dead and dry doctrinal preaching in men professing truth, without that "deep, heartfelt, experimental, testing-and-trying, probing-and-proving" ministry of which you have so well spoken. It is surprising what a deal of dross, hidden from ourselves, is purged away in the furnace of temptation, and I can well sympathize with what you say at the top of page 563, where you speak of a temptation of which I have known, and even now know, so much, but by passing through which many years ago, I was first taught the difference between that faith which is natural and notional, and that faith which is the expressed gift and work of God.

Wishing you, my dear sir, every blessing of the new and everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, and thanking you for your kind sympathy with me and desires for me.

I am, yours very affectionately in our gracious Lord,
J. C. P.

[NOTE. The above letter to the Rev. Doudney, editor of *The Gospel Magazine*, was published in that periodical, January 1870, and in *The Gospel Standard* for June, 1870. The reader will easily glean from the letter itself the circumstances which led to its being written.]

November 22, 1869

My dear Friends in the Lord, Mrs. Peake and Miss Morris. . . I have not yet answered our friend S.'s letter. I am very doubtful whether he can ever reap much advantage from attempting to read the New Testament in the original. It is a most difficult language to acquire to be of any value, and must be learned in youth when the memory is active and strong. If he is fond of reading and wishes to study, I would much rather recommend him to read our great and godly Puritan writers, such as Owen, Sibbes, Charnock, etc. But study even of these writings is often more apt to make a man book-learned, than feed his soul and put life into his ministry. This must have been the result of the dealings of God with his soul, a knowledge of sin and salvation, a prayerful study of the Word of truth, and a living under the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit. I have been, and still in good measure am, a diligent student of the Word of truth in the original languages, and a reader of the writings of godly men; but all this I have found very insufficient in the day of trial and temptation, and of very little benefit as regards the ministry. Nothing but the work and witness of the blessed Spirit, through the Word of His grace, can bring any life or feeling, power or comfort to my heart, or enable me rightly to divide the Word of truth and speak or write effectually to the hearts of God's people. My 'learning' therefore, such as it is, is but of little use in seasons of affliction and trouble, to speak peace to a burdened conscience, or assure my soul of its interest in atoning blood and dying love.

I am thankful to say I am pretty well in health, but much confined to the house. Indeed I rarely get out except on the Lord's day to chapel, which I usually do when the weather is not too cold or wet. My sons are living in London together in lodgings, and thus the younger has the benefit of the older's instruction, and the older the younger's company, and as they are much united in brotherly affection it adds much to the comfort of each. They generally come down here every Saturday, returning on Monday.

I have not heard much how the obituary of poor Mrs. Prentice has been received, except the two letters which I forward; but I have no doubt from my own feelings that it has made a deep impression upon many hearts. What the people of God want is reality and truth, life and power, simplicity and godly sincerity—not confused, indistinct, laudatory, "cooked" accounts—but something which speaks for itself that God was in it. It was this feature which made the account of the Wilds so acceptable, and good old Mrs. Freeman, and the same is stamped, I think, more clearly still on the words and experience of Mrs. Prentice. It may be a fulfillment of the words which were spoken to her—"What you do, do to My glory." This may now be done in the glory brought to God by her striking account of His work upon her soul, and the letters which I insert this month.

Yours most affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

November 22, 1869

My dear Friend, Miss Richmond—You enquire very kindly about my health. It is, I am thankful to say, better than it often is, though I am much confined to the house, and rarely get out except on the Lord's-day, when, if the weather be tolerably fine, I usually manage to get to chapel, which I feel to be a privilege as well as a benefit. It is, indeed, my mercy, and I hope for many others also that though laid aside from the active work of the ministry, I am yet enabled to use my pen in the service of the Lord; and I am thankful to say that I have had many sweet testimonies of the blessing of God resting on what I have been enabled to put forth in His name. And I hope the Lord may enable me still to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and still attend it with His power and blessing.

I had not heard of the death of your dear little nephew, nor that your school was broken up in consequence. It must have been a great trial to you in every way, but I am glad to find that you were favored with resignation to the Lord's will, and had some words to assure you that it was not in anger but from His dear covenant love. How different might it have been with you if the Lord had allowed the rebellion of your heart to rise, and how much more it would have added to the weight of the trial! It is indeed a mercy when we can fall into the hands of the Lord, and see and feel that "He is too wise to err—and too good to be unkind."

I am glad to hear that you have peace and union in the church, and that the Lord still is adding to you such as shall be saved.

With regard to my coming to Abingdon for two Lord's-days next summer, I fear it will not be in my power to do so. Indeed, I often think that my preaching days are over, as I have not strength for the work, and you know that this summer I was not able to fulfill my engagement, nor do I think it likely that I shall be able to go to Gower Street next year, as I have done for so many years. At any rate I could not make any promise of coming to Abingdon, though I would be very glad to see my friends there once more. It is now many years that I have known some of them, and it is a mercy that amid so many storms of sin and Satan, temptation and trial, we have been able thus far to stand. None but the Lord can hold us up, and I trust that he will do so even to the end.

I am sorry to hear of poor John Hatt's trial. How true it is that through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom of heaven. And I trust that your afflicted sister at Stadham may find it so, and that her afflictions may be blessedly sanctified to her soul's good. We unite in affectionate love to you and with my love to all the friends,
I am, yours very affectionately,
J. C. P.

November 24, 1869

Dear Friend in the Truth—I have not been able for several reasons to reply to your interesting and affectionate letter, and even now fear that my answer will fall very short of any wishes, as I cannot take up the various points which it has opened up.

But first let me notice that I am truly glad you should have found the experience of Isabella Prentice so much commended to your conscience, and that the blessing which my sermon *Winter before Harvest* was made to her, found a response in your own. I wish you could have heard her tell out her experience yourself, for there was something so marked and original in her expressions, and such life and power stamped upon them. I have usually found that, where people like her have been brought up in total ignorance of the way of truth, that when the Lord is first pleased to shine into their soul, it leaves a mark upon them which we do not find in ordinary Christians in whom the light has been more gradual. And I have observed also that those whose lot has been cast under a legal ministry, and who have had to grope and groan under hard burdens, usually come forth into the liberty of truth with greater clearness.

But I need not dwell on these points as no doubt you have observed, and I may add, experienced in your own soul the truth of what I have thus stated. I come now therefore to the point on which you have asked my advice, that is—will it be desirable for you to attempt to study the New Testament in the original language? Now at your time of life, with your delicate health and your ministerial engagements, I greatly doubt whether you could ever attain to such a knowledge of Greek as would be of any real service to you. You might learn enough to compare passage with passage, and this might interest you, as for instance, to discover that in 1 John 2:24, where we have in our translation three distinct words, "abide", "remain", and "continue", it is but

one and the same word in the original; but beyond this you would not reap very much benefit, for a critical knowledge of the language requires very great study, a powerful memory, and a cultivated intellect. . . .

I do not wish to discourage you too much, though I greatly doubt whether you will derive as much benefit as you anticipate. Still you might make the trial, and if I can be of any service to you in giving you directions how to go on, if you name to me your chief difficulties I will endeavor to help you. Your mention of good Mr. Fowler called to my mind what he once said to me in conversation—"Do not give up your Greek Testament." But though I have given you what directions I could about your study of the Greek Testament, yet I think myself that you would derive more real benefit from studying such books as Dr. Owen's various doctrinal and experimental works, Sibbes, and Huntington, than wasting your time and strength on attaining a knowledge of Greek. But I need not tell you that the Word of God, under the teaching and application of the blessed Spirit, must be the food of your soul both privately and ministerially; and you will find that prayerful meditation upon it, and seeking to enter into its divine and spiritual meaning, will often sweetly feed your soul and will fill you at times with such holy admiration of the wisdom and grace of God in the Word of His truth, that you will say—"Your testimonies are wonderful—therefore does my soul keep them. The entrance of Your words gives light—it gives understanding unto the simple." And as your soul is under these sweet impressions of the truth and power of God's word, you will reproach yourself for not reading it more in the same way. But when you try again so to read it and so to feel it, you will find it all gone; darkness and confusion will cover your mind, and even a disinclination felt to reach the Word of God at all.

I hope you may be encouraged in the work to which you set your hand. If of God, as I hope it is, for I well remember our little meetings at —, you will find encouragements as well as discouragements. Do not seek for or expect great things, which are usually very deceptive, but seek after real things, to feel the life and power of God in your own soul, and a sweet flow of His unction and grace for the souls of others. You will then have the satisfaction of a conscience made tender in God's fear, and His approbation to rest upon your spirit.

Your wife is in a safe though not a happy place. The time will come when she will say—"You have loosed my bonds".

Yours very affectionately in the truth,
J. C. P.

November 25, 1869

(This is the last letter written by Philpot.)

My dear sister—I am sorry to learn that you are so depressed both in body and mind; but the two are probably much connected with each other, and therefore I trust that as you obtain some relief from your present indisposition, you may find some corresponding change for the better in your mind and spirits. But you have lived long enough in this valley of tears, and have also learned in soul experience, that it is through much tribulation we

enter the kingdom of God, that trials and troubles do not come upon you without the gracious permission and are under the wise regulation of the Lord. And it is your mercy that in times past, even if not now, you have found Him a very present help in time of trouble, and that He can by His presence and His power support the soul under the heaviest load.

Now it is a most blessed truth, whether you can lay hold of it or not, so as to feel the comfort of it, that those whom the Lord loves He loves unto the end, and that neither life nor death nor any other creature is able to separate that soul from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. I hope, therefore, that amid all your depression of spirits and darkness of mind, you may be able to hold fast by the faithfulness of God. He has in times past given you many sweet promises, manifestly answered your prayers, been with you in providence, and blessed you in grace. Now therefore, when you are come to those days of which the wise man says that "the grasshopper is a burden", I hope the Lord may appear for and shine into your soul. It is an infinite and unspeakable mercy that the work of our gracious Lord is a finished work, that He has put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, that our salvation is not a work for us to perform, but that those who are saved are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. And you will find that the more you are enabled to believe and realize this, and can look to and hang upon the Lord alone for salvation and every other blessing, the more peace of conscience you will feel, be more reconciled to the will of God, and have more submission to all that He may see fit to lay upon you.

Our time in this life cannot now be long; we have outlived the rest of our family; and whichever of us is next taken away, the survivor will be the last. As regards this life, there is not much in it to make us desirous to live, and yet there is a natural shrinking from death, and even a fear how it may be with us in that solemn hour. But all we can do is to cast ourselves upon the rich mercy, the free, sovereign, and superabounding grace of God, and to look to the Lord to be with us in His blessed presence, that we may fear no evil when called to pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

I have no doubt that you will much feel the departure of Captain and Mrs. S.; and much pleased indeed am I with the account my daughter gives of his great kindness and attention to you. But it seems as if it were the Lord's will to cut in some way or other every tie which binds you to earth. You have lost your husband, the free use of your bodily faculties, the society of many affectionate friends, the benefit of a Gospel ministry, and many privileges once enjoyed; but you have not lost your God. And if all these painful bereavements make you cleave all the more closely to the Lord of life and glory, so as to find all your happiness, rest, peace, strength, help, and hope in Him, you will find a blessing couched in all these losses and sufferings. I do not often write to you; but I do not the less feel for and pray for you, desiring of the Lord that he would bless your soul with His presence and promises, and grant you faith and patience even to the end.

We are very glad to have dear Sarah back, and indeed I greatly missed her, not only on account of her usefulness in writing, but her affectionate attentions. I am, through mercy, pretty well, but keep much to the house, except on the Lord's day, when if the weather be tolerable I get to chapel. We

are all, through mercy, pretty well and unite in love to yourself and our dear relatives.

Your most affectionate brother,

J. C. P.