

*Wed.* 19.—I accordingly came to London, though with a heavy heart. Here I found every day the dreadful effects of our brethren's reasoning and disputing with each other. Scarce one in ten retained his first love; and most of the rest were in the utmost confusion, biting and devouring one another. I pray God, ye be not consumed one of another.

*Mon.* 24.—After spending part of the night at Fetter-Lane, I went to a smaller company, where also we exhorted one another with hymns and spiritual songs, and poured out our hearts to God in prayer. Toward morning one of them was overwhelmed with joy and love, and could not help showing it by strong cries and tears. At this another was much displeased, saying, it was only nature, imagination, and animal spirits.—O thou jealous God, lay not this sin to her charge! And let us not be wise above what is written.

*Sun.* 30.—One came to me, by whom I used to profit much. But her conversation was now too high for me: It was far above, out of my sight. My soul is sick of this sublime divinity. Let *me* think and speak as a little child! Let *my* religion be plain, artless, simple! Meekness, temperance, patience, faith, and love, be these *my* highest gifts: And let the highest words wherein I teach them, be those I learn from the book of God!

*Mon.* 31.—I had a long and particular conversation with Mr. Molther himself. I weighed all his words with the utmost care; desired him to explain what I did not understand; asked him again and again, "Do I not mistake what you say? Is this your meaning, or is it not?" So that I think, if God has given me any measure of understanding, I could not mistake him much.

As soon as I came home, I besought God to assist me, and not suffer "the blind to go out of the way." I then wrote down what I conceived to be the difference between us, in the following words:—

"As to faith, you believe,

"1. There are no degrees of faith, and that no man has any degree of it, before all things in him are become new, before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception that Christ dwelleth in him.

"2. Accordingly you believe, there is no justifying faith, or state of justification, short of this.

“3. Therefore you believe, our brother Hutton, Edmonds, and others, had no justifying faith before they saw you.

“4. And, in general, that that gift of God, which many received since Peter Böhler came into England, viz., ‘a sure confidence of the love of God’ to them, was not justifying faith.

“5. And that the joy and love attending it were from animal spirits, from nature or imagination; not ‘joy in the Holy Ghost,’ and the real ‘love of God shed abroad in their hearts.’

“Whereas I believe,

“1. There are degrees in faith; and that a man may have some degree of it, before all things in him are become new; before he has the full assurance of faith, the abiding witness of the Spirit, or the clear perception that Christ dwelleth in him.

“2. Accordingly, I believe there is a degree of justifying faith (and consequently, a state of justification) short of, and commonly antecedent to, this.

“3. And I believe our brother Hutton, with many others, had justifying faith long before they saw you.

“4. And, in general, that the gift of God, which many received since Peter Böhler came into England, viz., ‘a sure confidence of the love of God to them,’ was justifying faith.

“5. And that the joy and love attending it, were not from animal spirits, from nature or imagination; but a measure of ‘joy in the Holy Ghost,’ and of ‘the love of God shed abroad in their hearts.’

“As to the way to faith, you believe,

“That the way to attain it is, to wait for Christ, and be still; that is,

“Not to use (what we term) the means of grace;

“Not to go to church;

“Not to communicate;

“Not to fast;

“Not to use so much private prayer;

“Not to read the Scripture;

“(Because you believe, these are not means of grace; that is, do not ordinarily convey God’s grace to unbelievers; and,

“That it is impossible for a man to use them without trusting in them;)

“Not to do temporal good;

“Nor to attempt doing spiritual good.

“ (Because you believe, no fruit of the Spirit is given by those who have it not themselves ;

“ And, that those who have not faith are utterly blind, and therefore unable to guide other souls.)

“ Whereas I believe,

“ The way to attain it is, to wait for Christ and be still ;

“ In using all the means of grace.

“ Therefore I believe it right, for him who knows he has not faith, (that is, that conquering faith,)

“ To go to church ;

“ To communicate ;

“ To fast ;

“ To use as much private prayer as he can, and

“ To read the Scripture ;

“ (Because I believe, these are ‘ means of grace ;’ that is, do ordinarily convey God’s grace to unbelievers ; and

“ That it is possible for a man to use them, without trusting in them ;)

“ To do all the temporal good he can ;

“ And to endeavour after doing spiritual good.

“ (Because I know, many fruits of the Spirit are given by those who have them not themselves ;

“ And that those who have not faith, or but in the lowest degree, may have more light from God, more wisdom for the guiding of other souls, than many that are strong in faith.)

“ As to the manner of propagating the faith, you believe (as I have also heard others affirm)

“ That we may, on some accounts, use guile :

“ By saying what we know will deceive the hearers, or lead them to think the thing which is not.

“ By describing things a little beyond the truth, in order to their coming up to it.

“ By speaking as if we meant what we do not.

“ But I believe,

“ That we may not ‘ use guile ’ on any account whatsoever ;

“ That we may not, on any account, say what we know will, and design should, deceive the hearers ;

“ That we may not describe things one jot beyond the truth, whether they come up to it, or no ; and,

“ That we may not speak, on any pretence, as if we meant what indeed we do not.

“Lastly, as to the fruits of your thus propagating the faith in England, you believe,

“Much good has been done by it ;

“Many unsettled from a false foundation ;

“Many brought into true stillness, in order to their coming to the true foundation ;

“Some grounded thereon who were wrong before, but are right now.

“On the contrary, I believe that very little good, but much hurt, has been done by it.

“Many who were beginning to build holiness and good works, on the true foundation of faith in Jesus, being now wholly unsettled and lost in vain reasonings and doubtful disputations ;

“Many others being brought into a false unscriptural stillness ; so that they are not likely to come to any true foundation ;

“And many being grounded on a faith which is without works ; so that they who were right before, are wrong now.”

*Tues. JAN. 1, 1740.*—I endeavoured to explain to our brethren the true, Christian, scriptural stillness, by largely unfolding those solemn words, “Be still, and know that I am God.” *Wednesday, 2,* I earnestly besought them all to “stand in the old paths,” and no longer to subvert one another’s souls by idle controversies, and strife of words. They all seemed convinced. We then cried to God to heal all our backslidings : And he sent forth such a spirit of peace and love, as we had not known for many months before.

*Thur. 3.*—I left London, and the next evening came to Oxford : Where I spent the two following days, in looking over the letters which I had received for the sixteen or eighteen years last past. How few traces of inward religion are here ! I found but one among all my correspondents who declared, (what I well remember, at that time I knew not how to understand,) that God had “shed abroad his love in his heart,” and given him the “peace that passeth all understanding.” But, who believed his report ? Should I conceal a sad truth, or declare it for the profit of others ? He was expelled out of his society, as a madman ; and, being disowned by his friends, and despised and forsaken of all men, lived obscure and unknown for a few months, and then went to Him whom his soul loved.

*Mon. 7.*—I left Oxford. In the evening I preached at Burford ; the next evening at Malmsbury : And on *Wednesday, 9,*