

Letter: 13f 33 Mr Maylan, Geneva, January 2nd, 1840

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's faithfulness and maintaining humility and faith in one's walk with God, while also highlighting the dangers of unfaithfulness and the importance of church unity and liberty.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, John 15:12-13, Romans 12:10, Galatians 6:2, Ephesians 4:3, Philippians 4:19, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 2 Timothy 2:13, Hebrews 10:23, 1 Peter 5:8-9

Topics: "Unity in the Body of Christ", "Faithfulness of God"

Description

John Nelson Darby encourages Mr. Maylan in his work for the Lord, emphasizing the importance of trusting in God's faithfulness amidst trials and the dangers of isolation in faith. He warns against the temptations of pride and depression that can arise when walking a path less traveled by others, urging constant communion with God. Darby expresses concern about the potential weakening of Mr. Maylan's ties to the established church as he pursues evangelization, advocating for unity among all believers despite differing views. He stresses the necessity of remaining free from human constraints while serving God, and the joy found in brotherly communion. Ultimately, Darby conveys his heartfelt support and love for the Swiss brethren, hoping for their continued strength in faith.

Transcript

p33 [Mr Maylan] [From the French.] VERY DEAR BROTHER, - I was rejoiced to receive your letter, and to see that you are in fact working in the Lord's field, and for the Lord. Specially that you are able to trust yourself to the Lord to sustain you in your path, and to maintain you as to the things of this world. You have already, dear brother, made proof of His faithfulness, as you told me. Be very sure that He will never fail in it. Oh, for more faith, that we might be able to trust ourselves to His incomparable faithfulness, to His love, which will make us pass without doubt, through testings for our good, but which at least never wearies.

Dear brother, in the midst of much unfaithfulness, I have always found Him faithful - I can bear witness to it - and more than faithful, always full of mercy and goodness. It is a happy thing to be able to be witness to one's God, though in humbling oneself for all one's own wretchedness. When the goodness and will of our God have forced us out into His harvest, we have always need to be well on our guard against the wiles of the enemy, especially when we leave, even ever so little, the ordinary path of Christians. One is so

accustomed to trust oneself to men, the habit of it is so rooted in the ways of Christians, and in their manner of working as to the gospel, that Satan is extremely jealous of those who separate themselves from it, and who trust themselves to our God, and he lays for them all possible snares, and even Christians look constantly to see them fall; so much so, that if we do not keep our spirit carefully, we are always in danger.

There are many Christians who withdraw from us from the first, saying that it is pride that prompts us to walk alone, when in fact they desert us in spite of ourselves; and this increases the danger, because the isolation in which we sometimes are, exposes us to the arrows of the enemy, either by the ordinary trials of life, or by the temptation of thinking too much of ourselves, and of leaning to either pride on the one side, or to depression on the other. Do I desire, dear brother, to discourage you in saying these things? far from it, but only to remind you that it is a life of faith, and that we cannot pass through this world of sin, when we are put ever so little forward, without constant communion of our souls with God. As you advance in your path of service, as I hope that you will advance, you will find that if you do not walk in the ordinary paths, a very great number of Christians will be opposed to you, an opposition much more painful than that of the world, which one ought to expect. And this because this question is agitated greatly at this moment, whether one ought to walk by faith or not. May God keep you in humility, and give you a firm and quiet faith which, recognising the duty put upon you of serving Him, has nothing to do but to obey Him, and to do His will. As to your temporal circumstances, dear brother, it will always be to me a great pleasure to help you. I am not very rich, but what I have, I hope, through the grace of our God, will be always devoted to His work. . . .

There is still one thing, dear brother, that has come upon my spirit. I suppose that you have continued relations with the established church; perhaps I am mistaken, but I discern the possibility that these relations may be enfeebled if you follow the call to evangelisation which you think you have received from God. If this come to pass, I hope with all my heart that you will not throw yourself, on the other hand, into narrowness; it is this which has been one of the sores of Swiss Christians. I have nothing to hide from you in my christian ways (habitudes). It is my joy and my privilege to find myself in the midst of brethren who know one another in Christ, and to rejoice in the blessedness of brotherly communion in all the weakness in which it may be found at present; but I could not recognise an assembly that does not receive all the children of God, because I know that Christ receives them. I see the church in ruins: I follow my conscience according to the light that I have received from the word, but I desire to bear with the weakness or lack of light that I may find in other Christians, and do all that I can to unite those who love the Lord. The liberty of your ministry, if God bless it, may be a means to this desirable result; and I, according to the light that I have received, find it impossible to remain in nationalism, but I would rather remain alone and isolated, a position, I admit, not at all desirable, than to restrict the limits of the church of Christ to some brethren, even though they may be more correct in their thoughts than others, and to enfeeble the action of the Spirit of God in uniting the Lord's sheep, scattered by our wretchedness and by our sins.

I have ventured to say these things to you, dear brother, in all frankness, because in all my weakness I have at least the good of the beloved church of my Saviour at heart, and further, because I love, and I ought to love in a special manner, the dear Swiss brethren, in the midst of whom I have received so many blessings, and so much love in Christ. I hope that God will keep you from every bond save the bonds of Christ, and that He will rivet these bonds of security and joy more and more.

If you are able not entirely to give up your calling, so much the better; the workman is worthy of his hire, but it is my experience that in the existing circumstances of the church, the more one is independent of men the better one is circumstanced. If you were able to apply yourself to it in leisure moments, or to work alone, and could sell what you made, even if you were not in an establishment, I do not know if the thing is possible, but for you even I am persuaded that it would be very desirable. I write in haste, dear brother, but I did not wish to delay my letter any longer. Be assured of the cordial and sincere love of

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Geneva, January 2nd, 1840.

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