

Letter: 31f 63 Mrs Monthenez, London, August 3rd, 1843

by John Nelson Darby

The speaker reflects on their feelings of being a stranger in London, their desire to carry on the work in Switzerland and France, and their gratitude for the brethren's reception and prayer.

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:10, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 4:3, Philippians 1:3, Colossians 3:23-24, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 Peter 4:10

Topics: "Unity in Christ", "Faithfulness in Service"

Description

John Nelson Darby shares his experiences in London, expressing a deep sense of connection to Switzerland and the work God is doing there. He acknowledges the warmth of the brethren in London but feels more at home in Switzerland, where he believes God has raised a significant testimony. Despite feeling unworthy and weak, Darby is committed to serving God and desires to bear witness to Christ's glory. He expresses gratitude for the affection shown to him by the sisters in Lausanne and hopes to unite the brethren more closely. His reflections emphasize the importance of God's will and the joy found in serving Him.

Transcript

p63 [Mrs Monthenez] [From the French.] VERY DEAR SISTER, - Here I am then, in this vast and horrible town, but led by the good hand of Him who never fails in His faithfulness, and the haste that I make to let you have tidings of us, ought to assure you on the one hand that I count on the interest you have in receiving them, and on the other hand, that I do not forget Switzerland. In fact, when I arrived here, I felt myself a stranger, and much more at home in Switzerland than here. It was not from lack of affection on the part of the brethren, far from it, for their reception was affectionate, could not be more so. I felt my unworthiness, and attributed it as much to the interest that they take in the work in Switzerland, as to what was more personal. It is not as a compliment that I say this. But they had prayed much for the work in Switzerland, and naturally that had identified me with that work.

There was nothing extraordinary in my journey, unless it be the continued goodness of God. I hoped to spend the Sunday in London, but we encountered a storm in the passage from Rotterdam to London, so that we only arrived the Sunday evening. I have already spoken, on Monday and Tuesday, and we had the presence of God; but half of those who attended were unknown to me, the number of brothers having greatly increased during my absence. There would be an extraordinary amount to do in this country, but at

present my heart is in Switzerland, I believe by the will of God. I do not know if you will believe me when I tell you that I feel much more a stranger here than over there, and it gives me wonderful joy when I meet a Swiss brother or sister. I hope that the only thing that will lead me will be the will of God. I cannot doubt that God has raised up a testimony at the present time in Switzerland and in France, which He gives me, at least I think so, still to carry on in those countries. I feel my weakness and my incapacity, but this does not stop me at all, because I feel that the work is of Him. I am conscious of having but one desire, namely, that testimony should be borne to Christ, to Him whose glory alone is precious to me. I am conscious that that is my only desire, and that makes me happy and inspires me with entire confidence. I do not doubt that I have done the will of God in coming here; and it is very sweet to feel it, and it is this that removes from me all anxiety with regard to Lausanne. When I shall have finished what God wishes me to do, I hope to be there again. I have only the thought of a journey here at present, till the moment of my return. I know nothing about it, that depends upon His will. May He give me the discernment of that will, and of the things that are really of some importance.

As to the brethren of this place, I have not yet spent a Sunday, but this is the impression they have given me. They talk to me much more of God and less of man than in Switzerland, this is a great good; on the other hand I have found, it has seemed to me, much more solemnity and seriousness in our meetings at Lausanne, &c., than here - though I have been happy in the two I have been at. There is more care of souls also here. I am still ill at ease in meditating, and almost incapable of praying yet in English. In Ireland they have been neglected, but in Dublin they are much blessed, more than ever, and they walk in peace elsewhere, but there is no work. There are some, but few new workers in England, but the work has been greatly extended. The time of returning to Switzerland will be to me a time of joy, although I particularly love the brethren here, and see more and more the solidity and the truth of the work that God has done in these times in this country, and I feel that the links that attach me to them are not of man.

I hope that our dear sisters at Lausanne will not think that my heart does not own all their affection and their goodness with regard to me, although, pre-occupied with so many things and little demonstrative, I received all the testimony to it without saying much. I should indeed be very ungrateful if I were not sensible of it; but the fact is that I am. I cannot accuse myself of failing there, but the best recompense that I can render, is the ardent desire, adding to it my prayers, that they may enjoy fully and more and more, the fellowship and grace of our precious Saviour, the joy and the portion of my heart, and that they may be more conformed, and more acceptable unto Him. My joy when I think of them, is not only that they have shewn me so much goodness and patience, but that they glorify the Lord; it is in this also that I have boasted of them. Can I do otherwise than desire that they may abound more and more in it? . . .

Greet cordially all our dear sisters, particularly your family, face to face. My object, if God permits me soon to see the brethren again, will be to unite the brethren much more. It is possible I may change my whole manner of living, remaining partly isolated, and receiving the brethren if they are disposed to come. I think it is very possible that I may attain this end by the goodness of God more easily in living thus isolated. That I shall lose much as to my comfort in every way, I well know. You are assured, dear sisters, I hope, that I am not forgetful of all the regard you have had for me in this, of how much I owe you in every way. If you have spoilt me, so that I have received so much attention and care as if it were all natural, it is your fault. I say this, because I know that often when I count on the sincerity of the kindness of any one, I avail myself of it, as an effect of christian love, without making compliments; but I can assure you that I am very keenly and sincerely thankful for all the goodness which you have shewn me, even though, as I have said, pre-occupied with service, I have accepted it without saying much. Accept my sincere thanks before the

Lord. I hope, all unworthy as I am, you have done it to Him. Once more, greet all our dear sisters and the brothers whom you know.

Your affectionate and grateful brother.

I write in haste, at different times, having begun in London and ended in Sussex.

London, August 3rd, 1843.

[51031F]

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