

# Letter: 41e 81 G v Wigram, Somerton, May 27th, 1845

by John Nelson Darby

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*The brethren face persecution and government interference, but they remain steadfast in their faith, trusting in the Lord's protection and guidance.*

**Scripture:** Romans 8:31, Philippians 4:6

**Topics:** "Perseverance in Trials", "Faith Amidst Persecution"

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## Description

John Nelson Darby shares a letter detailing the challenges faced by the brethren during a time of persecution and unrest. Despite a recent riot at their meeting, the congregation remains joyful and united in faith, trusting in God's protection and guidance. Darby emphasizes the importance of maintaining their testimony amidst political turmoil, choosing to meet in smaller groups to avoid provoking further conflict. He expresses gratitude for the support of the Lord and the joy found in their trials, noting that their faith has strengthened and attracted new members. The letter concludes with a hopeful outlook on their situation, relying on God's sovereignty over their circumstances.

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## Transcript

p81 Dear G V Wigram, - You have this account already, but it is so short I send it, still all for private reading. I could have sent you other parts, but I extract for everybody - it is only private sentiments I have not, but which would be very interesting in private. After acknowledging the receipt of what was sent, and thanking the brethren, in substance saying he had all and abounded, &c.

\*"The tribulation is not at its close; last Sunday we had a formidable riot on our meeting in your apartment. The meeting passed in perfect joy; it was very numerously attended, scarce any one was wanting. A furious crowd was before the house, but this time the police, who were on foot, hindered them from attacking us, and protected us going out. After that, the people would have taken possession of the house, but the conservatoirs restrained them, and the gendarmes, who returned, succeeded in dissipating the tumult at past twelve o'clock. Since then our sisters M. have been guarded by the Lord, and nothing has happened to them.

{\*From Lausanne.}

"Already, Friday, the transport of the benches by J. O. caused a real riot, of which J. supported the brunt without accident. They seized some benches from him, which they broke. I do not know if I told you that one Sunday morning the band entered my house also, penetrating close to my rooms where we were, several persons, and the Lord stopped them there. The brethren and sisters are generally happy. We go this morning to your room: the Lord knows what will come of it; in every case we are in His hands. . . . The persecution seems to arrive at a crisis. Thanks be to God, who has saved us through Jesus Christ our Lord. How sweet to think that our brethren, and above all, Jesus prays for us. Adieu."

"Since my last letter, the Lord has permitted that we should pass tranquilly through sufficiently evil days. Our Sunday meetings had become for parties, the perspective of an engagement. The conservateurs pressed us to meet all together, and in case of need they would shew themselves and restrain the populace. From the moment that we became the occasion that parties seized to come to an engagement which might become a revolution, it seemed to me that our assembly was no longer simply a testimony, but a political affair, which we ought to avoid: the brethren were of the same judgment. The government were very uneasy, and we received overtures from members of the Great Council, who offered to ask for us from the Council of State, the German church in the Mercerie, with the proviso of having us protected there. . . . I represented that in going there, we departed from the path of testimony, which offended the people, but was agreeable to the Lord - that this would be made use of throughout the Canton, to make our brethren go into the churches, and that our place was not to be protected but persecuted: the brethren were of this mind.

"The next day the Council of State had us requested through B. (its president), not to have our meeting all together at 22 St. Pierre [the house I lived in, where the riot was], in order not to expose the town to troubles whose issue could not be foreseen. This seemed to us a very simple direction (indice), and we agreed to disseminate ourselves on Sunday in small meetings - we had eleven in the course of the day. All were very tranquil. The Great Council is to be occupied tomorrow with the petitions relative to religious liberty. This question occupied it already Tuesday. The government seeks, in order to flatter the passions of the populace, to adopt a measure which deprives us of liberty, saving appearances as much as possible. It has shewn itself so illiberal, that the most radical of the Great Council (the government is the extreme radical) have expressed their surprise at it. I do not expect to see religious liberty granted to the children of God in this country. It is very sweet to know that that will happen as to it which our own Lord shall see good for the exercise of our faith. Men are occupied about us without consulting God; and the Lord when He is pleased to act for His children, defeats the designs of men. His counsels will be found to be very firmness itself. We are happy to be in His hands, and to have for our path Himself - not a path which men may make; though they may become the means of our trial, they cannot decide what is to happen to us.

It is not probable that we can meet next Sunday all together. The government would not be sorry to have an occasion which would justify the measure it desires. People's minds are in a great fermentation. The Conservatives desire to stop this torrent of passions and violence which threatens everything with subversion. In case of a serious tumult, our meetings would be the spark which would set fire to the powder. We desire to rest strangers to all political conflict, and for that reason we prefer to break ourselves up into small portions while things are in this state. If there had been no danger to run but that of seeing our meetings assailed and our persons ill-treated, the brethren were all encouraged to persevere. The Lord has sustained and encouraged and fortified us. He has made us find in the trial great subjects of joy and thanksgiving. The testimony has had blessed fruit. Hesitating souls have been established, and thus

have joined us. The brethren are happy, and we see that Christ is precious to us in proportion as men reject us. Adieu, very dear brother; the brethren and sisters salute you. Not being able to write you word tomorrow what the Great Council shall have done as to religious liberty, if in any case some result is arrived at, I shall only write next week if the Lord permit.

"The grace of the Lord be multiplied to you.

"Your very affectionate,

"G"

Somerton, May 27th, 1845.

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