

Letter - the Female Missionary Society of the Western District

by Charles Finney

Charles Finney reports on the powerful impact of his missionary work in the northern parts of Jefferson county, with many conversions and a movement of the multitude.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19

Topics: "Spiritual Revival", "Domestic Missions"

Description

Charles Finney writes a heartfelt letter to the Presiding Officer of the Female Missionary Society of the Western District, sharing the transformative impact of domestic missions in Jefferson County. He describes the dire spiritual condition of the communities he served, where rebellion against God was rampant, but through his preaching, many experienced conviction and conversion. Finney expresses gratitude for the powerful work of the Holy Spirit, noting that the gospel's reach is expanding and hope is rising among the people. He emphasizes the importance of strengthening feeble churches and uniting efforts to establish the gospel in these areas.

Transcript

To the Presiding Officer of

The Female Missionary Society of the Western District

10 June 1824

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The following letter from a clergyman in the employment of the Female Missionary Society of the Western District, contains the most heart cheering evidence of the utility of Domestic Missions. It was written to the presiding officer.

Antwerp, 10th. June, 1824.

DEAR MADAM,&endash;-

"About the first of April, I received a commission from your Society, to labour for three months as a Missionary in the northern parts of Jefferson county. I entered upon the duties of the commission, as soon as was convenient; and agreeably to the advice of several members of the Presbytery, took my principal stations for preaching upon the Sabbath, at Evans' Mills, and at this place. At each of these places, is a small Congregational church, which lies surrounded and intermingled with professing christians of various denominations. These churches had been so much destitute of preaching, of their own order, that they were disheartened, and had "hung their harps upon the willows." The dear Zion of God, in this region was robed in mourning and sat desolate as a widow. On my first arrival in each of these places, my heart almost bled at the awful desolation that surrounded me on every side. Rebellion against the blessed God, under almost every form, and in every shocking degree, stalked abroad with unblushing front, in defiance of Almighty authority, and in the heedless and impious rejection of proffered grace and mercy. The streets resounded with impious oaths; the mouths of multitudes were "filled with cursing and bitterness," and it was but too obvious that "destruction and misery were in their ways." In view of this state of things "my soul was sick," and I commenced my labours amongst them with plain dealing, and denounced the terrors of the Almighty against them for their impious wickedness, and ruinous rejection of the gospel of God's dear Son:— And O! to the everlasting praise and glory of his grace be it spoken, the dear Redeemer has not suffered your unworthy, inexperienced Missionary to labour in vain. On my first arrival at Evans' Mills, the word seemed to be attended with immortal energy. Some were immediately smitten with conviction, and soon hopefully converted. As I continued preaching in that region, convictions and conversions multiplied — slumbering professors of different names arose and entered into the work — laying hold on the promises by faith, held up by my feeble hands, and rejoiced to see the salvation of God.

"The blessed work, has been exceedingly powerful in the village of Evans' Mills, indeed to the hopeful conversion of the great mass of the inhabitants of every rank and sex. It is now spreading in almost every direction, and O! we fondly hope and earnestly pray, that this whole region may behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Antwerp is 13 miles from Evans' Mills. The Lord has owned his word here also. But as the work has been so powerful at Evans' Mills, I have found it impracticable to spend much time with this people, — in visiting from house to house, as yet. — There have been several hopeful conversions here however, and as I have now been visiting among them for two days, I find many cases of conviction. Meetings are well attended, and solemn — great attention is given to the word, and there is manifestly a movement on the minds of the multitude.— The minds of some christians seem to be aroused, and we can not but hope that God designs to visit this people with the outpouring of his Holy Spirit.

"I suppose that it is one object of your society, to build up and strengthen feeble churches — to unite their strength in the establishing of the gospel among them. The object, I have strong hopes will be effected at the two places where I have principally laboured."

"I am dear madam, your humble servant and affectionate brother in the Lord Jesus."

CHARLES G. FINNEY.

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