

Letter: 28e 54 G v Wigram, Lausanne, January 21st, 1843

by John Nelson Darby

John Nelson Darby shares his experiences and blessings in spreading the truth in France and Switzerland, despite facing opposition and criticism.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 12:12, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 6:9, Philippians 1:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 2 Timothy 4:2, Hebrews 10:24-25, James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 5:10

Topics: "Faithfulness in Ministry", "Overcoming Trials"

Description

John Nelson Darby expresses gratitude for the prayers and support of his brethren while sharing his experiences of trials and blessings in his ministry. He reflects on the challenges faced in maintaining faith amidst opposition, yet rejoices in the conversions and spiritual awakenings occurring among young believers. Darby notes the importance of responsibility and zeal among the brethren, highlighting the growth of their faith and the spread of truth despite external challenges. He emphasizes the joy and freedom he feels in his work, trusting in the Lord's guidance and provision. Overall, he conveys a message of hope and encouragement for continued faithfulness in the face of adversity.

Transcript

p54 Dearest G V Wigram, - It is always good to hear both of the Lord's work, and the labour of the beloved brethren. I am exceedingly thankful for the prayers of the brethren, and indeed I pray you to thank them that pray for me. I need it, and if I be weak, need it the more.

You must not expect much news. It is not my gift. I have passed through so trying and difficult a path here, that I distrust myself to speak of it, but I am come out of it, I trust, in charity, and it was no easy matter. To be opposed is easy in a certain sense; I have had plenty, and all who would maintain things when the Lord is overthrowing them, naturally count me to do the work of Satan - the reputation I have in general in France and Switzerland - when there is frankness to speak out; but speaking out or acting on conviction, it not generally the habit on the Continent - they complain of it even. Yet there has been blessing. The young men, whom those who would be with us vilified all they could, have been blessed very generally, and there are many conversions through their means, and in general there has been awakening wherever they have been, and joy and gladness have accompanied their steps. This is a subject of rejoicing, and the Lord has kept them in a most healthful feeling of responsibility with much zeal. At the same time, the dissemination of truth and blessing, and on what are called our principles, thus spreading on the right hand and on the

left, without knowing whence it came or how it sprung up all of a sudden, has exceedingly irritated those, who with much effort were doing nothing or spoiling their own work, and I confess, has surprised me; for we are slow to count beforehand on the goodness of God. That He has acted is most manifest. Also I am much more free, for in all their plans, they have planned against themselves. They had what they called a Conférence Fraternelle, to judge the expressions of my tracts, which has had the effect of setting me completely at large. They sent to all their churches, that a new system agitated many Christians, and that thereon they would judge if the expressions of my tracts were scriptural. They told nothing of their plan to those who had received more or less the principles contained in the tracts, but invited them when all was ready, saying that the state of Christians was so changed in Lausanne, that they could not offer hospitality to the brethren. At the meeting which I had declined attending, but went afterwards, at the demand of many who were come from far, they admitted the ruined state of the church, which they had denied hitherto, but denied our responsibility, saying that we were not answerable for the evil of our forefathers. I told the two I was most intimate with, that after that I could not go on with their Dissidence any longer, though I was in charity with all. I am much freer and happier since, and blessing is manifest.

In France there is progress, and I found the brethren well and walking near the Lord in general. There is now a large field open in the Gard. . . . At St. Hippolyte, though others labour equally, several true men (finding that our brethren walked more with the Lord, and had His blessing), who had been exceedingly prejudiced, have drawn towards the brethren and avowed it. There will be opposition there, at least, on the westward, but there is testimony. In the Isère there is a commencement of blessing, and in the Drôme, at Montmeyran, where they are however weak; this place will bring probably excessive enmity on me. I saw brethren from this place when in France. I could not go there when in the Ardèche. At Annonay and Vernoux they came as much as eighteen leagues to read and confer; this shews the awakening to the state of things which exists. It is chiefly, though not exclusively, among simple brethren; they are devoted and zealous - this is a remarkable feature. One in Switzerland has been severely beaten, but is happy in his work; one who is much blessed, has left all recently (a lithographer), and felt led to go out at once, without reading with us at Lausanne. Five more are come to read, of whom three I trust will be valuable labourers in different ways. The brethren meet to break bread in France, in places of which I knew not the existence before I went there this last trip. Many of them receive next to nothing, being unmarried: their zeal has awakened the goodwill of those among whom they labour; they receive them, and even give them clothing as presents. In the towns this can be less the case, and in the Catholic population in France - that is, where the work has not produced its fruits. At any rate, all work on their proper responsibility; if they have not faith, they have only to return to a life of labour like others. Much happy confidence reigns.

I am exceedingly happy with them all, exercising no control but what their own affection claims, and I find that thus cast in considerable difficulties on the Lord, they acquire by the necessity they are in, a rapid ripeness of judgment and prudence according to the Lord. In France many are locally employed, and earn their bread. The married brethren naturally having ménage, need more. . . .

I write up my letters as much as I can; my head scarce suffices for all, but, thank God, I have been very happy in my soul, and helped on in various ways, and though poor and miserable, conscious that a gracious, faithful and pardoning Lord is with me. . . . Kindest love to all the brethren.

Ever yours, most affectionately in the Lord.

Lausanne, January 21st, 1843.

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