

Letter: 4e 12 Miss Kingdom, Limerick, 1832

by John Nelson Darby

The speaker shares their experiences and challenges in evangelism, emphasizing the importance of fellowship, prayer, and serving the poor.

Scripture: Isaiah 58:10, Matthew 25:40, Romans 12:13, 2 Corinthians 9:7, Galatians 6:9, Ephesians 4:12, Philippians 1:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 2 Timothy 4:2, James 1:27

Topics: "Importance of Prayer", "Ministry Challenges"

Description

John Nelson Darby writes to Miss Kingdom about his laborious ministry in Limerick, expressing the challenges of preaching the gospel amidst opposition and the need for constant prayer and support from fellow believers. He emphasizes the importance of maintaining communion with God and the church while working among the poor and those in need. Darby reflects on the blessings and struggles of his mission, urging Miss Kingdom to remain focused on serving others and to pray for the Spirit's guidance in their efforts. He shares his longing for the church in Plymouth and the joy he finds in their fellowship, despite the distance and challenges he faces.

Transcript

p12 DEAR Miss Kingdom, - I was waiting to hear from Miss -, or some of the letters you spoke of before I wrote; for you must remember that you are enjoying the rest and quiet of fellowship, and I am labouring, in whatever weakness, I may almost say, night and day, with almost all around, either opposing, or expecting to be sustained and fed, and one's judgment exercised at every step. So that I assure you, with the danger of being dragged into the world one is working in (which is more than you suppose), or the loss of communion, which success with men is always apt to produce - while I have found my God most gracious - the consciousness and enjoyment of communion with those who are within the reclaimed country is not only pleasant, but profitable, as keeping before one's mind what one is labouring for. They say that those who go as reclaimers into the backwoods, constantly fall into the mere backwoodsmen's life, instead of civilising them. I am much in the backwoods, not indeed as a settler, but leaving the tilled country much to other hands less hardened to suffer, while I could work till all the country be cleared; yet weeds will grow in fallow ground where all has been cleared, and Plymouth is much in my thoughts and prayers (however they may count me careless of them in my absence), that it should flourish as the garden of the Lord.

Indeed, if you would know the truth, what I dread, because of the blessing that is there, is too much concentration of my interest and my prayers where I have found so much christian happiness and

kindness too, lest the Lord should say to me of this also, "Lovest thou me more than these?" But indeed, besides that which might be selfish, I am anxious enough about Plymouth to have longed to hear oftener than I have; and my dear brethren and sisters there must remember that my occupation is travelling and preaching two or three times a day, or as here, standing out on the question whether the gospel is to be preached, in spite of all the clergy, or not; and now that the Lord has opened the minds of the people, lecturing nightly, and expected to answer all the questions and hold every ground that anybody might question. Nevertheless, the Lord is wonderfully at work here, but this, of course, does not make the labour less. I suspect the real difficulty is hardly come yet, for the Lord has allowed no felt difficulty yet, but set the tide one way as regards those around me. In the meanwhile, the meeting at Powerscourt, as it has wrought conscious desires, and inquiry and prayer too, in the minds of many of the evangelical people in this place, there has been a considerable plunge made into the minds of this country by it, and this has partly exercised me, as interested in this country.

Aungier Street, too, as you know, through the captiousness of one person, has caused trouble. But the Lord worketh still His own way. There is a little church here which has caused in an idle town great trouble and confusion of thought, where the preaching of the gospel was made a crime before; yet I communicate there, preach the gospel, and none to hinder me. We have set up weekly scripture reading meetings, two of them at the two most worldly houses in Limerick. Our only present difficulty is to keep people out. Pray that the Lord may turn this to His own real blessing in truth. The Lord is working strangely; one's only part is to follow closely in the path of His will, and not be led in anything from the point of blessing.

Pray for me, dear brethren. I feed a little day by day upon scripture, and we shall find something to talk about, I dare say, when I meet you all. Meanwhile, I do commend you earnestly to God, and beg your prayers, that that Spirit, by which alone there can be profit or blessing, may descend, and be abundantly upon me - yea, upon all the church: it is the church's great necessity. I preached a good deal upon it here. Is there much prayer for it at Plymouth? I do trust there is; nothing would I press more. Is there much real prayer there now? May I not be sure there is, and that you abound in reading and good works; your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Do not let even the enjoyment of your social meeting, pleasant and profitable as it is, trench upon your actual service among those without, specially the poor; as it is harder and less grateful, so when done in the Spirit, the Lord especially meets and blesses them. Be much among the poor, the Lord always owns it, it was always His way, and it has its peculiar importance in more ways than men suppose. It is His order and place of the church, for results are not always from apparent causes. Blessed is the man that considereth the poor.

You may be sure that when my spirit flags I think of Plymouth, as I do also ever, with earnest prayer for the Lord's sake. I have been detained here longer than I thought, which will be accounted for by what I have mentioned. The Lord's hand was remarkable. The bishop was removed. The Independent minister, a real Christian, and labouring, but confined and hindering in some things, away; and -, the minister who is setting up the chapel away; and I brought here in an unlooked for way, and those most adverse turned to be the houses open for the truth. Were I to tell you the detail of these circumstances, you would see yet more the Lord's hand. All I pray is, that the depth of His purpose may not be hindered by our weakness. I have yet Clare to visit, and perhaps a day's run into Mayo, but that will be nothing; and then, please God, I shall turn my ways towards Plymouth. It may be, I may go through London and Oxford, or perhaps take it in my way there, and see you for three or four hours and then return there. Such is my purpose; we must think of Bristol also, but that would be at and with Plymouth. I will write to W., please God, speedily, but would yet rather he would write to me, so that I may hear of all (What of the Penitentiary?), though it is a

comfort to me ever to write to Plymouth.

Ever, dear Miss -,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

In Christ Jesus.

I am very well, but a little overworked, as usual.

Limerick [1832].

[51004E]

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