

Letter: 8e 24 Mr H Borlase, Dublin, July 24th, 1834

by John Nelson Darby

The sermon emphasizes the importance of labour, wise hearts, and prayer in the Lord's Vineyard, highlighting the need for believers to cultivate and minister to one another.

Scripture: John 15:1, 1 Corinthians 3:9

Topics: "Dependence On God", "Fellowship"

Description

John Nelson Darby expresses his deep affection for his brethren in Plymouth, reflecting on the joy and fellowship experienced there despite their current scattering. He emphasizes the importance of cultivating the Lord's vineyard with wise and patient hearts, acknowledging the need for prayer and spiritual growth among the brethren. Darby also discusses the necessity of relying on the Spirit of God for guidance in ministry and the challenges of maintaining unity within the church amidst external pressures. He encourages his brother to seek the glory of the Lord above all and to trust in God's provision for their needs. Ultimately, he conveys a message of hope and reliance on God's grace for the future.

Transcript

p24 MY VERY DEAR BROTHER [Mr H Barleage], - I received your letter with great comfort, both as witness of your kind remembrance, and as letting me know of my dear brethren and sisters at Plymouth; though now so much scattered, that I miss so many well-known names, I trust only for a while. How much I love them there they, I trust, in a measure, and my own heart, surely know! The Lord has shewn me many pleasant services; still, the opening out to so much brotherly kindness, and love, and fellowship was, I believe, first at P.; and my heart continually turns there with the fondest recollection of it, though a better place is still before us. I do feel every day the infinite deficiency of one's labour, and do long for the abounding of this labour in myself, and to see the Lord's vineyard continuously dressed and cultivated, so that no need should appear, and labourers in it, whose hearts were in its ministrations. Oh, what wise hearts, what patient hearts, what large hearts, in the scope of all the necessities, and the infinite grace that suits them, ought those hearts to be! What a heart of prayer that ministers to, feeds, and cultivates the Lord's vineyard, and the hearts of the children of His saints, the plants of the Lord's planting; watching every noxious weed, seeing roots of bitterness before they spring up and claim their right by prescription to the soil! Indeed, the Lord has been very gracious to us at P., and I trust will continue to minister there amongst us; for surely He, however gently and lovingly in manner - and how much is it so! - is the great

purger of the vine or its branches. I should regret indeed, much, the scattering of the brethren at P. However, the Lord orders all things (and much better than we do), so that I feel disposed exceedingly to bow, sometimes I fear too listlessly - which is not right - to what arises.

It would appear that the thought has arisen in - 's mind of settling at Limerick, but I have heard nothing from him; he is to be with us, as arranged, to-day. There might be good there: I dread transplanting a good deal; it is not raising up people in the place; however, you are an argument against that, though only sub modo; he would be hailed there I am sure. So much have I felt the necessity of letting the Spirit of God work in each place, I have sometimes hesitated in having been the instrument, much as it might have been my delight and my comfort, of bringing any of my dear brethren over here. Bellett has just returned from visiting the churches or little bodies, South-west, and came back very happy from them, refreshed by their zeal and grace, which has in no small way comforted me, as you may suppose; he reports much grace, not much gift. I like this; it is a good order, yet I believe that many of them there would be found better informed in most important points of Christianity than most of their neighbours; but their minds have been recently expanded, and want deepening and strengthening in what they have opened to. I have long been quite aware of what he speaks of, nor have I indeed regretted it particularly; it taught them wonderfully to lean upon the Lord, and look for grace, and for communion, and His teaching, more than mere leaning on ministry, yet He never left them actually destitute, even of this; and indeed, almost all the active exertion in their parts is in their hands.

As to work, I do trust the Lord is surely working there: as to the "Witness," I think we ought to have something more of direct testimony as to the Lord's coming, and its bearing also on the state of the church: ordinarily, it would not be well to have it so clear, as it frightens people. We must pursue it steadily; it works like leaven, and its fruit is by no means seen yet; I do not mean leaven as ill, but the thoughts are new, and people's minds work on them, and all the old habits are against their feelings - all the gain of situation, and every worldly motive; we must not be surprised at its effect being slow on the mass, the ordinary instruments of acting upon others having been trained in most opposite habits. There is a great effort making in this country to keep the reformation within the church, and not let it go farther than they like; for they are very anxious, as always, to keep God within their own bounds: it will not do in the end, nor, if we are faithful, on the way. There is one advantage in sometimes scattering (not, however, counterbalancing the habit of communion bringing the Lord's presence), and that is the acquisition of the habit of work, a thing much individually blessed ever; but I do feel so utterly our need of leaning on the Lord for these things for the management of the church.

Dear brother, I speak not as though you did not, but for love's sake: seek singleness of eye to our blessed Master's glory above all things, and that that glory which shall be alone and above all in the Father's love in that day, may shine so ever in our hearts even now; we must be the Lord's ministers if we were to beg our daily bread; at least, I feel so, but I equally feel how constantly we must wholly depend upon God's Spirit, to guide and lead one in the path He has ordered for blessing, and the glory of truth in Christ Jesus, that one may meet Him with joy. Grace be with you, my dear brother. . . . I suppose I may go to the north shortly. May the Lord be with me, and make me His wise servant. My kindest love to all my dear brethren and sisters (I suppose Wigram has left you), and also to the poor people in K. Street, and how I rejoice to hear they are going on comfortably; may the Lord keep and bless them abundantly. I rejoice that G. has been faithful; he may be assured the Lor

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