

July 18th, 1795

# Letter from John Newton to John Campbell, July 18, 1795

John Newton

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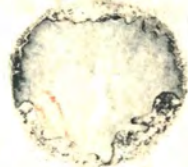
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London Twenty July 99

Mr J Campbell

Grays Market

Edinburgh





Dear Sir,

In future, if you please you may direct to me as formerly, under cover to Samuel Thomson Esq: only <sup>mine</sup> taking care that your whole packet is under an Ounce weight. I hope <sup>these</sup> will be franked to you likewise - but perhaps they may sometimes wait a day or two after-date, for an opportunity.

I thank you for the only news I have had of my Sister since she left Yorkshin. I hope she still has the use of her right hand, & will soon give me a proof of it. I love her dearly, & shall be glad to hear from her, or my brother.

Lord & Lady Balgony ~~is~~ returned some weeks since to Scotland. I have enquired but can find no friend who has any acquaintance with Lord Roseberys family. But if the Lord has engaged the hearts of the young Ladies you speak of, he will provide all that is necessary to bring them forward, in his own good time. His work is perfect. All hearts & means are in his hands, & when he begins he will surely make an end.

I know comp. as a truly but few of my <sup>well</sup> Masters. It is probable I had no knowledge of the Gentleman you mention who died lately. But I hope I shall know him hereafter. Nor can I take to what Paris & the Minions or the back of the Minions belongs. But I am glad if there is a Minister in it who speaks of sucking the Lord - for the phrase is rather unfashionable in these parts. Few excepting those called the Methodist Clergy, make use of it.

I like to keep you in my debt, tho' not having any long letter from you to answer, I am at a loss for a particular subject. But a general subject is always at hand, were my heart always in tune to manage it. Should not a Believer be ashamed to own that he can <sup>find</sup> nothing to say, or to write about? Perhaps not. For if he is indeed poor, & unable of himself to think a good thought, why should he be ashamed to confess his weakness & poverty? I may well be ashamed of my depravity that I am such a help, less worthless creature; but if it be so, to deny or attempt to palliate the case, would expose me to further shame for my pride & hypocrisy. I sometimes compare myself to a mill, which differs from a common house, in having a Mechanical apparatus, capable of producing motion; but without wind or water the wheels are all useless; & the mill can neither grind nor move. Thus my knowledge of Divine things, such as it is, is often dormant; & tho' I do not forget what I read of the person & love of the Saviour, of the beauty of Holiness, & the joys of Heaven, I cannot speak or write of them, just when I please, or as I please; but only as I am assisted by an influence, which is no man as my command than the rain or the sun-shine. When a large heavy laden ship is dry upon the shore, a thousand, a thousand teams of horses could not ~~raise~~ stir her an inch. But when the tide returns & raises her from the ground, one Man, with a rope can move her. Thus it is with me; what is impracticable at one time, is easy at another. I am a dependant creature. When the Lord is with me, I can do some thing; if he withdraws I can do nothing. Yet I am no better in myself, when I can do most, nor



strictly speaking am I worse, when I can do least. For it is at all times equally true, that I have nothing properly my own. The eye can see, if it has light, but it has no light in itself. The Seer & the Blind are much upon a par in the dark. Only the Man who can see, is qualified to perceive & welcome the light when it returns.

Could I always depend upon this Divine Influence, in a steadfast use of the means by which he has promised to communicate it, without any mixture of self-dependance, I believe I should go on better. But my rashness renders many mostifying leaps in the School of Experience, quite necessary. When shall I learn to be like a little child who sensible of his weakness, is afraid to cross the street without leading, & while he is led has no fear at all. And who not pretending to be Wise, believes with implicit confidence what he is told by his affectionate Parents!

I shall be glad to see Dr. Erskines address. We may pray <sup>in faith</sup> for the spread of the Gospel, & the enlargement of our Lords Kingdom, for we may <sup>be</sup> sure this is the great design he has in view, & for which the wheels of Time & Nature are kept in motion. This is the grand mark, to which the rise & fall of Empires, & the commotions of the present day, have a direct tendency, tho' the way of the Lord is so in the sea, that we short-sighted creatures cannot trace the connection of events, & the dependance of one upon one another. But his Word warrants us to believe, what we cannot clearly see. They say the Times are very dark - they seem so to us; Clouds & darkness are about <sup>his</sup> throne, but light will in due time shine out. He is carrying on his work by a straight line. If you or I were engaged in a plan, which we had much at heart, we would not suffer any thing to hinder our purpose if we could prevent it. Much less will he who has all power in Heaven & on Earth. Even the wrath of his Enemies shall praise him. They are permitted to do nothing, but what shall be found subservient to his design. Not only was Cyrus his servant, but Pharaoh & Sennacherib likewise. They sought their own Will & Glory, but promoted his.

We may leave all in his hands safely. Yet there is a part for us to act. We ought to be affected by what we see & hear. To ~~be~~ mourn for our own sins, & for the sins of others, & for the miseries with which Sin has filled the World. We should be jealous for the Lord of hosts, & compassionate to the souls of Men. Now his name is so visibly & awfully lifted up, it becomes us to see it, acknowledge it, & humbly ourselves under it, whether others will or not. The Lord has a Controversy with this Nation, He is pleading his own cause against the prevailing spirit of Infidelity, & the abominations ~~of~~ that abound, & He will make sinful worms know that He is the Lord, & that in all they speak proudly, He is above them. Perhaps the steps he may see fit to take, may touch his own people in their temporal concerns, but his glory ought to be the dearest object of their souls; <sup>it is</sup> better we should suffer a little, & for a little while, than that his Enemies should triumph. The love of self & of the present world, make us terribly afraid when any thing seems to threaten our ease & prosperity. But what are these when compared with the glory of our Lord & the welfare of precious souls. The times are dark - but perhaps they were darker in England sixty years ago; when tho' we had peace & plenty. The bulk of the Kingdom lay under the judgment of an Unregenerate Ministry, & the people were perishing for lack of knowledge. In this respect, the times are better than they were. The gospel is preached in many parts,



We have it plentifully in London, & many of our great towns, such as Leeds, Hull, Leicester, Birmingham, Manchester &c; which were once sitting in darkness, have now the true light. Some of these places were as a Wilderness in my remembrance, & now they are as Gardens of the Lord. And every year the gospel is planted in New places, Ministers are still raising up, the work is still spreading. I am not sure that ~~then~~ in the year 40, there was a single parochial Minister, who was publicly known as a gospel ~~Preacher~~ Preacher in the whole Kingdom. Now we have, I know not how many, but I think not fewer than Four hundred. Let us my friends settle it as a Maxim, That is the best time with any Nation, when the best cause flourishes most. For as the life is more than meat, so the Soul is more than the body. If one half of the Kingdom was ravaged by War, provided the distress was sanctified to <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ many candle ones, to seek the Lord & his Salvation - Such a dispensation would be more a Mercy than a Judgment.

I have just received my sisters letter, & your note. I thank you for both. Please to give my love to her, & my thanks to Mr Colquhoun. I hope to write to her before very long. But I am fully hindered. Now the franks go on in a moderate way, we shall do pretty well with our letters.

It is Saturday evening, when I usually have a few select friends to chiefly Ministers, to drink tea with me. Something that passes at these meetings, often suggests subject matter for the Lords-day. My company is gone, & I have a little time left to finish my letter. I believe the Lords old & faithful servant Mr. Remond is going home. He is nearly 82 years of age; has been 58 years in the Ministry - & was never laid by a single Sabbath till very lately. I have known him as a preacher of the Gospel since about the year 1750 & I believe he began sooner. He has been an honourable & Useful Man, a burning & a shining light. Inflexible as an Iron pillar in publishing the Truth - & unmoved either by the smiles or the frowns of the world. He is the most popular Man we have had since Mr. Whitfield. And few men living will be more misers. I believe some of his friends would wish to keep him here another fourscore years if they could. But when he goes, as he could not be expected to ~~be~~ preach if he lived, I shall not be sorry that he is entered into his Masters joy. My turn will probably be next, for I shall be 70 y. 4<sup>th</sup> August. Pray for me, that I may be found ready when the summons shall come. I will try to pray for you, that the Lord may bless you more & more, & make you a blessing in all your connections. Miss Cartlett sends her best wishes, with thanks for your kind remembrance.

I am your affectionate friend

Ormeron.

of. 18. July 95.