

April 2nd, 1798

Letter from John Newton to John Campbell, April 2, 1798

John Newton

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A friend of mine told me today that he saw in a Number
of the Repository Magazine, a Letter of mine concerning
Pope's Self. I have been accustomed to write to you with the greater
freedom but unless I hear your promise that no Letter or ex-
tract of a Letter from me, shall be printed without my consent or

copy
London. Third April 98
Mr. John Campbell
Grafton Place
Edinburgh
Prof. Stewart

to consent. I shall not feel myself at liberty to write to
Edinburgh again. And this would be a great mortification
to me.

I thought to have put you off, with a half sheet, but I have filled ^{it}, & therefore must write something on this, & not send you much blank paper. I must look again over your letters.

But first I must tell you that my poor old head has got to send some copies of the sermon I lately printed ⁱⁿ French on the day of Thanksgiving. Whether any of them have found the way to Edinburgh without my help, I know not, or whether they are yet to be had at Johnson's. I believe he sent One at least, to be put in a Volume of my detached papers - An Edition of all my printings has been long in hand at Edin - in Twelve, The 6 volumes 2 Meppals, & the smaller pieces, with make of vol. But when they will appear who can tell. I have expected them for about or above a twelvemonth.

I wrote to Mr. Black the very day when I received his sermon, so I must beg you to transmit my thanks for it. I suppose I have already noticed the particulars in your Apr. 23^d. Dec. - but it appears to me as a New letter. Your account of the Young Man executed for forgery is awful. Sin first deceives, & then hardens. So it soiled me & nothing but Sovereign Grace could have softened such a heart as mine. In sickness & in many dangers I seem'd no more afraid of death than of sleep. Nay had I not been restrained by a strong Invisible Hand, I should probably have destroyed myself - for my life was miserable, & I thought myself quite sure, like the French Philosophers, that Death was an Eternal Sleep. Was ever such a wretched, such a signal Monument of Mercy?

I know not if Infidelity has greatly spread, tho' the avowal of it is more public. Many perhaps were heart- infidels, before they read the books to which they ascribe their new wisdom.

But the writings of Payne & others, like the Spear of Ithuriel, have brought them forth in their true Characters. Infidelity is now in vogue at Rome. Popery is no more, for there is no more Pope & many of the Cardinals have sung hymns to the praise of French Liberty. But the Roman Catholic Religion so called, still subsists, in many parts of Christendom. Therefore I think Infidelity has not yet done all its work. It will proceed to the extent of its Commission, but no further. And when it has finished its work, it will receive its wages. How far this Commission may reach we know not, but we know the Lord has marked the bounds beyond which it cannot pass. I think neither Mr. Flemyng nor any other Commentators of the Prophecy foresaw the wonderful & rapid revolution which has taken place within these 4 years. They thought France would be subdued, but were not aware that France was to be the scourge of Europe. ^{Evnts are the best exponents of prophecy.} They nor Daniel ^{have some references to those times} ch. 7. v. 25. ^{But I stop.} My business is to preach Jesus Christ crucified, & leave temporal concerns in the hands of Him whose Council shall stand, & who will do all his pleasure. It will be well with the Righteous. He will either preserve them from the evils they approach, or give them strength accord'g to their day. It will make little difference to them a hundred years hence, whether they lived here in peace, or in the midst of trouble.

He says to his people, See that ye be not tempted. Lo, I am with you always, your Sun & your shield. But He likewise commands them to watch & pray, that they may maintain a spirit suitable to the times in which they live. We have no just cause to be afraid for our selves, if we are duly affected with

the Sin & Chisery that surrounds us. There is a secret snare of protection put upon those who sigh & mourn for what they cannot prevent. The Lord is pleading his own cause, & the glory of his Holy Name, should be the nearest & dearest concern to our hearts. But tho' I cannot write with much security & comfort, while I sit quietly by the fire-side, I am aware, that if such things as we have described ~~should~~ were actually to come upon us, I should tremble like a leaf & prove a very Coward, if left to myself. But He has said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. I may hope upon his Faithful promise.

My health & ability for Public services are still miserably preserved. Dear Miss Carlisle, & all my little family, are tolerably well. I trust we have tokens of his favourable presence in our Assemblies. He thro' the Lord's Blessing helps us. I have good reason to praise Him for what is past - & have good equal reason to trust Him for the future.

We write in love to you, & to all friends as if named, & request a continuation of your prayers for me & mine. May the Lord bless you in all your concerns & connections.

N. B. 2 April 98.

John Newton