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Letter from John Newton to John Campbell, October 22, 1799

John Newton

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My dear friend,

Time was, when your correspondent letters from me, but times are altering. I shall always love you, but my letters will probably decrease in number, since I have been so long without seeing you. But you are to me as I hope will be frequent. I trust, you wrote a fortnight ago, I have not heard from you since till this 21st October.

You found us at Southampton. It is the great news of your safe return home; I was thankful for the courage of Prudence, the love gave you on the shore. They are both Christian Graces when dominant, but if separate Courage degenerates into Rashness, and Prudence into Cowardice.

The order of the Assembly to dedicate such regular Services as the Church takes from preaching, in any of your years, was unworthy of their post, and will be a stain upon their Character. The mistaken notions of that denomination are equally unjust now, though they had at one time been ground given. And if it be true that a zeal for the Circus Service has induced many valuable persons to forsake such a man as Mr. Black, Mr. Davidson, Mr. Buchanan, others of a like character, so that good Ministers have been kept from forming those occasions. But formal ideas of the success of the recent portable Missionary in place daily distract of the Gospel, except there will be some mixture of human in preference to the best designs of the best men, and Satan will be busy when he puts his wisdom against the beam. But the Lord will accept the intentions of his faithful Servants, and overrule all things eventually for good. We will plead their cause, and put their enemies to shame to silence, if they can. But simply and patiently content
I am to write long letters to-day. Have to hear from some of my friends. My health is much improved since my return from the Continent. My letters from home are always welcome.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and direct your path. I close with the blessing of the Lord upon you.