

John Stewart's Letter to the Wyandottes

Transcribed by Darren English

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"My dear and beloved Friends: I, your brother traveller to eternity, by the grace and mercy of God, am blessed with this opportunity of writing to you; although I be far distant from you in body, yet my mind is oft times upon you. I pray you to be watchful that the enemy of souls do not ensnare you; pray to the Lord both day and night with a sincere heart, and he will uphold you in all your trials and troubles. The words that I shall take as a standard to try to encourage you from, may be found in the 5th chapter of Matthew, 6th verse, 'Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.' These words were spoken by our Saviour Jesus Christ, and they are firm and sure; for his words are more firm than the heavens or the earth. Likewise the promise appears to be permanent; it does not say it may be, or perhaps, so as to leave it doubtful; but 'they shall be filled.' This man, Jesus Christ, spake like one who possessed power to fill and satisfy the hungering soul, and we have no reason to dispute his ability to do so, knowing that he made all things that are made, and made man for his service, then we are bound to believe that he is a Being of all power, able to fulfill all his promises to all mankind. Though he made us for his service we have all gone astray into the forbidden paths of sin and folly; therefore the promise appears to be held out to a particular class of people, who, happy are they, if they find themselves in this hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the first place, my friends, I shall endeavour to shew you who it is that this gracious promise is made to, or how it is that we have a right to this promise; according to the light the Lord has given me, it is not him that is living in open rebellion against God, and going contrary to his commands-that closes his eyes against the light-that is barring the door of his heart against the striving of the blessed Spirit, that is continually admonishing him to forsake the ways of sin, and turn and seek the salvation of his soul; it is that man or woman who has called upon that God that hears sinners pray, and who will have mercy upon such as will call upon him with sincerity of heart, really desiring to receive and believing that he is able to give you. The Lord by his goodness will begin to take off the veil that the enemy has veiled you with, then you begin to see how thou hast strayed from the right way, this causes the sinner to be more and more engaged: this good and great Saviour, who sees and knows the secrets of every heart, seeing the poor soul willing to forsake the service of the devil, moves nearer and nearer to the sinner. his glorious light shines into his heart, he gives him to see the pool of crime that he has committed against the Blessed Saviour who hung on the tree for the sins of the world; this makes him mourn and grieve over his sins, and calling on the mighty Savior, as his last, his best refuge, for help; finding that there is no help in and of himself, seeing that all he has done is nothing, this causes the soul to try to make his last prayer, crying 'Lord, save or I perish;' thou wouldst be just in sending me to destruction, but Lord, save for Christ's sake; Lord, I have done all I can do, take me, do thy will with me, for thou knowest better what to do with me than I can desire. This blessed Saviour shews his face with ten thousand smiles-lays his hand to the work- breaks the snares of sin-unlooses him from the fetters and chains of unbelief-sets the soul at liberty-puts a new song in his mouth-makes the soul rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; it is then he desires to

go to his friends who have done so much for him, and leave this troublesome world; but the soul has to stay until it has done its duty on earth, which will not be long. After a few more rolling suns of this life, the tempter begins to tempt him; the world, the flesh and the devil all unite, the poor soul begins to mourn and grieve, because he cannot do as he would wish; when he would do good, evil is present; then it is the soul begins to hunger and thirst after righteousness. My friends, be glad and rejoice in the Lord, for this promise is to you and to all mankind; yes, they shall be filled with water issuing from the throne of God. O, my friends, pray to God to give you a hungering and thirsting after righteousness! Seek for it and you shall find it, for you shall reap in due season if you faint not. If you persevere in the way of well doing you will find in your path clusters of sweet fruits, that will satisfy your hungering souls, and being faithful to your Lord's commands, when you have made your way through much tribulation, and lie down on your dying bed, you will be filled with the glorious prospect of the reward that awaits you; guardian angels wait around your bed, to bear your soul away to those bright worlds of everlasting day, where the friend of poor sinners reigns. This fills the soul with the sweets of love divine; this, methinks, will make the dying bed of the man or woman, 'soft as downy pillows are.' Therefore, my friends, if you hold out faithful, you will have part in the first resurrection; then it will be that you will see your Lord and master face to face; then it will be that you will hear that blessed sentence 'Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' Then shall you sit down with the people of God in that kingdom, where your Saviour with his soft hand will wipe all tears from your eyes. There you shall see and be with him, and praise him to all eternity. Having, after a broken and imperfect manner, my friends, shewn you the characters of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, I shall endeavour to say a few words to that class of people, who I, in the foregoing part of my discourse said, had no part in the promise. A few words of consolation to the sinner; that is, the Lord is willing to save all who will call upon him with a sincere heart, at the same time having determined to forsake all sin, and to seek the salvation of their souls. Now, my friends, you who have been at war against this great friend of sinners, now turn, for behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. Take into consideration, realize how long the Lord has spared your lives, and all this time you have been resisting his holy and blessed Spirit-this Spirit the Lord has sent to warn you, and entreat you to turn to the Lord. But oh, my friends, how often have you thrust that good Spirit away, and forced it to depart from you! Let me inform you, if you continue to resist this good Spirit, it will after a while leave you, never more to return, for God hath said, 'my spirit shall not always strive with man.' Therefore, my friends, though you have caused the Spirit to go away grieved, now begin to encourage and attend to its admonitions; he that receives it and obeys its directions, receives Christ, and at the same time receives God the Father. My friends, if you will not adhere to the Lord's Spirit, neither to the entreaties of your friend, the time draws on when you will wish you had spent this glorious Opportunity the Lord has given you, in preparing to meet Him who is to judge the world. Then it will be you will have to hear and abide by that dreadful sentence, 'Depart ye cursed ye workers of iniquity, for I never knew you.' Oh! my friends, consider you must go into fire prepared for the devil and his angels, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Some of you may put off this and think it is a long time yet before it comes to pass; but consider, if the Lord does not call you by judgment, death is always near, and he taking off our friends both on our right and on our left

hands. Ah! we must all, sooner or later, be called to lie on a sick bed, when no physician can effect a cure, when death-cold and dreary death will lay hold on us; then will we have a view of awful eternity, and if unprepared, horror will seize upon the soul, while our friends wait around our bed, to see us bid the world adieu. Oh! what anguish will tear the soul of the sinner! What bitter lamentations will then be made for mis-spent opportunities, slighted mercies! O! that I had spent my time more to the Lord! Then you will say, farewell my friends, I have to go, for devils are waiting round my bed, to drag my soul away to hell. Then will you remember how often you grieved the good Spirit of the Lord, how often you drove it from you, but too late, you must go to endure the horrors of ever lasting burnings. Then, my friends, accept of my feeble advice; bear constantly in mind the necessity of obtaining this blessed promise, and ever let your hearts and conduct be guided by the directions of that blessed Saviour who died for you, that you might live. You who have set out in the way of well doing, be faithful unto death, and you will be conveyed by angels to Abraham's bosom, and there meet the sweet salutation of 'well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' And may God bless you and keep you in the path of righteousness, until he shall see fit to close your eyes in death. Now may the blessing, &c.;