

*PRECIOUS TRUTHS
REVIVED AND
DEFENDED
THROUGH
J. N. DARBY*

*VOLUME TWO
Defense of Truth
1845 - 1850*

*B. W. Newton and Bethesda
(The Origin of Open Brethrenism)*

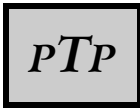
*An historical review including
exposures of past and present
calumnies employed in attempts to
discredit these truths.*

R. A. Huebner

Made and printed
in USA

ISBN 0-9640037-0-8

ISBN 0-9640037-0-8



Present Truth Publishers

825 Harmony Road Jackson NJ 08527 USA

www.presenttruthpublishers.com

Part 2

*Defense
of the
Recovered
Truth*

1845 - 1850

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ix
Preface x

*Section 8: B. W. Newton and Plymouth:
 The Church and the Hope Denied and
 The Person of Christ Violated* 1

*Chapter 8.1: The Introduction of
 Modified Presbyterianism* 7

 The Germing of Newtonism 7

 Introduction 7

 The *Christian Witness* Article 7

 Long Undetected 8

 The Truths Undermined at Plymouth 9

 B. W. Newton's View of the
 Spirit's Action in the Assembly 10

 Clerisy and Modified Presbyterianism Introduced 11

Chapter 8.2: Recovered Truth Defended 15

 The Ripening Evil 15

 B. W. Newton's Ecclesiastical Agenda 17

 The Meeting of the 15 Brethren 19

 Patience Produced No Change in BWN 21

 JND'S Withdrawal 22

 Breaking Bread in Separation from Ebrington Street 25

 No Second Lord's Table 28

 Five Letters on Events Predicted in Scripture as
 Antecedent to the Coming of the Lord 28

 "The question of the *character* of the church and how
 incompatible with this was all untruthfulness
 and shuffling" (G. V. Wigram) 32

*Chapter 8.3: The Work of the Enemy
 Fully Unmasked* 37

 Newtonism Brought into the Light 37

A Sketch of the Exposure of BWN's Evil Teaching	37
Defense and Exposure of Newtonism	41
Confessions of Several Plymouth Leaders	44
Newtonism Held at Plymouth for Years	45
B. W. Newton's Acknowledgment.	46
B. W. Newton's Restatement of the Satanic Doctrine	47
The Meetings at Bath, May 1848.	49
<i>Chapter 8.4: Did B. W. Newton Teach</i>	
<i>His Evil Doctrines Subsequent to</i>	
<i>His Acknowledgment?</i>	
B. W. Newton Said That He Subsequently Taught It	51
BWN'S Writings Show That He Continued to Teach His Evil Doctrines	53
.	
The Fire of Sinai Burnt Against Christ	53
Christ's "Unspeakable Circumstantial Distance from God"	54
Christ had to Find His Way to	
the Point Where God Could Meet Him	56
Christ had the Exercises of an Unconverted Man	57
BWN's Doctrine of Christ's Mortality	57
Concluding Thoughts	60
BWN is Acquitted by Open Brethren	60
Predecessors that BWN Quoted for Support	63
BWN'S Shiftiness	64
BWN and the 1866 Controversy Regarding JND's	
Teaching Concerning the Sufferings of Christ	66
"Thoughts on the Apocalypse"	67
<i>Chapter 8.5: H. W. Soltau's Account of</i>	
<i>What Happened at Plymouth</i>	
<i>Notes for Section 8</i>	<i>80</i>

*Section 9: Bethesdaism: Corporate,
Public Ratification of Unholiness
in Christian Fellowship*

Introduction 99

Chapter 9.1: Brief Background to The Bethesda Division 101

 G. Muller, H. Craik and the Reception at Bethesda 101

 Summary of the Bethesda Matter 102

Chapter 9.2: The Reception of Leaven 105

 Leaven Leavening the Lump 105

 JND’s Visit to Bethesda After
 the Reception of the Woodfalls 107

Chapter 9.3: Sheltering the Leaven by Principle 111

 The Reception of Leaven at Bethesda 111

 J. M. Code’s Description of Bethesda’s Position 113

 The Letter of the Ten 114

 What Happened When Bethesda
 Adopted the Letter of the Ten 113

 Who Signed the Letter of the Ten? 114

 The Letter of the Ten Upheld by Leading Open Brethren 117

Chapter 9.4: The Result of Sheltering the Leaven 123

 The Letter of the Ten
 Denounced by Faithful Men 123

 The Result of Bethesda’s Taking an Evil position 123

 The Bethesda Circular Issued by JND 124

 The Response of the Brethren at Bath 126

 H. Bewley’s Visit 127

 The Lack of Response at Bethesda 128

 G. V. Wigram at Bristol 128

Chapter 9.5: Bethesda’s Belated and Unacceptable Reaction
. 131

 The Oct. 31, 1848 Meeting at Bethesda 131

 H. Craik’s and Bethesda’s Position. 132

 G. Muller’s Letter to J. G. Deck 132

 Why Did Bethesda Finally Investigate? 133

 What Were Bethesda’s Findings? 134

 Additional Facts 136

 How do Bethesda’s Supporters Answer This? 140

 Did Bethesda (Ever) Judge the Evil? 141

 The Practical Outworking 142

 B. W. Newton’s Papers Circulated at Bethesda 144

Bethesda's Position	145
A Classic Palliation and Reversal	145
<i>Chapter 9.6: Bethesda Adamant</i>	<i>147</i>
A Meeting Requested	147
<i>Chapter 9.7: Division Spreads</i>	<i>151</i>
Others Side with Bethesda	151
<i>Chapter 9.8: J. N. Darby's Interview With George Muller</i>	<i>155</i>
<i>Chapter 9.9: The Meetings at Taunton & Bristol, and JND's Withdrawal of the Bethesda Circular</i>	<i>157</i>
The Meetings	157
JND's View of Bethesda's Conduct	159
JND's (Alleged) Letter to Henry Craik	162
<i>Chapter 9.10: With the Door Open the Evil Taint Spread</i>	<i>163</i>
<i>Present Day Open Brethren Kenoticism</i>	<i>163</i>
What is Kenoticism?	163
Kenoticism Circulating Among Open Brethren	164
<i>Present Day Trends</i>	<i>165</i>
<i>Who is Looking for "Unclean Birds"?.</i>	<i>167</i>
Where Are They Nesting?	167
Can You Find Any?	168
<i>A Note on Open Brethren "Intercommunion"</i>	<i>172</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>173</i>
<i>Notes for Section 9</i>	<i>175</i>

Appendices 183

<i>Appendix 1: A Statement and Acknowledgement Respecting Certain Doctrinal Errors [Nov. 26, 1847]</i>	<i>185</i>
<i>Appendix 2: A. N. Groves</i>	<i>189</i>
A. N. Groves' Principles of Fellowship	190
A. N. Groves, G. Muller and H. Craik	197
<i>Appendix 3: Confession of J. E. Batten With Comments on B. W. Newton's Acknowledgment</i>	<i>199</i>
<i>Appendix 4: L. Pilson's Analysis of B. W. Newton's Acknowledgement</i>	<i>203</i>
<i>Appendix 5: F. R. Coad's Charge Concerning Docetic</i>	

Tendencies of "Exclusives" 205
 The Charge of Docetism 205
 C. H. Mackintosh and "the Heavenly Humanity" 206
Appendix 6: Use of the Word "Mortal" 209
*Appendix 7: A. C. Ord's Examination of B. W. Newton on
 the Person of Christ 215*
Appendix 8: J. N. Darby on the Sufferings of Christ 221
Appendix 9: Views on Newtonism 225
 Introduction 225
 Views of Those Who Excluded Evil 225
 Views of Open Brethren 225
 Miscellaneous Judgments 227
*Appendix 10: Examination of the Letter of the Ten by G. V.
 Wigram 231*
Appendix 11: G. V. Wigram 253

Appendix 12: Henry Craik 259
 Henry Craik's Attitude and Views 259
 Was H. Craik Sympathetic Towards
 B. W. Newton's Doctrine? 261
*Appendix 13: George Muller's Views and Conduct
 Relative to B. W. Newton 267*
*Appendix 14: The Open Brethren View of Leaven Leavening the
 Lump 275*
Notes for the Appendices 283

* * * * *

Index 293
Bibliography 305

Acknowledgements

My first acknowledgement is due our blessed Lord Jesus, without Whom we can do nothing (John 15:5). He has graciously given me guidance to the information needed for this book.

The second acknowledgement is due Dr . David Brady , Curator of the Christian Brethren Archive located at the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, England. He has supplied me with numerous papers, including the *Fry MS* sometimes called "Newton'sMemoirs."^a Also, on occasion he has been able to supply me with an answer to a question on relevant history.

Next, I am much indebted to Dennis Ryan and Frank Marotta for their valued editorial work which has greatly improved the presentation of the information contained in this book, though they are not to blame for any deficiencies.

And then I wish to express appreciation for word processing, and also the proofreading of Section 9 and the Appendices, done by Carolyn Ryan.

* * * * *

Thanks are due the following for permission to quote copyrighted material.

Harold H. Rowdon, editor, *Vox Evangelica*, 1983, for an extract.

The Paternoster Press, Exeter England, for F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, sec. ed., 1976. ©

a. The *Fry MS* refers to handwritten notes which had been in the possession of C. E. Fry. His father compiled them from written material by F. W. Wyatt who had written down reminiscences made by B. W. Newton in his old age. (See Brian R. Wilson, ed., *Patterns of Sectarianism* , London: Heinemann, p. 214). The source herein designated as the *Fry MS* comprises 444 handwritten sheets.

Preface

In *Precious Truths Revived and Defended by J. N. Darby: Volume One, Recovery of Truth, 1826 - 1845*, we reviewed the history of the recovery of truth associated with the name of J. N. Darby. This included truth about the nature of the church, especially that the church is a mystery unforeseen by the O. T. prophets, the heavenly character of the church, and the interlocking truth of the tribulation rapture.

In particular, the truthfulness of JND's statements regarding the beginnings was substantiated; not that there was ever any reason to doubt it -- spite of the attempts of calumniators to attack his integrity and character.

In tracing his expositions of Scripture, we followed JND to Switzerland where we took leave of him at the beginning of 1845 when he was about to return to Plymouth, England.

By this point in time (early 1845) the recovered truths concerning the church and the tribulation rapture had been undermined at Plymouth, England for some years. B. W. Newton (BWN) was a principle teacher there. He had been among the first to break bread at Plymouth in Raleigh chapel, which had been purchased by G. V. Wigram. Meanwhile the Plymouth assembly had grown quite large and was now located in Ebrington St., Plymouth. Also, meanwhile, BWN had changed his church principles and developed a "modified Presbyterianism" church system and was the leader in undermining the recovered truth mentioned above. He also developed a posttribulation prophetic system which received detailed expression in the publication, in 1844, of his *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*. (JND wrote a reply to this work; See *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, vol. 8.)

JND returned to England in early 1845 and went directly to Plymouth, where he began to deal with the ecclesiastical undermining and changes, and also raised the question of BWN's integrity. At the end of 1845, JND withdrew/separated from the assembly at Ebrington St., Plymouth, which supported BWN concerning the changes in church principles and practice.

In 1847, the fact that BWN held evil teachings concerning Christ's relations to God was made public by another teacher at Plymouth, J. L. Harris. He had not been privy to the clandestine development of this heresy which BWN had been developing from about 1835/1836. This had been done in a secretive manner and only certain persons were privy to these teachings before the exposure during 1847. I shall call these teachings **Newtonism** or **B. W. Newton's doctrine of "Christ's unspeakable circumstantial distance from God."**

A related concern was that in 1848 the assembly at Bethesda (Bristol, England) received partisans of BWN, thus bringing into issue the subject of the holiness of Christian fellowship. Bethesda enunciated a new principle of fellowship in justification of receiving to the breaking of bread the persons in question. Those that accepted Bethesda's new principle of reception became known as "open brethren," while those who opposed this became known as

"exclusive brethren." ^b The reader may consult Appendix 14 for one of the important differences in doctrine that affects dealing with evil teachers and immoral persons.

This new principle of reception expressed itself in a three-fold attack on the recovered truth and the human instrument God used. There is a pattern of attack to be observed in the 1845-1866 era regarding opposition to J. N. Darby; it is composed of three parts. These three parts (to which three sections -- 8, 9, and 10, are assigned) have a particular connection and serve as an example of how the supporting evil goes hand in hand with *calumniating those who oppose the evil*:

- Section 8 ■ JND deals with the evil of Newtonism (1845-1847).
- Section 9 ■ Bethesda's (Bristol, England) indifference to Newtonism (1848-1849).
- Section 10 ■ Attempting to fasten Newtonism on J. N. Darby (1864 - 1866; during a controversy regarding the sufferings of Christ).

The present volume (which covers events of 1845-1850) will review the first two parts (Sections 8 and 9) of this three-part attack. The third part (Section 10) is reserved for volume three in this series of books. Volume 3, will also include a Section 11, composed of a review of JND's translation work in English, German and French, characterizations of his writings, and interesting comments on his person. ^c

The present volume, then, covers the years 1845-1850. The events of those years have been used by persons hostile to the truths recovered through JND to attack his character, presenting him as an untruthful man, just as was done regarding the beginnings, as we saw in vol. 1. As F. W. Grant disgustedly remarked in connection with this form of attack on JND, 'Who wants to listen to a blackened man?' Two things have gone hand-in-hand: blackening JND and whitewashing B. W. Newton and also Bethesda. In the present volume, then,

b. The designation "exclusive brethren," a description given them as a term of odium, meant that such excluded wicked persons, including teachers of fundamentally evil doctrine (like B. W. Newton), from their fellowship, and also refused to break bread with those who fellowship such wicked persons (as B. W. Newton). It was a good designation, meaning that they excluded leaven. Why would anyone who professes to be gathered together to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 18:20), and to maintain the holiness of Christian fellowship, shirk, or shrink from, being so known?

I am here using the descriptions "open brethren" and "exclusive brethren" in a generic sense. Numbers of British Christians refer to "Exclusive Brethren" when they are really referring to one of the Raven-Taylor groups. These are Apollinarians who also deny the eternity of Christ's Sonship and also deny that He was eternally the Word, etc.

c. In addition, another volume (of about 180 pages, too long to have included it in vol. 1) has been published: *J. N. Darby's Teaching Regarding Dispensations Ages, Administrations, and the two Parentheses*, with an appendix on "ultradispensationalism," another showing that JND was neither an Arminian or Calvinist, and another replying to the allegation that the offer of the kingdom, as understood by dispensationalists, would be an immoral offer. This book is available from the publisher of the present volume.

I hope to:

- show that B. W. Newton's doctrines, concerning Christ's relations to God, were evil; and, that he held these teachings both before and after the Bethesda division (of 1848);
- show that Bethesda received partisans of BWN and enunciated a doctrine of unholiness in christian fellowship in justification for doing so (which her followers practice to this very day); and, dealt with the matter in a dishonest way;
- connect the defamation of JND with a desire on the part of JND's detractors to stigmatize the recovered truths that he taught.

Writers hostile to JND write on these matters from their doctrinal perspective (as, of course, I do also). The issue comes out plainly in section nine concerning the basis of the separation from Bethesda. There we will see Bethesda's deliberate fellowship with evil; and JND, G. V Wigram, and others (and I also, as writing this history) believe that tolerating what Scripture calls leaven (1 Cor. 5; Gal. 5:9) leavens an assembly; and receiving persons coming from such leavened places is receiving leavened persons. This leavens those receiving such leavened persons. Perhaps some readers may be helped in understanding this issue by noting that some fundamentalists are concerned today about what they call the necessity for "secondary separation," and rightly so. This was a major issue in the Bethesda division of 1848. Present-day Open Brethren writers, for example, F. R. Coad, F. F. Bruce, and H. H. Rowdon, deny that breaking bread with leavened persons leavens a person by that fellowship. Indeed, JND (and others) acting on this scriptural principle of separation from fellowship with evil (as well as the ecclesiastical, dispensational and prophetic truth has engendered much controversy. But is that a valid reason to distort history and defame a man's character? At any rate, the reader of this book will judge, but he also will, of course, judge by the principles he holds. One's judgments, JND observed, are an index to his state of soul. Let the reader observe how the followers of Bethesda did not seem able to find out some facts, distorted other facts, and did not judge rightly concerning what was before them, and enunciated a principle that amounts to indifference to the honor of Christ. The reason for this is the effect on the judgment caused by looseness in divine things, and of 'brethrenism' rather than what is due Christ.

I add that as with B. W. Newton in the past, so part of F. R. Coad's agenda, ^d presently, is to fasten on "exclusives" a "docetic tendency ." ^e I suggest that what underlies such a charge is this: that one who does *not* oppose B. W. Newton's doctrine that Christ's alleged mortality (meaning, necessity of dying) may, from that unholy standpoint, think that he sees an evil tendency in those who do oppose these teachings, when really there is no such tendency. Instead,

d. In his, *A History of the Brethren Movement*.

e. "Docetism was the doctrine that Christ did not actually become flesh, but merely seemed to be a man" (*Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, article "Docetism," p. 171, 1973). I suggest that its use against "exclusives" indicates an unsoundness regarding the humanity of Christ by those making this charge, just as was so in the case of B. W. Newton, who is the father of this charge.

something of the view he holds is revealed by his 'concern.' What character of concern might be expected from one who is not able to pronounce BWN's doctrine of Christ's circumstantial distance from God as fundamental evil? Rather than a 'concern' about an alleged docetic tendency in those that he opposes, it would be in order to separate from the evil of, not a "tendency" but, a **form of Kenoticism** among some Open Brethren, noted in Chapter 9.10.

It is well to take note of the doctrinal basis that gives rise to a judgment.

Let us now turn to the subject of B. W. Newton's attack on the recovered truth, necessarily involving the doctrine and practice of the church. Connected also was the rejection of the truth of the pretribulation rapture. BWN elaborated a posttribulation system. But what was far deeper, and deadly, was his doctrine of Christ's circumstantial distance from God and the alleged mortality (necessity of dying) of His humanity.

Section 8

B. W. Newton and Plymouth:

The Church and the Hope Denied and The Person of Christ Violated

In vol. 1, we saw that the Enemy had been foiled in 1833 in his attempt to introduce into the assemblies indifference to Arianism through F. W. Newman, the various meetings all acting in the unity of the Spirit in refusing him. In the following years the assemblies increased in number and this period was characterized by growth in understanding the Word of God. However, there were those who were attracted to the practical love and care manifested without necessarily understanding assembly principles.

B. W. Newton, (BWN hereafter) of Plymouth, who was among the first to break bread at Plymouth, set himself on a course of opposing the recovered dispensational truth in its ecclesiastical and prophetic aspects. He developed a posttribulational view of prophecy -- which also had some unique features. He set himself to make Plymouth the center from which to neutralize the influence of J. N. Darby (JND hereafter).

In 1835/1836 he bred some evil thoughts which he subsequently systematized into teaching that put Christ in *false relations to God*. Using a phrase of his, I designate this as BWN's teaching concerning Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God," to use his expression. Thus he taught that Christ had to work His way to a point where God could meet Him. These teachings, which he never repudiated, will be considered in Chapter 8.4.

In the *Fry MS* (pp. 373, 374) there is a letter by B. W. Newton dated Jan. 24, 1845. (Recall that JND arrived at Plymouth, from Europe, in March 1845). In this letter we read a libel against Christ:

Christ freed himself from all the consequences of Adam's imputed guilt (imputed to mankind not to Christ) by keeping the Law and so proved His title to life.

However, it was not until late spring of 1847 that this system, which he had been propagating in a secret manner, came to light. This teaching, I suggest, forms the moral background to his conduct at Plymouth -- involving untruthfulness (a feature often associated with the introduction of fundamentally evil doctrine).

At the same time he was maturing his prophetic and ecclesiastical views. He thus introduced into Plymouth what his ardent supporter, S. P. Tregelles, agreed was "modified Presbyterianism." In Oct. 1845, JND withdrew (separated) from the Plymouth meeting on the grounds that clerisy had been instituted. G. V. Wigram, who also was among the first to break bread in Plymouth, also withdrew. That occurred, note, about 1-1/2 years before the evil doctrine concerning Christ's Person came to light through the instrumentality of J. L. Harris, another teacher at Plymouth.

G. V. Wigram briefly surveyed the situation and this will give us an overall chronological frame work. He wrote:

As to His goodness in teaching, first, in *truth*, God did teach us graciously for many years; -- His book, without a rod, open before us (see the first edition of the Christian Witness, from January, 1834 to January, 1841). There was no rod of controversy then. Through Satan's guile, heretics were raised up; and our hearts, generally exalted instead of humbled, by the mercy and blessing given, were ready to be snared in what God could not own. His grace would not give us up, nor his testimony through us; and though, during the interval from 1841 to April, 1845, that is, while the evils were ripening till brought into judgment, it may be hard to trace the manifested teachings of God; since 1845, I can, to my own mind, at least, distinctly do so, mingled with the rod though they be -- the rod which broke the primary evil, and has to break down the worldly self-sufficiency which followed in its wake. Thus, first, there was (in 1845) the question of the personal presence of the Holy Ghost in the Body, the Church. Then (1846) the question of the *character* of the Church, and how utterly incompatible with this was all untruthfulness and shuffling. Then (1847) the heresy, and that such a thing as delusions and works of Satan were to be found among saints -- to clear in that which is spiritual and moral, as storms do the atmosphere in nature. Then (1848) was 1 John 4:1-2, taught [us] practically at Bethesda, *i. e.*, trying the spirits, whether they be of God; also the question of the links of the company of believers.¹

JND was the principle teacher that opposed BWN. Writers hostile to JND say that it was differences in prophetic views that caused the division at Plymouth. Opposers of JND say (whether directly, or in effect) that he was untruthful in this controversy and had no grounds to separate from the Ebrington Street meeting (where BWN and others met, in Plymouth). Those who support JND say that is untrue, as W. Kelly, below. S. P. Tregelles, the textual critic, who was in the Plymouth meeting at the time, and an ardent defender of BWN, said:

You appear to be so perfectly aware that the opposition to Mr . Newton arose entirely from his prophetic views being disliked by Mr . Darby, that I need not insist on the point. Out of this sprang all the ~~charges~~ charges against Mr. Newton, and the endeavor to condemn him on *every possible* ground. Had he accorded with Mr Darby on Prophecy, we should never have heard *his* voice raised against him as to Ministry or Church Order; his writings would not then have been scrutinised with severity, in order to glean matter of accusation.²

That is an incorrect assessment, a not unusual phenomenon in S. P. Tregelles'

defense of BWN.^f As JND said soon after coming to Plymouth, "it was a moral question to me."³ However, BWN's heresy, noted above by G. V. Wigram, concerning Christ, was connected with BWN's prophetic scheme. In 1849, a writer using the pseudonym Presbutees wrote:

Within the last few years another prophetic theory has been formed, which was almost stamped with infallibility; and this has been discovered to be connected with fundamental error respecting the relation of Christ to God by Incarnation, an error as dishonoring to the person of the Son, and as subversive of the gospel itself as Irvingism itself.⁴

What this true testimony omitted to say, however, is that the fundamental evil concerning Christ's relation to God was hidden until (1847) after the separation had taken place at Plymouth on moral and ecclesiastical grounds in 1845. W. Kelly, in a review of W. Collingwood's *"The Brethren." A Historical Sketch*, which he characterized as "in every respect unreliable," wrote:

About 1843 or 4 I remember a brother asking me what was to be done, if evil got the upper hand among those gathered to the Lord's name, as of old after the apostles; and replying that we must adhere in faith to what unfaithful souls compromised. So 2 Tim. 2:19-22 teaches. Alas! the need arose at Plymouth itself soon after, where a leader with several coadjutors came to the conclusion that "Brethren" were wrong ("Christian Witness," and all). Instead of going quietly out, as uprightness must have dictated, they chose to leave the meeting there with his independent church system, ministerialism, and judaizing (of the hope especially), to say nothing of personal conduct. Mr. Darby did all he could in vain to have this judged; and when the mass stuck to local majority and gave up all sense of the Spirit's unity, and common consistency, he withdrew as did others, that they might be subject to the word and Spirit as before. Not long after a system of heterodoxy was discovered secretly at work in the same party. This was exposed to the deliverance of many and the scattering of the unworthy. But a part of western England^g really sympathized with the Plymouth system of independency, ministerialism, and the earthly hope to supplant the heavenly; and this is what the booklet tries to defend without knowing what was at stake.⁵

W. Kelly also said:

f. In vol. 1, we saw that S. P. Tregelles manufactured a story that 'the secret, any-moment coming' teaching came from a demon inspired woman, in 1832, in E. Irving's church.

g. A comment was made in the Open Brethren periodical, *The Witness* 67:258, Sept. 1937, regarding George Muller, one of the two principle leaders at Bethesda:

George Muller was known as a man of *faith and prayer*, but not a master of Prophecy. He naturally took the view of a few leaders in the West of England at that time. His gift was not Prophetic Schemes, but practical Holiness and evident Faith.

There is a gift of faith (Rom. 12) but certainly not of practical holiness. Perhaps the statement that "He naturally took the view of a few leaders in the West of England . . ." is supposed to account for the fact that G. Muller was a posttribulationist. Why *naturally*? At any rate, here is an indication of where he learned his posttribulationism, coupled with the impotent excuse that he was not "a master of Prophecy." He learned it where B. W. Newton had his influence. It appears to me that he also learned something of B. W. Newton's changed church principles.

Whatever the difference as to prophecy, the rupture at Plymouth in 1845 was mainly on ecclesiastical grounds (that God was practically displaced in His assembly through a subversion of our confessed principles, and evil not only unjudged, but through the suppression of a weekly meeting for enquiry the remedy for much taken away). It is certain that through corrupting influence at that time in Ebrington St. the church's responsibility to judge evil was denied, as well as the unity of Christ's body on earth. He who in such circumstances could justify going on with the Ebrington Street party seems to me without conscience as to holiness and without faith as to unity, abandoning the rights of Christ in both.

Mr. N.'s heterodoxy as to Christ appeared, as Mr. Teulon says, about two years after. . . .

But just after JND arrived at Plymouth from Switzerland (March 1845), BWN himself denied that prophetic matters were at the root :

No doubt it would be very desirable for Mr. Darby to convince all that the feeling between us hangs on *a* prophetic point or on the interpretation of *a* particular book such as the Revelation . . . the very things that he has continually said since he has been here prove that it is not.⁶

Here BWN himself disagreed with his ardent supporter, S. P. Tregelles. Those who do not understand the truth concerning the church as JND did, are inclined to say that difference in prophetic views were the cause. But BWN himself saw further than this, and rightly so.

In chapter 8.1 we will consider the introduction of "modified Presbyterianism" into Plymouth. In doing so we will first examine the germinating of the evil doctrine concerning Christ because it forms the background to the effort of the Enemy to neutralize the recovered truth and it will introduce us to the methods by which BWN sought to do this.

Chapter 8.2 will review JND's dealing with the introduction of the "modified Presbyterianism" into Plymouth.

In chapter 8.3 we will see how a Satanic system was unmasked and finally confessed by several of BWN's co-leaders at Plymouth; and how JND was vindicated.

However, BWN made an acknowledgement of *an* error. Many claim he gave up his evil teachings. Chapter 8.4 will show that he merely shifted the system to a new base. Indeed, he himself claimed to continue, subsequently to teach his system. This, and more, is documented in Chapter 8.4, which I think is the most important chapter in Section 8 in preparation for Section 9.

Finally, in chapter 8.5 a manuscript is printed that shows what was transpiring among those leaders who had supported BWN through both the ecclesiastical controversy and the following controversy regarding BWN's evil doctrines concerning our Lord. Nothing in the previous chapters depends on whether or not Chapter 8.5 is a true or false account.

In these chapters, and in section 9, the reader will see how evil works and how Christians palliate it. They will see how the evil teacher is excused and how those who oppose and expose the evil are made to look as if it is they who are guilty. Such ever have their character and reputation attacked. The

Scripture long ago pointed out this very thing (Prov. 14:16; Isa. 59:15).

Chapter 8.1

The Introduction of Modified Presbyterianism

The Germinating of Newtonism

INTRODUCTION

Were we to review B. W. Newton's (BWN) undermining of the recovered truths in the historical order in which it came to light and was dealt with by JND, the ecclesiastical issue would be first and BWN's blasphemous doctrines (which I will call *Newtonism*) concerning Christ would be second. However, I think it well to consider the germinating of the blasphemous doctrines, secretly at work, first because they were at work from at least 1835 and on through 1845 when JND separated from the brethren meeting at Ebrington St., Plymouth. The evil teachings formed the background of the conduct of certain leaders at Plymouth. JND charged untruthfulness upon BWN before separating (before the fundamentally evil teachings concerning Christ became public). Adversaries of JND, and palliators of BWN's fundamentally evil teachings concerning Christ, have claimed that JND was untruthful. I would think that the one holding evil doctrine concerning the Person of Christ would be the one who was untruthful, especially since it was kept from the knowledge of brethren who would oppose it;⁷ and even from J. L. Harris, a principle leader at Plymouth, and editor of the *Christian Witness*. Indeed, the underhanded way in which BWN began the introduction of his doctrine set the tone for his subsequent, untruthful conduct, both in connection with the ecclesiastical matters and his doctrine of Christ's circumstantial distance from God.

THE *CHRISTIAN WITNESS* ARTICLE

BWN wrote a paper, "Doctrines of the Church in Newman Street, Considered," a response to Edward Irving's views concerning the notion that the Lord Jesus had the carnal nature, though He did not sin. This was published in the *Christian Witness* 2:111 (April, 1835). BWN subsequently modified the paper in a new preface, in response to Irvingite critiques and reprinted it at the end of 1835 as a separate paper and it had a wide circulation in India. A second edition of the *Christian Witness* was published and the above tract⁸ "was inserted in a second edition of the *Christian Witness* in 1837 or 1838"⁸ now containing the preface⁹ that included the foundation of *Newtonism*, described in some detail subsequently herein.

LONG UNDETECTED

It seems strange that BWN's evil notions concerning Christ's relations to God

were not detected sooner. Even the editor of the *Christian Witness*, J. L. Harris, who had also been a fellow minister of the Word of God at Plymouth until 1845, was not aware of it; but in 1847 he first brought the system, by then full blown, to light. Well, here is how this began. JND remarked:

The matter containing this doctrine was not at all in the first edition [of the *Christian Witness*], superintended by Mr. Harris. It was introduced into the second edition issued from the tract shop under the control of Mr. N. [Newton], so that the "Witness" was made to accredit the doctrine unknown to the person originally responsible. The fact of the long time Mr. N. has held the doctrine remains unaffected, proving its systematized character.¹⁰

Here is the first case of the trickiness of BWN in connection with his evil doctrines concerning Christ's relation to God. J. L. Harris, the editor did not see that second edition.¹¹ In fact, he was not included in the secret school of those who were indoctrinated with the system during its development -- since he was the one who exposed it, as we shall see, and was never implicated in it. W. Kelly wrote:

He also disclaimed all knowledge of this "Second" edition, like most of the elder brethren also, being already provided with the first. This it is well to state, as an effort was made to show that people were inconsistent in complaining later of what was in circulation long before. The fact is that an active teacher of the system (W. H. D.) acknowledged, just before it was exposed, that it had been fully canvassed in their large meeting for eight years before, and that the party were fully made up in it. He too with N's chief associates renounced it in print.¹²

JND had not known about this second edition until after the evil system was brought to light in 1847. G. V. Wigram tells of an experience he had in connection with BWN's publication methods:

. . . then, 3rdly, the awful blasphemy against the person and work of Christ (which had existed long before and been artfully brought^h into a *second* edition of the *Christian Witness*) rose to the surface to show something of what was the root of the untruthfulness and immoral system.¹³

It has long seemed to me that fundamentally evil doctrine is a work of the angel of light and his ministers (2 Cor. 11:14,15); and also that loss of integrity and lying most often accompany such work. The character of BWN's way should be particularly noted here, especially since, as G. V. Wigram remarked, he and his supporters at Plymouth were accused of untruthfulness and treachery for one and one half years before the system of evil doctrine concerning Christ came to light¹⁴ in 1847. In the *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby*, vol. 20, p. 40, the reader will find a quotation of BWN's offensive paragraph that he sneaked into the second edition of the *Christian Witness*, vol. 2 (it appears on p. 113 of that reprint, as I have verified from a copy of it) along with JND's critiques.

JND believed that BWN's prophetic system was the instrument of **ripening** this subversive evil system because of BWN's views concerning a future Jewish

h. One sister (who had the *second* edition) again and again complained to me of the bad doctrine of the paper in question. I as often went home and read *in the first edition*, and could see nothing to complain of [GVW].

remnant that did not have divine life and thus was not within the reach of the sympathies of Christ. His system thus corrupted the subject of the sufferings of Christ.¹⁵

THE TRUTHS UNDERMINED AT PLYMOUTH

JND had come back from Europe in March 1845 and went directly to Plymouth where he personally confirmed what he had been hearing.¹⁶ Besides, he knew BWN quite well from the very beginning of Plymouth's history. JND gave a summary of what transpired there during 1845 in his "Narrative of Facts," published in 1846,¹⁷ regarding the ecclesiastical truths that were set aside, the clerisy and sectarianism at Plymouth. The reason that he wrote it is this:

I did so because it was attempted to introduce the Plymouth evil system into a district where there were a large body of newly converted souls; and, as it was thus active, I felt the saints must know what it was. A considerable time had elapsed after matters had closed at Plymouth.¹⁸

Matters to which JND objected, besides BWN's untruthfulness were:

Many well know that he and Mr. Newton, as others, have assiduously maintained that the Epistle to the Ephesians refers to all saints from the beginning of the world; and 1 Corinthians 12 to a local perfect church, with some idea of a sort of model at the beginning; but that the unity of the church, as such, with Christ at its head on high, *in this dispensation*, was denied by the constant teaching at Plymouth.

. . . I believe that there has been a direct work of the enemy, and this to subvert the blessed truth that Brethren were specially trusted with; a work which has shown itself in doctrine, principle, and practice, as is always the case, very subtly and very gradually, but surely and constantly. I shall notice in their plain effects the doctrines.

First, practically the present hope and expectation of the Lord's coming was put off and set aside.

Secondly, the heavenly calling, which Brethren had specially been favored to bring out, and the glory of the church with Christ is confounded with earth, and subverted and set aside. *Our Mother* is declared to be the establishment of a system, which had been going on from the beginning in glory in the earth. "Christianity supreme in the earth in Mount Zion and Jerusalem" "identical with Zion arising in the moral grace and dignity of its high calling in the earth" (*Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, pp. 138, 142). "This is our parent, the system to which we belong," Jerusalem.

Thirdly, unfeigned faith in the presence of the Holy Ghost to guide and minister in the assemblies of the saints was undermined and subverted.

Fourthly, the unity of the body of Christ, as gathered by the presence of the Holy Ghost *in this present time of the church on earth*, was undermined and subverted too.

Fifthly, the deification of the saints, that is, "Omniscient power of superintendence, [sic] "Omnipotent power necessary to such execution"; and, referring to Ezekiel's vision but as a description of the power of the cherubim who symbolize the redeemed, "nowhere absent but everywhere present in the perfectness of undivided action," and they "will apply to the earth, the wisdom

of the elders, and the throne."

And, as a sixth point, the constant extenuation of the evil of Popery, with the decided absence of Christ from the teaching, while the saints were exalted "almost into co-equality with God." These are Mr. N.'s own words.¹⁹

BWN had changed his principles. JND remarked,

And here I would indeed remark, that Mr. Newton avowed to me, both alone, and as it has been recalled to me, in the presence of Mr. Edward W -- d [Wakefield] of Kendal, that his principles were entirely changed as to those very points of ministry, rule, and government. *

* It has been stated to me that Mr. S. declared that, had the principles on these points been what they were at first, he would not have stayed. I have referred in the "Narrative" to an intelligent member of Ebrington Street, who declared that ten years ago, Mr. N. urged on him the principles which now I am urging, and Mr. N. resisting; but that he never received them, but joined Ebrington Street as a sect, and stayed in it as such.²⁰

B. W. NEWTON'S VIEW OF THE SPIRIT'S ACTION IN THE ASSEMBLY

L. Pilson wrote,

Instead of recognizing the "one Spirit" dwelling in the Church, and owning His manifestation in the free exercise of gifts, there was a party formed in Plymouth long before the separation for the express purpose of bearing united testimony against the brethren who taught doctrines different from Mr. Newton's, and to prevent them ministering there. This party substituted their own authority as teachers, for the Spirit's maintenance of order, founding their rights on 1 Cor. 24:29 -- "Let the others judge." "This was said to be the prophets to which the teachers now answered. They were to try, and approve or not, of a person being a teacher." Mr. N. expounded this notion in Somersetshire, and so thoroughly indoctrinated the meeting there with his views, that they denounced anyone's taking a part in the meeting as led of the Spirit as "impulse" -- "that the Holy Ghost wrought in the body by members, and that these members were the gifted teachers." ("Narrative of Facts," p. 33.) "It has been formally and expressly denied that the presence of the Holy Ghost should be looked for in the assembly." (*Idem*, p. 23.)²¹

Clerisy and Modified Presbyterianism Introduced

We have had testimony before us that BWN introduced "modified Presbyterianism" into Plymouth and that he sought to counteract the recovered truth regarding the action of the Spirit in the assembly and substitute a clerical system²² (instead of withdrawing). It has been erroneously alleged that essentially there is only JND's unreliable *Narratives of Facts* and his allegedly partisan supporter, W. Trotter, to support many of the charges against BWN.

First we will hear from S. P. Tregelles and then hear from some others in end

notes. S. P. Tregelles had married a cousin of BWN and came to the meeting at Plymouth in 1835.²³ He steadfastly supported BWN in all of the controversy;²⁴ and in after years, when BWN occupied a pulpit, he would only entrust it to S. P. Tregelles in his absence. S. P. Tregelles wrote:

Those who know anything of the Brethren are aware, that, for a long course of years, they have agreed in opposing and attacking B. W. Newton. It had been an endeavor of Mr. Newton to prevent the Brethren at Plymouth from adopting practices and opinions as to ministry and absence of order, into which those in other places, professing to hold the same principles were running. In this endeavor he was for some years successful; so there was at Plymouth the definite recognition of ministry, such as was not unsuitably termed "modified Presbyterianism."^{i 25}

Here we have confirmation of JND's charges (not, of course, including the charge of the untruthfulness of BWN) by a strong supporter of BWN. In the same paper he wrote:

It was Mr. Newton's misfortune to have sought for years to lead into right paths those who would walk perversely.^j From the time that the Brethren adopted their present doctrines and practices,^k Mr. Newton has had no connection with them

i. [A Methodist journal, *The Southern Review*, April 1877, p. 287, says of BWN, "He abused his position to endeavor to introduce, as Dr. Reid himself admits, 'a modified form of Presbyterianism!' Now this, considering the constitution of the society, was treason in the camp." I suggest that this is a proper, objective, evaluation of BWN's conduct.]

j. [F. H. A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, fourth ed., Covent Garden: George Bell, 1894, 2:241, says of S. P. Tregelles that:

"... his last years were more happily spent as a lay member of the church of England, a fact he very earnestly begged me to keep in mind. *

* He gave the same assurance to A. Earle, D. D. Bishop of Marlborough, assigning as his reason the results of the study of the Greek N. T.

So much for S. P. Tregelles' views on *order*. It might be at one time modified Presbyterianism and at another time Episcopal; anything but what BWN was fighting!]

k. [This is *absurd* falsehood. In effect, he tells the reader that others changed and BWN was maintaining original principles. One must conclude that his mind was under the power of the delusion of the Enemy that wrought at Ebrington Street, Plymouth. Of course the fact is that BWN changed *his* principles and he was fully supported in this by SPT as also in his wicked teachings on Christ. W. H. Dorman left his clerical position among Independents in 1838 to be among those gathered together to Christ's name on the basis that there is one body. During 1849 he published a paper in which he spoke of some of the truths he had embraced at the time:

There were certain points of testimony which the Lord, unquestionably, had graciously given the brethren to witness to, in the joy of the Spirit, by means of His recovered truth: such as the coming of the Lord, the blessed hope of the Church; the "heavenly calling" of the Christian in contrast with Israel's position in the earth, as the result of Christ's rejection on earth and his place in resurrection; the unity of the church as the body of Christ, in association with its head in heaven; and, by virtue of this, the presence of the Holy Ghost -- as the spirit of adoption in the individual believer, and in the body -- as working all the gifts, which Christ gave for its edification "when he ascended up on high and led captivity captive," as well as "distributing to every man severally as he will." Now there is not one of these points of testimony which this system [of BWN] was not

(continued...)

of any kind. He sought to keep some amongst them from straying wildly; but, when this in general did not succeed, neither he nor any who maintained that pastors and teachers are the definite ordinance of Christ, and who held fast the dogmatic teaching of the Protestant Confessions, have had any fellowship with the Brethren. This has been definitely the case since 1847, and it was practically so for some years before.²⁶

So BWN was busy at introducing these changes for some years, just as JND, and others, said he was. We have, then, the accusation by JND and others confirmed by S. P. Tregelles. JND's charge was true.

His words, "absence of order" refer to his views of eldership and control of ministry. We shall return to that later. S. P. Tregelles has presented the matter as if the free action of the Spirit in ministry was heretofore not the practice and that BWN was resisting this 'innovation.' This, at least, admits BWN was resisting it. But BWN had changed. W. Kelly remarked:

But that he did not adopt in due time and in its full extent the principle of "open ministry" (though it be not a phrase used by wise brethren¹) is disproved by his paper "On the Apostasy of the Present Dispensation" (Christian Witness, 5. 83-99), as the following extracts bear witness, though the expression be not accurate, as is usual in Mr. N.'s writings.

And accordingly it is not in the rejection of Jesus, nor the rejection of God as God, but in the rejection of God as at present acting on the earth, viz., in the Spirit in the church, that we find the great present evidence of the apostasy of the dispensation to which we belong. In the 12th chapter of the 1st of Corinthians we find the relation of the Holy Spirit to Christ's body the Church very clearly unfolded. First, He gives it its living power of unity. By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body; and, secondly He rules in the Church, for He divideth to every man severally as He will.

Had Mr. N. abode in the principles here enunciated and applied, none could have asked more; but as is well known he gave up much here and elsewhere taught by him* and betrayed what was far more serious, fundamental heterodoxy as to the doctrine of Christ. To "presidency" no intelligent brother objects, seeing that it is laid down in Rom. 12:8, and 1 Thess. 5:12, apart from all question of apostolic authority in appointment.²⁷

* "At the Clifton meeting, Mr. Newton, speaking of ministry and the points connected with it, told me that his principles were changed." JND's Narrative of Facts, C. W. Eccles. 4:22.

(...continued)

framed to meet and smother; and that entirely distinct from the horrid error [of Christ's circumstantial distance from God] in which it issued in regard to the blessed person and work of Our Lord Jesus Christ (*A Review of Certain Evils & Questions that have Arisen Amongst Brethren*, p. 37, 1849).

He then went on to show how BWN undermined these truths.]

1. [The expression "open ministry" might imply to some an every man ministry, an idea that JND, W. Kelly and others rejected; for ministry is by gift, and not all have a gift involving public utterance.]

Lord Congleton (J. Parnell) admitted that there was sectarianism and clerisy at Plymouth but was a systematic opposer and calumniator of JND in the Plymouth and Bethesda controversies from the very beginning of the trouble in 1845. His hostility to JND was manifest. Lord Congleton's paper, *Reasons for Leaving Rawstorne-Street Meeting, London*, is indeed valuable only for some dates of events, but is relied upon by those hostile to JND as the paper ostensibly showing that JND was untruthful in his *Narrative of Facts*. L. Pilson has shown the absurdity of this ²⁸ and it is also interesting to read JND's account of an interview by Lord Congleton trying to charge him with errors. ²⁹

Opponents of JND have, then, supported JND's main charges regarding BWN's introduction of clerisy . There are also the testimonies of G. V. Wigram, ³⁰ W. Trotter, ³¹ W. H. Dorman, ³² and others, ³³ as well as H. W. Soltau, a teacher at Plymouth, and a supporter of BWN, ³⁴ who eventually made a confession, dated Dec. 22, 1847, that confirmed JND's charges. ³⁵ The exposure, in 1847, of BWN's evil teachings concerning Christ's circumstantial distance from God resulted in confessions by BWN's principle supporters and comments on this are found in JND's *Letter on the Confession of Error of Some*. ³⁶

It might be well to notice also that the time came when the assembly at Rawstorne Street, London, requested BWN to appear before them to clear up some charges. He refused to come ³⁷ and this assembly refused further fellowship with BWN until he would satisfy their consciences. The four principle supporters of BWN, at Ebrington Street, Plymouth, namely, J. Clulow, H. W. Soltau, J. E. Batten and W. B. Dyer issued their *Remonstrance and Protest Addressed to the Saints at Rawstorne Street, London, Respecting Their Late Act of Excluding Mr. Newton from the Lord's Table* (dated Dec. 25, 1846). In it we read:

Must it not be sectarian to refuse fellowship at the Lord's table to a Christian brother, because his principles deduced from God's Word, respecting order and rule in the church, differ from your own? (p. 8).

BWN had charges of untruthfulness against him. I cite this merely for its value of confirming the introduction of "modified Presbyterianism" by four principle supporters of BWN at Plymouth.

Another supporter of BWN wrote a paper dated "Plymouth, Dec. 15, 1848" and said:

Mr. N. having for many years sought to preserve the integrity of the Scriptures and the principles of truth, and thereby to restrain the wild theories of Mr . D. [Darby] and others; has in consequence, been the subject of every kind of misrepresentation and unrelenting persecution. ³⁸

Chapter 8.2

Recovered Truth Defended

Any supposition of withdrawing on my side these papers because other parties had withdrawn theirs, as if it was a personal question and controversy, I repudiate altogether, or concession on one side met by concession on the other . . . It would be in my judgment an immorality in a question of right and wrong . . . instead of approving or acquiescing in the judgment of those who would speak of concession, or retracting when others retract, I judge such a thought as proceeding from a very deplorable state of mind and low tone of moral judgment, though perhaps in some cases from want of courage (JND).³⁹

The Ripening Evil

From 1841 to April 1845 were the dates given by G. V. Wigram "while the evils were ripening till brought to judgment" (see introductory remarks to Section 8). The date 1841 follows the closing of the periodical, the *Christian Witness*. Its editor for most of its history was J. L. Harris, a leading brother at Plymouth. One wonders if he terminated it because of conditions at Plymouth. At any rate, I shall largely quote from W. H. Dorman, who excellently summarized the attack against the recovered truth proceeding under the direction of BWN and at the same time put his finger on our ever present danger and failure.

So long ago as the year 1840, I received a letter from a clergyman (extracts of which I will here give), almost prophetic of the course which things have taken.

"I have for some months known a little of you; but it was not 'till yesterday at your I would say *our* Pentecostal festival (for a feast it was to my inmost soul), that I duly appreciated the character of the brethren who did me so much honor, happiness, and service, by inviting me to attend it, that I know not how to express my gratitude to you and them. My not approving of all things amongst you, does not at all obstruct the current of my Christian love for you and many others whom I need not name. But why do I write to you? It is to say, and that with real affection -- Alas! that so beautiful a theory *cannot* long subsist; it is too unworldly and sainted for our polluted atmosphere. It will do -- it has done much good; but IT WILL F ALL (Acts 20:30)^m -- '*Of your own selves* shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.' Woe, woe unto them through whom it shall fall! Mine shall not be the hand to detach even a pin from so goodly a tent; rather, like my namesake of Arimathea, I would honor it when others abandon it. May my soul be with yours! Yours in our common Lord,

JOSEPH WHITE NIBLOCK"

m. [Think of citing Acts 20:30 in order to avoid direct connection with what he described. Perhaps if he was there when Paul said those words he would also be excused?]

In this letter Dr. Niblock has truly, though perhaps unconsciously, stated what ought ever to have been the "theory," as he calls it, of the brethren's position; -- a position too *heavenly* to be maintained by *earthly* minds; a position based upon heavenly principles, and making its appeal continually to faith: depending for its subsistence every hour upon the exercise of the living power of Christ! But another set of principles have been introduced, and another position has been practically taken. Brethren have sought, to a great extent, to make their practice and their principles agree; and the result has been the relinquishment of practical dependence upon God -- and the substitution of what, in effect, is a system apprehensible and understandable enough, and much more in accordance with the systems around them than perhaps many might admit. But it is not the first instance of men beginning in the Spirit, and then seeking to be made perfect in the flesh. There is another thing which these extracts show, and it is this: -- That others had seen the point where it was likely the enemy would make his attempt; and the issue has confirmed the judgment. But Scripture had taught us, even in the days of Apostolic ministry, that "There must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

When I speak of the low moral condition of brethren before the Lord, as preparing the way for the evils they are feeling, I would explain: -- I mean, that hearty devotedness to Christ had greatly declined, and there were many indications of the returning love of the world; and, as a consequence, a loose holding, almost universally, of those divine truths and principles which at first brought so much blessing, and had in them the power of separation from the world unto God. Nothing struck me, in corroboration of this, so much, in my first and only visit to Plymouth, as the attempt of Mr. Newton and others to prove to me that certain truths, such as "the heavenly calling of the Christian," and especially "the resurrection-life of believers" (the distinctive position of the church as the bride of Christ, was altogether denied) which were brought out so prominently in the early teaching of brethren, were not NEW; but the germs of them, at least, were to be found in the old divines: and as a natural corollary to this, though not declared, the folly of attempting to maintain any *new position of testimony* or separation, which plainly hung upon the integrity of these truths, and the certainty of their having been given afresh by the Lord to meet the evil of these last times. This may seem a little thing, but to me it portended much; and I give it as an example of the way in which this loose holding of truths by which the Lord at first wrought amongst brethren was brought about.

This I can testify -- that the knowledge of "the heavenly calling" was once sufficient to separate from earth, and to put the heart and its affections in communion with heaven. And union with the Lord in "resurrection-life," and the hope of His coming again in glory, were the bright and living truths which gave an every-day buoyancy to the spirit, and made heavenly-mindedness and a pilgrim-position in the world something more than a name; while the assurance of the abiding presence of the Holy Ghost with the church, was deemed a sufficient guarantee (as it was the only power) that everything of the church's need -- whether of teaching, or rule, or discipline -- would be met. The reverse of this has, for several years, been seen; and with it, as I have said, a calling in question, successively, of every truth and principle that brethren were wont to hold, in the outset, in the power of faith.

Low as my own spirituality is (and I can only speak of things according to the apprehension God has given me), for a year or two before there was any disruption at Plymouth, I felt such a lack of spiritual energy amongst brethren generally, and

such a leavening influence of Plymouth doctrines, that I would fain have sought a place for myself outside altogether, and found a relief to my heart in the sole occupation of telling God's grace in "the highways and hedges," to those who had never heard it. So that, though the breaking up of this *dead unity* at first took me by surprise, as it did others, yet I most surely recognize the hand of the Lord in bringing it about; as I do the work of Satan, in producing the *necessity* for such a step. And if we are beginning to be taught by it the need of "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and to "be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die," some portion of God's blessed purpose in permitting these things has been gained. For unity in *power* and holiness, and in *the truth*, is that alone which the Spirit of the Lord will maintain.⁴⁰

During 1843, JND visited England from Europe and visited at Plymouth. He felt oppressed spiritually while there⁴¹ and returned to Europe. While he was in Europe he received some letters apprising him of what was transpiring at Plymouth. He referred to this in a letter written in 1844.⁴² He returned to England in March 1845 and went to Plymouth.

B. W. Newton's Ecclesiastical Agenda

In Chapter 1 we saw testimony that BWN had introduced "modified Presbyterianism" at Plymouth. We shall now see how his agenda to spread this came out in a meeting of 15 brethren.

JND ARRIVES AT PLYMOUTH

Referring once more to G. V. Wigram's remarks cited in the introduction to Section 8, note that he spoke of the evils ripening in the period from 1841 until April 1845, "when the evils were ripening till brought into judgment." In connection with how this judgment came about there will be references made to JND's *Narrative of Facts*,⁴³ published in Sept. 1846.⁴⁴ It exposes so much of what went on that it is not surprising that palliators of evil wish to nullify its testimony and call JND a liar, or infer it. But we have previously cited three hostile critics of JND that a clerical system had been substituted for what brethren had practiced, and H. W. Soltau's public confession means that the untruthfulness was on the side of BWN and his supporters. And besides this, the *Narrative of Facts* was subjected to scrutiny at a large meeting of brethren at Bath, May 1848, and was vindicated. In addition to the *Narrative of Facts*, JND's letters described what was transpiring.⁴⁵

March 1845. At this time JND returned from Switzerland and went directly to Plymouth. Before coming to that point let us look at what he says of prior remonstrance with BWN, and this could hardly have been all of it.

But there are other circumstances I must now mention because it has been supposed Mr. Newton was charged publicly all at once, and no steps taken, and this has been even much insisted on. Before ever I came to Plymouth, and without any communication with me, Mr .H. Y ., who felt equally the sectarianism and that every principle was set aside, had been to Mr. Newton and spoken to him. Mr . Newton answered him with the greatest violence, and declared that we were destroying the fundamentals of Christianity, that he was

justified in what he was doing against us, and should continue. Mr. A. P. went also to him just about the time I came, and was met with the same avowed determination to persevere.*

*It has been already stated that Mr. Newton had been complained of as to these letters by brethren all over the country, and I had been compelled to read them, and had at the instance of others remonstrated with him four years before. Mr. S.'s letter has also been referred to as showing that it was going on and remonstrated against.⁴⁶

Concerning his arrival at Plymouth, JND wrote:

It has been supposed that it was my sudden arrival which occasioned the feeling and conduct which followed. This is all untruthful pretence. Mr. Newton had ever since my letter to Mr. H. (I have the *date* from Mr. Newton himself) been laboring to prepare the minds of all he could against me. This I learnt after my arrival. It is only since the London meeting that I have known that Mr. H. had furnished him with my three or four private letters to him, which Mr. N. took about and pressed on people, with his own reasonings, to prove that I was subverting the truth. Mr. H. did it most innocently.

In the letters (which I have not seen since*) I apprehend there was nothing. At least the brethren who came down to inquire asked me if there were others than these of the date in question, in which I had said something to Mr. H.: and inquiry of which I could not well tell the meaning till I heard the use that had been made of them (a use which was not confined to Plymouth). Of all this I was happily ignorant when I went there, and desired only in ministry to raise, if God enabled me, the spiritual tone of souls which I felt to be grievously sunk -- I acknowledge I was a poor instrument for it. But the public weekly meetings in Raleigh Street were trebled in spite of all the prejudice raised.

But this is the way the letter-showing worked. A great many took Mr. Newton's statements as to my views without further inquiry, and at the same time it was based in their subsequent statements on my own letters. If not, distrust was produced, and this was something. Those who were disgusted with this way of getting on were known, and set down and discountenanced as Darbyites.⁴⁷

*Since I wrote this, I have seen them, and, though written with the unguardedness of private communications, there is nothing that I can see unscriptural. I suppose brethren thought so too by asking me if that was all.

BWN wrote a letter to C. McAdam in which he falsely said, "Mr. Darby's visit was, as you know, most unexpected to all."⁴⁸ The transcriber appended a note that this was in BWN's handwriting but it might have been a draft and not sent.

BWN wrote a letter to J. L. Harris, H. W. Soltau and J. E. Batten (all of Plymouth), dated March 30, 1845, the thrust of which was that they should unitedly resist JND's teachings:

... to express openly and unequivocally your united disapproval of the course which he has thought fit to pursue ... A most strange system of dispensational doctrines has become apparent among the brethren not only peculiar in its character and unknown to the saints of every past age, but entirely subversive of many most important truths which have heretofore been regarded as catholic verities, and of this system Mr. Darby has been and is the most efficient supporter."⁴⁹

THE MEETING OF THE 15 BRETHREN

Apparently J. L. Harris and J. E. Batten visited JND, found no cause for alarm, and reported to BWN; who then wrote on April 1, 1845 to JND stating that "I was under a mistake in supposing that you intended to assume an antagonistic position against us here."⁵⁰

April 1845. A series of letters passed between JND and BWN. In JND's first reply, he wrote, "This I have to add and that with sorrow of heart that I think you have acted badly towards many beloved brethren and in the sight of God and this is the ground of my conduct and not any personal feeling. . ."⁵¹ On April 4, 1845, BWN responded by requesting names and circumstances and admonished JND that "it seems a strange thing for *you* to inflict punishment on me for conduct to *other* brethren, without either you or they having first stated to me the sin and asked whether I would repent."⁵² This is a usual ploy -- divert attention by complaining about procedure a common enough ploy in controversy. JND replied that he was prepared to meet with some Plymouth brethren about this; and again affirmed, "I again repeat I disclaim all question of personal wrong to me."⁵³

Well, BWN objected to it being brought before brethren. He was trying to make it a personal issue.⁵⁴ JND tersely replied, "What I object to is a systematic effort to form a sect and the discrediting and denouncing those who do not adopt the opinions which form its base . . ."⁵⁵ Newton responded that JND's response "contains a charge that is entirely new. Moreover it involves others equally with myself for a systematic effort to form a sect could not have been carried on by me without those who have been associated with me here, being implicated. I will lay your note before them and shall be thankful to act with them."⁵⁶

Fifteen brothers, including BWN and JND, came together to hear the charges against BWN. JND said:

Mr. Newton broke out in great anger, saying, that he waived all formal objections, that he did seek to make a focus of Plymouth, and that his object was to have union in testimony there against the other brethren (that is, as explained and is evident, their teaching), and that he trusted to have at least Devonshire and Somersetshire under his influence for the purpose; and that it was not the first time that I had thwarted and spoiled his plans.⁵⁷

And this was done most assiduously and perseveringly, so that at last in some places, they had to tell Mr. N. they would bear it no longer; but the saints *here* had no present proof of this.⁵⁸

JND's assessment was that this meeting "no doubt acted greatly on his [J. L. Harris'] mind."⁵⁹ Indeed, writing in 1847 in connection with his exposure of BWN's evil doctrines, J. L. Harris said:

I have hesitated hitherto to obtrude myself in the unhappy controversy relative to the sectarianism and morals of the system of Ebrington St., although on the latter of these two point, I still ponder in my own mind as to the propriety of being silent . . .⁶⁰

In a letter dated April 25, 1845, JND commented on this meeting.

The result has been, the avowal of N. in the presence of the brethren, of much more than any one charged him with, though I did not doubt it was so -- of what no one would adopt, or at least avow with him, and has made those who were not partisans declare their thankfulness that I came down and that it was fairly brought out. I trust he will yet disavow it, and that all will be peace. At any rate, I believe decided good has been done. My conscience is as clear as the day, as to having avoided the smallest act approaching to hostile or party feeling -- quite the contrary. I admit, that in manner I might have been more calm, though quite so in conduct, indeed, I have been not only calm, but as happy as possible, and at large in ministering, for God has been very graciously with me, though it was all very painful. But when I had done what I had to do, my soul had no more to say to it than if there were nothing. We are not yet out of the wood, as I hope we may be, because Newton has not yet disavowed the purpose he avowed, but I trust it may come to this, and our relations be unhindered as before. As to me, I have no complaint, he had done nothing against me.⁶¹

BWN then circulated an untrue account of this meeting.⁶² However, we have this much from BWN's steadfast supporter, S. P. Tregelles:

Mr. Newton has thus spoken (in April, 1845) of the manner in which he thought it needful to oppose the system which he considered to be producing evil results.

It is this system which I feel bound in conscience to oppose in every legitimate way.ⁿ If in my speaking or writing, I make use of any harsh or ungracious expression, I am willing to ask the pardon of any Brother whom I may have offended, and to strive to avoid needless severity of expression: but beyond this I cannot go. I desire to produce in the minds of the dear Brethren everywhere, the same strong sense that pervades my own, of the evil of this system -- and this is one object of my labor everywhere. At the same time my hostility is against a system, not against individuals. . . .⁶³

Subsequent meetings produced no result.⁶⁴ Well, in view of BWN's frame of mind and stated objective, that should be no surprise. He certainly had a system in opposition to recovered truth. JND remarked:

Many well know that he and Mr. Newton, as others, have assiduously maintained that the Epistle to the Ephesians refers to all saints from the beginning of the world; and 1 Corinthians 12 to a local perfect church,⁶⁵ with some idea of a sort of model at the beginning; but that the unity of the church, as such, with Christ as its head on high, *in this dispensation*, was denied by the constant teaching at Plymouth.⁶⁶

The doctrine and conduct at Plymouth led JND to the conclusion that:

. . . they deny the real unity and holiness of the church of God.⁶⁷

Holiness here refers to the unholy toleration of BWN's untruthfulness⁶⁸ and that of his supporters. Later, we shall have more to consider concerning this.

n. [Legitimate? -- and while manuscripts were being copied and circulated secretly by certain sisters, as we shall see later].

Patience Produced No Change in BWN

Late Spring, 1845. JND and BWN both left Plymouth for a time.⁶⁹ After the April meeting J. L. Harris had gone to Ireland and was happy ministering among the Irish brethren. They were denounced by Plymouth partisans of BWN.⁷⁰ (Recall that not only the work started there, but the Powerscourt conferences were held there, where prophetic truth was unfolded to which BWN was hostile). JND had pressed for a meeting for humiliation and prayer. Upon his return, J. L. Harris joined in requesting this.⁷¹

July 1845. BWN wrote to J. L. Harris refusing a meeting for humiliation and prayer because there was no agreement concerning the basis for it.⁷² The referenced letter shows that he realized J. L. Harris was becoming cool towards him. About this time JND ceased ministering at Ebrington Street, where the Plymouth congregation met.⁷³

Oct. 8 1845. J. L. Harris wrote to BWN that for several reasons, including the lack of an act of humiliation, and because of the suppression of the Friday night meeting for oversight,⁷⁴ etc., that he would not resume ministry at Plymouth.⁷⁵ BWN replied, "I believe Mr. Darby's visit to Plymouth and conduct since have been of Satan against God." Again, we have something in the same letter that indicates that the separation (to come in several months) was not over prophetic differences. He wrote "I have said to you before that I should have considered myself to have been the proper person to leave Plymouth, if I did not believe the whole system of Divine truth to be effected by the system promulgated by Mr. Darby."⁷⁶

Oct. 18, 1845. JND returned to Plymouth.⁷⁷ Next, JND laid the matter before the saints at Plymouth.⁷⁸

JND'S Withdrawal

Oct. 26, 1845. JND withdrew from Ebrington St., Plymouth.⁷⁹ He stated his reasons for leaving in several letters.⁸⁰ He did not yet break bread apart:

And I think that if any one, through the flesh, separated from two or three walking godly before God in the unity of the whole body of Christ, it would not merely be an act of schism, but he would necessarily deprive himself of the blessing of God's presence. It resolves itself, like all else, into a question of flesh and Spirit. If the Spirit of God is in and sanctions the body,^o he who leaves in the flesh deprives himself of the blessing, and sins. If, on the contrary, the Spirit of God does not sanction the body, he who leaves it will get into the power and liberty of the Spirit by following Him. That is the real way to look at it. There may be evil, and yet the Spirit of God sanction the body (not, of course, its then state), or at least act with the body in putting it [the evil] away. But if the Spirit of God, by any faithful person, moves in this, and the evil is not put away, but

^o. [The word "in" is a mistake. The Spirit is everywhere. It is Christ's presence that is conditional (Matt. 18:20). The Spirit sanctions the body by the Lord being present in the midst.]

persisted in; is the Spirit of God with those who continue in the evil, or with him who will not? Or is the doctrine of the unity of the body to be made a cover for evil? That is precisely the delusion of Satan in Poper^y and the worst form of evil under the sun

I have not broken bread [in separation from Plymouth], nor should do it, till the last extremity: and if I did, it would be in the fullest, openest testimony that I did not own the others then to be the table of the Lord at all. I should think worse of them than of sectarian bodies, because having more pretension to light. "Now ye say we see." But I should not (God forbid!) cease to pray continually and so much the more earnestly, for them, that they might prosper through the fullness of the grace that is in Christ for them. . . .⁸¹

I have stated that they deny the real unity and holiness of the church of God; I say so still.⁸²

In a letter dated Jan. 20, 1846, JND characterized the state at Ebrington Street.

If scripture warrants me to separate from the worst evil as to corporate action I ever met, then I am sanctioned in separating from this. If the unity of the Church is to be the sanction of evil, we are landed in Rome at once. It was taught (not here) that in reference to the noble Bereans, that was Jews searching the Jewish scriptures, and that now God had raised up gifts and teaching, it was quite otherwise. Besides, there are things that sicken one, which you cannot say much about. I never, in all my experience in and out of the church, really met so little truth and straightforwardness; and nothing could be proved which had been said and done twenty times over, unless you had witnesses by, and then others were ready to say it was something else. I would not have stayed in it, my dear -- , if I were to walk alone and have no church at all to the end of my days. But God has ordered it otherwise, and given exceeding peace and quietness to those who have through grace delivered their souls from it. I have no doubt a direct power and delusion of the enemy was there,^p from which we have been rescued by the Lord's goodness, and are in the blessing and liberty of the Spirit of God, though poor and feeble. The visit of the brethren has, I think, to any heedful mind, left no doubt as to the standing of Ebrington Street. Romans 16:17, is just what I acted upon, on coming to Plymouth. The denouncing of godly brethren as subverting the gospel, by letters sent to India, Canada, Ireland, and everywhere, and hindering any teachers not ready to receive N.'s views coming here as far as they could, and making a focus of Plymouth, was causing divisions. And it was just -- though I shrank from using such a hard word -- 3 John 9, 10 that was *precisely going on* at Plymouth. No calumny was too bad to cast on the most godly brethren, to discredit them and hinder their coming here. I dare say if I had apostolic power I might have acted more efficiently, but I have not a regret or a cloud on my mind as to my path being where I was, save that I might have left in April. The Lord never roused the conscience of the body till I left.⁸³

Whom did JND excommunicate? He wrote:

I have only one more statement to allude to. There is a scripture appropriate to everything, and I confess the one which at once suggested itself to me was, "The

p. [How very true this was -- not only on the basis of what JND experienced there, but a year later BWN's heterodoxy concerning the Lord's circumstantial distance from God, which had been held and secretly spread for years, came to light through J. L. Harris.]

unjust knoweth no shame." "We are virtually excommunicated persons." Did any one ever dream that I excommunicated Mr. Hatchard, or Mr. Courtenay, and a thousand other saints, because I do not go to the Established Church? Was ever such nonsense palmed on people? ⁸⁴

Nov. 14, 1845. It was after JND's withdrawal that J. L. Harris stated his reasons for declining to minister at Plymouth any more. ⁸⁵ On Oct. 8, 1845 he wrote a letter to BWN letting him know that he was going to leave Plymouth. ⁸⁶ In his answer, BWN said:

[I] believe the whole system of Divine truth to be affected by the system promulgated by Mr. Darby. My convictions on this subject are so strengthened that they will materially influence all my future decisions.

You will see from this, how little my thoughts are influenced by mere local questions. ⁸⁷

J. L. Harris separated on Nov. 14, 1845. ⁸⁸ JND's detractors, who necessarily palliate BWN's course and conduct, prefer that it was merely JND's powerful influence on people -- thus attempting to evacuate J. L. Harris' withdrawal of its significance; which was that the Lord awoke him to the delusive power of the Enemy, ⁸⁹ as He did others at Plymouth, as we shall see.

Monday, Nov. 17, 1845. A meeting was held, attended, by 200-300 where JND stated his reasons for separating. ⁹⁰

Nov. 26, 1845. Lord Congleton, who had views like A. N. Groves (see Appendix 2), with three others, wrote to JND:

We are desired by Mr. Newton to request that you will name four brethren to meet an equal number nominated by him, to enquire into and report on the charges said to have been made by you on Monday the 17th Inst. at a meeting in Ebrington Street, which appears very seriously to affect Mr. Newton's moral character. . . ⁹¹

Here is what JND thought of this scheme.

I replied that I should not name any four persons; that the matter was an affair of conscience before the church of God (the most of it had already been first before 15, and then about 300 persons). I thought it a worldly way of settling it. Nor can I yet see that, when a person is charged with sin in the church, it is a scriptural way that he should name four persons to investigate it, and the one who has charged him four more. Indeed I was justified in this by every spiritual person I know before whom it came. I shewed it to Mr. H. and Mr. McA. then arrived, and they said, What is the good for us of four people inquiring into this when we were there? Their report could not affect our judgment. However, I only declined having four on my side. I said that I was quite ready to meet the inquiry, that I would meet the four friends of Mr. N. individually, or all four together, and tell them everything, or I would go before the whole body, or (if a limited number were thought more suited to investigate) I was content it should be done in that way, or Mr. N.'s friends might re-assemble the 15 who met in April, or if Mr. N. chose to take it up as a personal wrong (which is what in fact he complained of), he could follow the scriptural rule in that case. ⁹²

A number of brethren had come for inquiry. The reader should consult the *Collected Writings* 20:43-52 concerning the events that transpired. The following extracts give the result.

Immediately after, a declaration was communicated that as the brethren had been able to come to no conclusion, the brethren at Plymouth itself had drawn up and signed a document declaring their conviction that he [BWN] was completely cleared. This was signed S., and the names of C -- w B., D., -- , were added as concurring. I am informed on the authority of Mr. D., by a brother to whom he stated it, that it was he drew it up, not Mr. S. However that may be, being the parties concerned in the charge, it certainly was a strange document, more particularly as Mr. D. (to excuse Mr. Newton) had declared that he had suggested the addition of the matter to the letter printed six years old, and Mr . C -- w present at the April meeting had had the other printed and circulated. So that two of them were personally concerned in the things they professed to examine and clear Mr. N. of. I had done nothing save be ready for every call of the brethren who came, and answer their questions when they came to question me. Mr. N. declined to meet me as I was in the position of an excommunicated person. At that time it was a common subject of triumph that I was so, and therefore could bring nothing before the church.⁹³

In the *Fry MS* there appears statements by BWN showing the state of his mind at this time. He said:

I cannot but regard any attempt made to interfere with this work [the reader should have formed some idea of "this work" by this time], as offensive to God and obnoxious to His pleasure⁹⁴

Concerning what JND taught, he said:

I believe it to be as delusive a system as ever has been framed by the Father of deceptions to destroy the light and guidance of God's Word among His people.⁹⁵

Dec. 17, 1845. H. W. Soltau issued a statement defending BWN, and was supported by J. E. Batten, W. B. Dyer and J. Clulow .⁹⁶ About this time meetings were held by BWN to explain matters.⁹⁷

Dec. 24, 1845. On this date, G. Wigram formally separated from Ebrington Street.⁹⁸

Breaking Bread in Separation from Ebrington Street

Dec. 28, 1845. This is the date upon which the breaking of bread commenced in separation from Ebrington Street. Let us back up a bit. G. V. Wigram had come to Plymouth from London; and on Dec. 7 and 14, 1845 he held prayer meetings in the Mechanic's Institute, to which, by printed notices, he had invited the saints at Ebrington Street.⁹⁹ Lord Congleton wrote:

Mr. Wigram *formally* left Ebrington Street, Saturday, Dec. 27th, 1845, writing a note to Mr. Soltau to say so, and at the same time recalled the loan of Raleigh Street Chapel. The following Sunday, Dec. 28th, Mr. Darby and Mr. Wigram both broke bread with some, though in different houses, in the morning; and ministered in this chapel in the afternoon and evening, *thus jointly completing the*

*division.*⁹ Mr. Wigram also preached in it the next Sunday, Jan. 4th, 1846, and left it in Mr. Darby's hands.¹⁰⁰

Writing about these matters, JND said:

The paper signed by the Plymouth leaders to clear Mr. Newton [Dec. 17, 1845] did more harm than good to their cause *at Plymouth*, as they were known by all to be the parties implicated, and it implied that the strangers would not do it. But the brethren from a distance having in fact come to no conclusion, for whose inquiry I had waited to give time, I had no longer now any reason for delay, and I proposed breaking bread. I hesitated whether I should demand Raleigh Street and do it as a public testimony; but praying over it I felt the humble and more gracious way would be to do it for my own need. I procured a small room, knowing about six who wished to do it, for I had most carefully avoided seeking any, and had entirely ceased visiting since I left, lest I should have even the appearance of making a party, though my heart was in that work. Sir A. C. would no longer break bread; nor W., nor C., nor P -- r, nor McA. N -- r still I think at that time did, or might, though strong in his judgment, but left for Jersey; that is, excepting N -- r, all who were not avowed supporters and partisans of Mr. Newton. Mr. W -- r had left. Mr. R. came to me on leaving, and while blaming my beginning to break bread said what I said as my reason was very strong, and that I ought instead of declining to invite Capt. H. and W. because they were considered hostile, to have got a number who took my view of it to balance the others. He left me saying that I had acted with the greatest forbearance.

This part was now closed. I began to break bread, and the first Sunday there were not six, but fifty or sixty.¹⁰¹

The six that he refers to seem to have been visitors, including G. V. Wigram. Elsewhere he says that he thought he would be alone when he left Ebrington Street¹⁰² but that evidently refers to thinking that none from Ebrington Street would be with him. At Rawstorne Street, London, Lord Congleton charged G. V. Wigram with schism, apparently to no avail, though he himself, at this point, would not break bread at Ebrington Street.¹⁰³

A. T. C. Campbell (the Sir A. C. so often referred to in JND's *Narrative of Facts*) having previously written a letter to those meeting at Ebrington Street, wrote a letter dated Jan. 1, 1846 to them again (now declining fellowship with them), in which, among other things, he testified that:

Anything like an open investigation of his [BWN's] statements, is positively denied.¹⁰⁴

His paper also, in effect, supports JND. Henry Groves (the son of A. N. Groves), who had an extraordinary inability to understand what he opposed, wrote,

From this meeting in December, 1845, we must date the rise of Darbyism, and its development into a distinct and self-excommunicated body,¹⁰⁵ separated on grounds subversive of the great truth around which, as opposed to all sectarianism, "the Brethren" had sought to rally the saints of God; namely, that

q. [He believed that there were evils at Ebrington Street, but not sufficient to separate (p. 10). He labored to charge both JND and G. V. Wigram with being division-makers and JND with publicly slandering BWN (p. 23).]

the blood of the Lamb was the basis of the union of the family of heaven: as Mr Darby expressed it, "to receive all who are on the foundation."

The grounds of this melancholy division were, as we gather from Mr. Darby's narrative, sectarianism, clericalism, and erroneous prophetic views. There was no charge of heresy; there was not one Scriptural ground on which the separation could be justified; but, as if there had been no injunction to mutual forbearance and long-suffering, and as if the blood of the Lamb no longer constituted the sure foundation of all true fellowship here, as it is of all the fellowship in the glory; we find Mr. Darby either excommunicating the saints with whom for so many years he had been in fellowship, or perhaps more correctly, excommunicating himself; in either case, rending the body of the Lord, and saying in fact, as one of old, who had no mother's heart to yearn over the child, "Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it."¹⁰⁶

That text of Scripture cited in the last sentence quoted above seems to serve many palliators of evil well in controversy! It is usually the other fellow who is accused of it, especially if he maintains holiness in God's house. At any rate, he also cited G. V. Wigram's reasons for withdrawing.

Mr. Wigram's reasons for joining Mr. Darby in this act of separation are given as follows:

"The cause of withdrawal was *not* difference of judgment upon the prophetic question, *neither* was it a question of doctrine. My act of withdrawal took place solely and simply because *a new and a human church system* had been introduced, and one which appeared to screen guilt. I am thankful for this, because while it forced me to separate from the *congregation* as such, it left me free to have fellowship with any as individuals in the congregation. *They are all accredited as Christians, and I can accredit them as such without any question.* The hinge of all this is a *new ecclesiastical polity*, having been introduced and acted upon, and avowed in Ebrington Street, new, and opposed to what I had known there from the beginning." -- See *Reasons for Withdrawing from Ebrington Street.*¹⁰⁷

W. Trotter said,

At first Mr. Darby's act was judged by brethren almost everywhere to be rash and premature. They had not been inside the scene, and so knew but little of the system that had been introduced. Several of those who went down to Plymouth to inquire, found things so much worse than they had any conception of, that they also separated from Mr. Newton and his party. One thing which seems to have weighed greatly with these brethren was the corruption of moral integrity, and the system of intrigue and deception which attended the evil.¹⁰⁸

How were persons in Plymouth, who withdrew from Ebrington Street, treated?

At Plymouth the majority were Mr. Newton's party at all cost. If any separated themselves from it, they were not spoken to nor owned as Christians; even their temporal interests injured as far as possible. In private statements, it was a similar case.¹⁰⁹

Some hundreds withdrew and broke bread in Raleigh Street, Plymouth,¹¹⁰ in the

building G. V. Wigram^r had purchased in Dec. 1831 where the breaking of bread began in Plymouth.

No Second Lord's Table

In breaking bread in Plymouth in separation from the saints at Ebrington Street, JND made it clear that he did not own the table there as the Lord's table because he did not own two tables where the breaking of bread took place in separation:

I act then as I acted seventeen^s years ago, believing that, where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, there He is. I do not speak of a second table as regards Ebrington Street, more than I should say a fifth or sixth, if I began to break bread where there were four or five other dissenting bodies already established in the place.¹¹¹

. . . it was a question with me of having *any*, not of a *second* . . .¹¹²

Five Letters on Events Predicted in Scripture as Antecedent to the Coming of the Lord

We will pause at this point in the flow of the history to review the issue concerning BWN's five manuscript letters, written in 1840 and circulated by copies multiplied by sisters¹¹³ and which were sent to Canada, India and elsewhere. JND remonstrated with BWN concerning this, during 1840, at the urging of others.¹¹⁴ When at Plymouth in 1845, JND was shown a manuscript book containing the first three of the Five Letters, with an Appendix after Letter 3, meant to be an appendix for Letter 1 (but having also to do with the last two of the five). A Miss Jeremie made the copy. She had secured from JND some objection to teachings in these letters, went to BWN about it, from whom she secured written answers to these objections, and then formulated BWN's replies into the said Appendix.¹¹⁵ This raised some questions in JND's mind, but he made no charge of *dishonesty* in connection with that facet of this story. The two last letters were copied into another manuscript book.¹¹⁶

In midsummer of 1845, BWN published Letter 1 (of 1840), as we learn from his Defense, but had altered it in such a way as to weave into it matters in dispute in 1845, leaving the reader to think that BWN had written those matters in 1840. In reality, they were matters just before brethren for investigation, and caused JND to charge, rightly so, dishonesty. BWN's altered Letter 1 was printed under the title, *Are we wrong in expecting Intervening Events Between the Present Time and the Coming of the Lord*.¹¹⁷

Whatever JND may have thought (previously to this publication of the

r. G. V. Wigram was a leader in Rawstorne St., London at the time of this controversy.

s. [Observe that this refers to the beginning of the breaking of bread in 1827, as was shown in vol. 1.]

altered Letter 1) about the first three letters in manuscript form, with the Appendix to letter three, was never the basis of any charge of dishonesty he made against BWN. An attempt was made to charge JND with having made false accusations against BWN, such as that BWN had altered the Letters,¹¹⁸ which, keep in mind, had nothing to do with Letter 1, which indeed *was* altered and printed in midsummer 1845. While this is illustrative of the trickiness and deceit that JND had to deal with in Plymouth, that aspect need not detain us. The reader should keep in mind, also, that a number of BWN's supporters at Plymouth were caught in the same web of doctrinal evil, concerning Christ's relations to God, as was BWN at this time, but this was hidden from many brethren. If anyone's integrity is to be in question, it ought to be BWN, not JND.

About a year after JND withdrew from Ebrington Street, H. W. Soltau wrote a letter dated Nov. 23, 1846 to Robert Howard. In it there are four charges that, allegedly, JND made:

First, the suppression¹¹⁹ of two out of five manuscript Letters which were written and circulated some years since -- this charge has been proved entirely contrary to fact, for the letters have been circulated as they were first written from that time to the present moment.

Second, the substitution of a certain Appendix for the aforesaid two letters. This as well as the former charge Mr. Darby has been compelled to acknowledge to be groundless though in a way which clearly proves his unwillingness to form a more favorable judgment of Mr. Newton.

As to the third accusation I believe the printed "Letter to Clulow"¹²⁰ to contain a fair statement of the amount of what Mr. Newton had said at the meeting, at which I was present. . . .

As to the Fourth point, I did not believe that there had been the slightest intention on Mr. Newton's part to commit an act of deception. -- In appending a page or two of fresh matter to the printed tract, he had even in the title page discussed that omissions and alterations had been made and indeed any such attempt at deception would have been absurd for the original letter was in circulation and the addition itself was not in any way contradictory to the truth contained in the original letter but was only supplementary matter.¹²¹

A year later (Dec. 22, 1847) this same supporter of BWN published a *Confession of Error*, in which he not only confessed his entanglement in the web of BWN's evil teachings concerning Christ's relations to God, but his part in the system in which that evil developed. Let us hear a few words:

He [God] has allowed those errors in doctrine to develop themselves, in order to awaken myself and others to our sin, in forming or making one of a party . . . Energies . . . have too often been used to *sustain a system* in the midst of which grievous error has now been found to be working . . . In my own breast I am conscious an *antagonistic*, as well as over-anxious spirit has *hereby* been engendered . . . I doubt not that my estimate will daily (as it has hitherto) deepen, both as to the *doctrinal errors* I have held, or been implicated in, and as to the *wrong position* in which I have stood.¹²²

H. W. Soltau's point four was the real issue. He handled it in three ways: 1) his opinion that he did not think BWN attempted to deceive; 2) it involved only "a

page or two of fresh matter; 3) the addition did not contradict what was in the 1840 version and was supplementary to it. The issue looked quite different to JND, who wrote:

. . . I entirely deny, as Mr. Newton confirms me here in doing though he charged me fiercely elsewhere, that I ever said a word about altering letters at all.

As to the Appendix being a substitution for the letters,¹²³ it is mere nonsense. I do not even understand what is meant by it. But all this is very immaterial: it served to distract from the real charges. These began with the third [this is a reference to the third charge regarding these letters, i. e. the fourth above, in H. W. Soltau's letter]: i. e., that a letter professing to remain in substance the same, did not remain the same. Mr. N. justifies his omissions [in his *Defense* . . .]. He has a perfect right to do so. Nobody complained of them. He said he had made omissions, and of course had a right to make any he liked. The *additions* are the thing in question. He states he added two paragraphs: he has added about five pages and a half to a tract of twenty-four pages. But the quantity is not the material point. It is the contents and manner of it. And first, note here, *the fact is not denied*. Now I do not enter into intention. The question is, Is it honest.

. . . He has interwoven¹ in with the most assiduous care into the subjects of the tract itself, statements which go to charge the things he was accused of rather on others, or at least to disburden himself of them, in such a manner as would make it impossible for a reader of the tract to suppose that it was not part of the letter written six years ago; so that he appeared as an indignant refuter six years ago (before he was conscious of such imputations) of the things he is charged with now. Surely, if I say it remains the same in substance, the substance of the published tract ought to coincide with the original. But here the substance of near a quarter of the tract is on topics agitated at the time [1845], interwoven with old matter, so that it required very close examination to find it out; and matter on the old subject added in the new part, so as to make it look like an original part of the tract.¹²⁴

JND then continued on to demonstrate this with certain extracts. which the reader who has JND's *Collected Writings* can consult.

In 1847, BWN's *Five Letters*^u was published by his supporter , S. P. Tregelles. In the preface, dated "Plymouth, May 24th, 1847," he said:

About two years ago, the substance of the first of these Letters was printed by the Author, with the following Advertisement: -- "The following Letter was written some years ago, in reply to the enquiries of a friend who resides in Norfolk. It is now published with some omissions and alterations; but in substance it

t. JND said:

What was my astonishment to find, on comparing it, . . . that the new matter consisted of reasonings *against* the doctrines he was charged with holding now as to the authority of teachers. So that these charges [made during 1845 regarding clerisy] appeared most wanton and unfounded, inasmuch as six years ago [in 1840] the person charged [BWN] had actually written against the things he was now charged with. This was woven in at the end of the letter, so as to form part of it (*Collected Writings* 20:35).

u. My copy is a third edition, 1877, which is a reprint of the second edition, 1847. It is clear to me that by second edition, S. P. Tregelles did not imply that there was a first edition in 1845/1846, but that the first edition is the 1840 manuscripts.

remains the same." ¹²⁵

Amongst other alterations there were some paragraphs added; and besides the omissions (that of one paragraph in particular) there were various abridgments in order to bring the whole into a more condensed form.

Objections have, however, been made to these alterations; and in printing the Five Letters together, the Editor has thought it best to give them as originally written.

You will see the deception in the "Advertisement" he quoted. And in this Preface, S. P. Tregelles, who was aware of "objections," continued to propagate the deception. He was a full accomplice to all the evil at Plymouth, and remained unrepentant.

It would be desirable to have an 1840 manuscript copy of BWN's *Five Letters*, i. e., the first edition, and compare it. At any rate, I see here a getting rid of the deceptive, altered, printed Letter 1 of midsummer 1845.

I mention here another paper, written in 1845 by D., who attended the meeting of the fifteen in April 1845, *Signs of the Coming of the Lord, for Whom are They Given*. ¹²⁶ JND replied to that paper. ¹²⁷

*"The question of the character
of the church and how
incompatible with this was all
untruthfulness and shuffling"
(G. V. Wigram)*

April 1846. A general meeting was held in London for humiliation and prayer BWN and his friends were invited, but refused, and then circulated printed reasons for refusing. ¹²⁸ Lord Congleton at first said he would not attend if JND and G. V. Wigram attended, but he went on the second day, pressed charges against JND and G. V. Wigram, but dropped them when told that there was agreement no charges would be made. He sent BWN an account of the meetings. ¹²⁹ Concerning these things, JND wrote:

It is a saddening and yet an instructive thing, to see at the moment that under the Lord's special leading, and surely without their own wisdom, the brethren from every quarter were humbling themselves before the Lord for their own individual and common failure, the leaders at Plymouth, having refused to come because it would turn to an investigation on their conduct, were making out a case for themselves. It is an epitome of the whole matter ¹³⁰

May 8, 1846. Lord Congleton wrote BWN confirming his opinion that JND was wrong in claiming that his (JND's) charges had not been investigated and

he told BWN that he was making a mistake in not reinstating the Friday night oversight meeting. Otherwise, he wrote, BWN should leave Plymouth for a while and stay with him!¹³¹

Sept. 1846. Next, JND published his "Narrative of Facts," *Collected Writings* 20:1-72 which gives the situation at Ebrington Street up to this point in time.

Nov. 1846. JND was about to go to France. BWN went to London and held meetings in the home of some who went to Rawstorne St. He stated, in a conversation, that one object in his coming was to satisfy the minds of brethren as to charges against him. Through Dr Cronin, a meeting of four was arranged at Dr. Cronin's home, with BWN, and he was given a letter signed by ten asking for a meeting. He declined this arrangement for various reasons including the allegation that the charges were investigated at Plymouth and his Defense was available. He refused all repeated efforts to arrange a meeting.¹³²

Nov. 20, 1846. A letter was sent by W.H. Dorman to BWN urging a meeting concerning the charges.¹³³

Nov. 24, 1846. H. W. Soltau replied, instead of BWN, supported by J. E. Batten, H. Dyer and J. Clulow, his four principle, regular supporters, giving reasons for counseling BWN to decline an examination at Rawstorne St. They maintained that BWN was innocent of the charges of untruthfulness and clerisy.¹³⁴

JND's "Account of the Proceeding at Rawstorne Street," *Collected Writings*, vol. 20, pp. 18-166, contains documentation of the dishonesty of the system at work at Plymouth and the letters put forth exonerating BWN at this point in time. This correspondence lies before me as I write, collected as *Correspondence, Etc., Relating To Mr. Newton's Refusal to Appear Before the Saints at Rawstorne Street, London, According to the Two Citations Which Issued From Them. November 20th, to 15th December 1846.* (50 pages).

Dec. 13, 1846. A letter from Rawstorne St., London, to BWN said, "they feel precluded meeting you in fellowship at the Table of the Lord, until the matters in question have been fairly and fully investigated."

JND's examination of this defense is found in the *Collected Writings* 20:100-137, 152-166. The latter third of that paper is very instructive as to principles. Concerning Rawstorne Street's refusal of further fellowship with BWN, the following explanation of the principles involved in this refusal are very important. JND wrote:

It [Rawstorne Street, London] cannot therefore receive him, till he either comes before them, or the matter is fully investigated, or cleared up. The act in such a case amounts to this: "You must come, if at all, through an investigation, to the table." Now this is what has been done. The church is bound to be satisfied where such charges lie. They have said, "Satisfy us." It is replied, "No." Now it is clear that if the party were proved innocent in any other way, to the satisfaction of the conscience of the body so acting, the barrier is gone.* And this is what has been said: "They feel precluded meeting you at the table of the Lord, till the matters in question have been fairly and fully investigated." This, as has been shown, they never have been: the greatest part of them were in no way whatever inquired into. Take, in the case before us, what is declared in the "Remonstrance" to be necessary for excommunication. "The sin must have been palpably and distinctly

proved against the individual." A person, by refusing to appear, makes it not possible in many cases to do this in a satisfactory way. The church does not therefore excommunicate the party as proved to be guilty. But it maintains, as it is bound to do, in God's name, its title, its obligation, to judge sin and the sinner, when the case is brought before it (otherwise it is partaker in it) and declares he can come on no other terms than that which it is bound to, namely , the maintenance of the holiness of the Lord's table in the Lord's name. This then is what has been done. There has not been an excommunication upon proved guilt, but there has been, when the occasion arose, the maintenance of that judgment of evil by the church, without which it ceases to exist as the church of God at all. And I now solemnly declare -- though I never did while it might have looked like a threat, or like pressing the point, or using personal influence, which I should account a sin -- that had Rawstorne Street not done so, I should have left Rawstorne Street as I left Ebrington Street. They acted -- and I bless God for it -- happily, freely, and under the Lord's guidance: but the question had come evidently to a solemn point, in which God would direct the state of things one way or another; and my mind was made up. Most thankful I am that the very opposite of such a step was called for. Poor and feeble as the brethren may have been, God was with them: and He whose strength is made perfect in weakness has vindicated His own ways. There is not a doubt, in the case before us, that a very large body had such convictions as to Mr. N. as would have precluded them from breaking bread with him on much fuller grounds than the one on which they acted as a body. The eyes of many were opened by what they had themselves witnessed in London: but they would not step beyond what they had (of God) before them as a body of saints; and it has, and will have, its weight.¹³⁵

* Though reproof might be called for, and just humiliation, for so refusing.

JND made a startling and important statement in this same paper:

... I repeat, I have no doubt that a proper, positive, work of Satan has been going on, with far deeper principles and power than anything that has come out in public evidence even as to sectarianism.¹³⁶

The next chapter, which deals with the fundamental evil teaching secretly circulating, unknown to JND at this point, will show how prophetic this statement was. W. Trotter said:

In connection with these events there were three documents issued by Mr. Newton and his party.

One, a paper by Mr . Newton himself in answer to the charges of untruthfulness. Another by his four co-rulers at Plymouth assigning reasons for his non-attendance at Rawstorne-street to satisfy the consciences of the saints meeting there. Also a remonstrance addressed by the Plymouth rulers to the brethren meeting at Rawstorne-street on their exclusion of Mr. N. from the Lord's Table. All these were examined at large in four tracts entitled "Accounts of the proceedings at Rawstorne-street in November and December, 1846." These four tracts are very important as showing the dishonesty connected with the system of which the three papers before named were a defence. The proceedings at Rawstorne-street, and the publications growing out of them, cleared the souls of many.¹³⁷

In summary, then:

He [BWN] was accused, to state it in few words, of clericalism, sectarianism, and

untruth. Of the two first, and consequently of subverting the very principles on which brethren met, even some of his best friends declare he is guilty; of the latter, many godly persons also.¹³⁸

Another paper of interest by JND is *What Investigation Has There Been at Plymouth*.¹³⁹

Feb. 1847. W. Trotter wrote this, concerning a meeting held regarding these matters:

A general meeting of brothers in London recognized the need to be separate from Ebrington St., Plymouth on account of the evil system at work there. The testimonies of Messrs. M' Adam, Harris, Lean, Hall, Young and others, were most solemn and decisive. There was scarcely a brother whose name was well-known amongst brethren as laboring in the word and watching for souls, who did not at that time acquiesce in the sorrowful necessity for separation from this evil and demoralizing system.¹⁴⁰

A summary of these meetings is given in "Summary of the Meetings in London, February 1847," *Collected Writings* 20:178-188.

Chapter 8.3

The Work of the Enemy Fully Unmasked

Newtonism Brought into the Light

Let all be brought into the light. That which is upright will not fear it (JND) ¹⁴¹

The main point of interest to consider next is the discovery by J. L. Harris, a principle leader along with BWN at Ebrington St., Plymouth, that BWN had been **secretly** ¹⁴² circulating horrible doctrine concerning Christ. This must have been a blow to such as Lord Congleton, who though he did not agree with all BWN did and protested to him, yet could not see the untruthfulness at work, except, as he imagined, untruthfulness in JND.

A SKETCH OF THE EXPOSURE OF BWN'S EVIL TEACHING

W. Trotter has sketched the way BWN's doctrines concerning Christ's Person, which had been surreptitiously circulated, were brought to light.

And now we come to a new era in this mournful history. Thus far the evil had been confined to the undermining all the truths of which there had been a special revival, through the Lord's mercy, among brethren -- the setting up of clerical power and pretension to an alarming extent, and the effort to form a party for these purposes, by means indicating the total loss of integrity on the part of those who used them, and most corrupting in their effects on others. Now we are to find the foundations of the faith assailed by the introduction of false doctrines concerning the blessed Lord Himself. Strange things were known to have been taught previously. In his "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," Mr. N. had taught the astounding doctrine that in the future glory the saints will participate in the omniscience and omnipresent power of the Lord Himself. Other statements, equally strange, had been made on other subjects; but it was not till after the London meeting, in February, 1847, that there was brought to light a systematic and diligent inculcation of doctrines which undermine all that is essential to Christianity. These doctrines were first brought to light by Mr. Harris. ¹⁴³ He published a tract, entitled, *The Sufferings of Christ, as set forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI considered*, by J. L. Harris. ¹⁴⁴

I gather from some comments in this paper by J. L. Harris that he had said to C. McAdam that he had no objection to C. McAdam's printing the notices of BWN's doctrine that he (J. L. Harris) had written ¹⁴⁵ and C. McAdam included an "Editor's Preface." In this paper, J. L. Harris explained how the manuscript of BWN's lecture on Psalm 6 came to his notice:

I desire explicitly to state how the MS. came under my notice. About three

weeks since, one of our sisters in Exeter very kindly lent the notes to my wife, as being Mr. Newton's teaching, from which she had found much interest and profit. When my wife first told me what she had brought home, I did not pay much attention to it; but shortly I felt it was not right in me to sanction in my house this system of private circulation, and I determined to return the MS. unread. Accordingly I wrote a note to the sister who had lent the MS. thanking her for her kindness and explaining my reason for returning it unread. It was late at night when I had finished writing, and I found in the meantime my wife had looked into the MS. so as to get an outline of its contents, which she mentioned to me, especially the expression that "the cross was only the closing incident in the life of Christ." She thought she did not understand the meaning of the author, and referred to me for explanation. I then looked into the MS. myself, and on perusing it felt surprised and shocked at finding such unscriptural statements and doctrine, which appeared to me to touch the integrity of the doctrine of the cross. The doctrine in this MS. appeared to me so important as to require investigation, and wishing to have my own judgment corrected or confirmed by consulting with other brethren, I read the paper to you.

In the law of the land there is such a thing as misprision of treason, involving heavy penalties when any one who has been acquainted with treasonable practices does not give information. In this case I believe the doctrines taught to undermine the glory of the cross of Christ, and to subvert souls; and it seems to me a duty to Christ and to His saints to make the doctrine openly known. The MS. professes to be notes of a Lecture, I suppose a public Lecture. With these notes on Psalm 6 there was given, as accompanying it, notes on Isaiah 13, 14, if I recollect aright, with this notice, -- "This to go with Psalm 6," or something to that effect -- so that it appears from this title that these MSS. are as regularly circulated among a select few, in various parts of England, as books in a Reading Society. I had intended to take a copy of this Lecture, and to return the original MS. to the lender -- that is, the one that came to my hands. As you expressed a wish to see the original, I gave it into your hands, and you made yourself responsible for detaining it. . . .¹⁴⁶

The notes of BWN's lecture on Psalm 6 were printed in this paper and we will look at some of them:

For a person to be suffering here because he serves God, is one thing; but the relation of that person to God, and what he is immediately receiving from His hand while serving Him, is another; and it is this which the sixth Psalm, and many others, open to us. *They describe the hand of God stretched out, as rebuking in anger, and chastening in hot displeasure; and remember, this is not the scene on the cross . . . [the cross] was only one incident in the life of Christ . . . It was only the closing incident of His long life of suffering and sorrow; so that to fix our eye simply on that would be to know little what the character of His real sufferings were.*¹⁴⁷

I do not refer to what were called His vicarious sufferings, but to His partaking of the circumstances of the woe and sorrow of the human family; and not only of the human family generally, but of a particular part of it, -- of Israel," (p. 11) [he then speaks of the curse having fallen on them, adding] *So Jesus became part of an accursed people -- a people who had earned God's wrath by transgression after transgression . . . So Jesus became obnoxious to the wrath of God the moment he came into the world . . . Observe this is chastening in displeasure, not that which comes now on the child of God, which is never in wrath, but this rebuking in wrath, to which He was amenable, because He was part of an*

accursed people; so the hand of God was continually stretched out against Him in various ways. He was chastened every morning. "My loins, He said, are filled with a loathsome disease."¹⁴⁸

Such are some of BWN's teaching. It was a systematized teaching. I will not transcribe more, though the following summary from W. Trotter is quite correct:

From this dreadful condition he [BWN] represents our Lord as getting partially delivered at His baptism by John. I say partially; for elsewhere he distinctly affirms that He only emerged from it entirely by death: "His life, through all the thirty years, was made up, more or less, of experiences of this kind; so it must have been a great relief to Him to hear the voice of John the Baptist, saying, 'Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Here was a door opened to Israel at once. They might come, and be forgiven; so He was glad to hear that word. He heard it with a wise and attentive ear and came to be baptized, because He was one with Israel -- *was in their condition, one of wrath from God*; consequently, *when He was baptized, He took new ground*; but Israel would not take it," &c. Such were the doctrines promulgated by Mr. Newton.¹⁴⁹

The exposure of them by Mr. Harris excited general alarm among those who had been associated with their author; and he, finding it needful that something should be done, issued two pamphlets, in neither of which did he disclaim the lecture, or the doctrines asserted in it; but first stated it more at large, though in a less palpable and offensive form, and then defended and supported it.

It appears that, long before this, a paper of his containing the germ of this doctrine, had been inserted in the *Christian Witness*.¹⁵⁰ This was pleaded by Mr. N. and others in palliation of his subsequent course. It was said that he had avowed the doctrine openly in a publication read by brethren generally, and edited by Mr. Harris, and that neither he nor they had detected in it any error, till altered circumstances made them adopt a different standard of judgment. But the facts, alas! while quite showing how long Mr. N. had held, or been inclined to hold, his present views, formed no real palliation of the evil. In the first place, he had carefully guarded what he said in the *Witness* against what constitutes the chief evil of his present views. In the *Witness* he strongly asserts that the sufferings of Christ he speaks of were "*vicariously incurred*"; in his tract -- "Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus" -- he defines the sufferings he specially writes of to be "sufferings which pertained to Him, *because He was a man, and because He was an Israelite*; sufferings therefore which cannot be *restricted* to the years of His public service, but which must be extended over the whole of that period during which He was made sensible, under the hand of God, of the condition into which man had sunk, and yet more into which Israel had sunk in His sight." (The italics in the [above] sentence are Mr. Newton's own.) These sufferings he carefully distinguishes in a note (page 2) from "those which were vicarious," and "which latter," he says, "began at the cross." Now this makes all the difference possible. I should regret to hear any one say that our blessed Lord endured God's displeasure, even *vicariously*, all His lifetime. It would be an error, and a serious one, to assert even this. Still, it does not so entirely overturn the foundations of our faith. But to assert that the hot displeasure of God, rested on Jesus throughout His life, *not vicariously*, but "because He was a man, and because He was an Israelite," does subvert the faith; because if *as a man* and *as an Israelite* He was obnoxious to this, how could He voluntarily endure it on the cross instead of others? But, secondly, the remarks in question were *not* inserted in the first edition of the *Christian Witness*, edited by Mr. Harris, and generally read by brethren, but added to the paper in a second

edition, issued from the tract depot at Plymouth, under Mr. N.'s control. But I must proceed with my narrative.

The two tracts issued by Mr. N. were answered by Mr. Darby. His pamphlet entitled "Observations by J.N.D., on a tract entitled 'Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus'"¹⁵¹ is most valuable, and well deserving the study of any one anxious to know the bearings of this solemn question. He printed another , likewise presenting proofs in copious extracts from Mr. N.'s writings, of what his doctrines on this subject really are. The effect of all this, through God's great mercy, was, that many of Mr. N.'s friends, who had adhered to him till now , began to have their eyes opened to the frightful precipice to the brink of which they had followed him. By them Mr. N. was pressed to make confession of his error, and he so far consented to this as to put forth a paper, dated "Plymouth, Nov. 26th, 1847," entitled "A Statement and Acknowledgment respecting certain Doctrinal Errors."¹⁵²

JND wrote:

The system of the tract [notes taken of BWN on Psa. 6] published by Mr. Harris is an elaborate and complete system, and undoubtedly , for the substance and system of it, Mr. Newton's.

This has been acknowledged by those to whom the notes belonged, when apprised that they would be kept.¹⁵³

During Nov. 1847, if not Dec. 1847, J. G. Deck, having acquired, and exposed, a number of notes of different lectures given by BWN, related the following incident:

Mr. Newton had previously [to the publication of J. L. Harris's exposure of BWN's lecture on Psa. 6] at a meeting in Exeter, v defended the doctrine of that lecture by appealing to the paper in the "Christian Witness," already mentioned, in *proof* that he had held those opinions for many years, and taught them with the knowledge of the very brethren who now attacked them. [The additions to the second edition were made] *without Mr. Harris's knowledge* or sanction; and for which therefore Mr. N. is alone responsible. While this defence, therefore, has a most sorrowful aspect, as Mr. N. ought to have remembered^w how this doctrine found its way into the second edition of the "Witness;" observe also the remarkable providence of God, (for surely his hand is most manifest in all these sorrowful and humbling disclosures,) that Mr. Newton should, not only by this appeal to the "Witness," have *identified the doctrine of PSALM VI with the paper in the "Witness," but should by so doing have HIMSELF dragged to light the existence of that paper* which has in the mercy of God so opened the eyes of many of his children to the fearful character of this heresy. . . .

I dread exceedingly, lest it should be overlooked that *this heresy is the delusion of the enemy!*¹⁵⁴

G. Muller did not appreciate what J. L. Harris had done. JND said:

v. [I wonder if this took place just after it might have become known to BWN that J. L. Harris had written strictures on his lecture on Psalm 6, and when C. McAdam published the paper.]

w. [BWN was not an upright man, and this is what JND had constantly to contend with at Plymouth.]

Mr. M. declared that Mr. J. L. H. had done a work of darkness, and maintained to the full their letter^x which justified their reception when he well knew what the doctrine was.¹⁵⁵

This attitude was prophetic of what was yet to transpire at Bethesda. W. B. Neatby accepted it that G. Muller said that but likewise criticized J. L. Harris.¹⁵⁶

DEFENSE AND EXPOSURE OF NEWTONISM

After the printing of J. L. Harris' *The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered*," (in July 1847)¹⁵⁷ BWN printed a paper , *Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus*.

JND responded to BWN's paper with *Observations on a Tract Entitled, 'Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus: A Letter Addressed to Certain Brethren and Sisters in Christ,'* by B. W. Newton.^{158 y}

Next, on Sept. 1, 1847,¹⁵⁹ BWN responded to J. L. Harris' paper with *Observations on a Tract Entitled 'The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered*.

Once again JND rose to the defense of the true Christ with his *A Plain Statement of the Doctrine on the Sufferings of our Blessed Lord*.¹⁶⁰

J. G. Deck published a paper, *Observations on the Doctrines of Notes of Lectures on Psalm XXIII, XXXI, XXXVIII, Concerning The Sufferings of Christ: to Brethren and Sisters in Christ, Meeting in Ebrington Street, Plymouth, and Elsewhere*. This paper contains lengthy extracts from manuscript notes of various lectures, containing evil teachings, given by BWN, that came into his hands. Before publication of his paper, J. G. Deck sent copies of the notes of BWN's lectures to H. W. Soltau, a principle supporter of BWN, at Ebrington Street, Plymouth. J. G. Deck's paper contains a response from H. W. Soltau, dated Nov. 1, 1847, which helps in placing his paper in late 1847. It also mentions that while he was writing, he "heard with deep thankfulness of heart that several brethren in Ebrington Street, have had their eyes opened to see the evil of this paper in the [Christian] Witness; and that they desire to abjure it, as 'destructive of the very foundations of the gospel.'" (p. 25). So it was printed some time, perhaps just before, or perhaps after , BWN's notorious *Acknowledgement* of Nov. 26, 1847. Another indicator of time is the inclusion of a note from H. W. Soltau to J. G. Deck, dated Nov. 1, 1847. Keeping in mind

x. [This refers to Bethesda's *Letter of the Ten* justifying Bethesda's reception of several of BWN's partisans in April 1848. That matter will be discussed in Section 9.

y. In the Introduction to this paper JND wrote:

Since entertaining the thought of giving this brief summary, Mr. Newton has answered Mr. Harris's tract, so that we have the fullest opportunity of ascertaining what his views are. The author, as is his known custom, after making statements which subvert the faith, seeks by modifying, by making statements which are entirely different appear to be the same, or substituting one for the other, smothering up what was said by expiating on recognized truths, to confound the minds of the simple, and escape the discrediting detection of the doctrines he has taught.

that H. W. Soltau, a principle supporter of BWN, all through 1845-1847, would make a candid confession of the evil on Dec. 13, 1847 (see below), let us see his note to observe the tactics used to defend BWN. J. G. Deck wrote:

I sent copies of all the following extracts save that from Ps. XXXI, which has since come into my possession, to our brother Soltau, before I felt it right to publish them: but he has given me his own judgment, and Mr . N.'s, on these notes.

Mr. Soltau says,

First, in reply, I must declare my dislike and disapprobation of many confessions in the notes you send, and believe them thorough perversions of what was said; arising, I doubt not, from the note-taker misplacing sentences and omitting other statements, and not understanding what was taught. Some are clearly reports of reading meetings, when omission of questions quite alters the thread of the teaching; and the insertion of answers, without the questions, involves all in confusion or absurdity.

I have read (to Mr. Newton) the extracts you have sent, and he desires me to say, he "abhors" some of the statements in them, and repudiates them; deeming some of them pure absurdities, and others erroneous in doctrine, and never held or taught by him. Nov. 1, 1847 (p. 10).

Evil is accompanied by loss in integrity. What J. G. Deck quoted from the notes is horrible, but it is not my purpose to quote them. However, a few of his comments on H. W. Soltau's ludicrous response, writing as if J. G. Deck was a dolt, were rightly used by J. G. Deck to expose the spiritual state:

Surely this is a most sorrowful and afflictive state of things! Think of the responsibility of circulating such notes! Alas! What must have been the spiritual condition of those who wrote, and read, and received such doctrines as precious truth, when such is the judgment pronounced upon them. Surely it opens to us such a state of spiritual blindness to the glory of Christ, and the fundamental truths of the Gospel, which, if an enemy had said it, would not have been believed, when "pure absurdities, and statements to be abhorred," are received as valuable truth.

And here let me solemnly appeal to the Teachers, and ask them, who is responsible for this state of things before God? Whose teaching has produced such bad fruit? Charged as you are yourselves with a doctrine, which many of your brethren believe to be subversive of the Gospel, yet the doctrines of those who follow you is, confessedly, by yourselves, to be "repudiated" and "abhorred" (pp. 10, 11).

Thus did this deceptive blaming of others recoil on their own heads. Thankfully, within some weeks, H. W. Soltau repented -- but BWN, never, nor S. P. Tregelles. These are the kinds of persons and conduct with which JND had to contend from March 1845 and on. What is the state of those who rather find that it was JND who was untruthful?

On Nov. 26, 1847 BWN printed his *Statement and Acknowledgment*

Respecting Certain Doctrinal Errors. ^z This statement, often referred to as his "retraction" of, allegedly, all his errors (they are more than errors) has, inexcusably, duped many a palliator of evil. He did not give up his system of evil teachings, which JND summarized a number of times in his writings. ¹⁶¹ But before looking at this "retraction" we will hear several confessions by two of his principle supporters. Their confessions of the evil doctrines may well be compared with BWN's "retraction."

S. P. Tregelles remarked that "On December 8, 1847, Mr. Newton quitted Plymouth; and very shortly after things were brought to a crisis here." BWN paid several visits, however, and preached in Ebrington St. ¹⁶² At some point he had "an open communion Baptist church." ¹⁶³ So much for his order in the church and his views on ministry.

The Ebrington Street, Plymouth meeting place was the joint property of J. L. Harris, B. W. Newton and H. W. Soltau. In midsummer 1848 the saints who had supported BWN moved to smaller quarters at Compton St., Plymouth. ¹⁶⁴ Meanwhile, saints who had withdrawn from Ebrington Street, occupied the premises at Raleigh Street, originally purchase by G. V. Wigram when meetings first began in Plymouth.

CONFESSIONS OF SEVERAL PLYMOUTH LEADERS

On Monday, Dec. 13, 1847 a meeting insisted upon by W. H. Soltau was held, ¹⁶⁵ attended by several hundred. During this meeting several leaders at Ebrington St., Plymouth, who had supported BWN, made confession of holding evil doctrine concerning Christ. ¹⁶⁶ On Dec. 22, 1847, H. W. Soltau issued a printed *Confession of Error.* ¹⁶⁷ H. W. Soltau's confession included the evil doctrine concerning Christ.

Deeply feeling, as I trust I do, my solemn responsibility to God and to His Church, I desire now to confess openly and unreservedly the errors in Christian doctrine in which I have been involved, or with which I have been connected, trusting also that through the Lord's mercy any further evil results of such errors may be averted, and that where souls have already been damaged, He may in His grace heal and restore. The errors to which I allude are twofold.

First -- I have held that the Blessed Lord Jesus was so closely by birth identified with the fallen family of man, as to come under the imputation of Adam's guilt, which rested on them; and in consequence was treated by God as one of the rebel family, suffering therefore under His hand many of the penalties which attached to that family; but that in these circumstances He stood pure and sinless, and proved Himself before God in His thoughts and ways the Righteous One, though dwelling in the midst of sinners.

Second -- The second error which I have to confess is one I believe more subtle than the first, and which I fear has produced more baneful effects in others. It is this -- That the Lord was by birth so connected with the nation of Israel, as to be made to feel from the hand of God their ruined and awful condition in His

z. Additionally, Chapter 8.4 documents the fact that BWN continued to teach his evil doctrine of Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God," and that Christ had in His humanity a necessity of dying, after his *Acknowledgement*.

sight, as under the curse of the broken law. That the living experiences of the Lord, therefore, were frequently those of distance from God -- of terror pressed upon His soul by God -- of wrath and curse. That He had, however, seasons of relief and comfort and brightness, partly owing to His own perfect obedience and faith and prayer; and partly through the direct interference of God.

Tracts containing these doctrines have been submitted to me for approval, fully sanctioned and circulated by me; and I have, under the influence, I doubt not, of these errors, applied some expressions in the Psalms to the living experiences of Christ, which now I believe are only applicable to the Cross.

I now desire humbly, and yet earnestly, to express my contrition for having in any way held or circulated such false doctrines. I believe them to be truly dangerous and pernicious to souls. I now perceive that they do affect the person and relation and work of the Blessed Lord. That had He been by birth under any imputation of guilt Himself, He could not have cleared Himself from it by any life of righteousness, but that death and condemnation was the penalty: and He could not, therefore, have died for us.

These I now fully perceive are some of the legitimate results of such doctrines, and fearful indeed they are. Moreover, another serious error is involved in them, and that is the dividing the Person of Christ. Experiences of mere humanity have been attributed to Him, and the Person and consequently the true experiences of THE SON have not been truly held.¹⁶⁸

The next day, Dec. 23, 1847, J. E. Batten issued his letter *To the Saints Meeting in Ebrington Street, Plymouth*. This confession is quite explicit in outlining the doctrine and its implications. The interested reader will find it in Appendix 3.¹⁶⁹ Subsequently W. B. Dyer also made a confession as did T. P. Haffner.¹⁷⁰

NEWTONISM HELD AT PLYMOUTH FOR YEARS

Those that would not separate from Ebrington Street, Plymouth, published a paper in Jan. 1848, *A Statement From Christians in Ebrington Street*, to which JND replied. In his reply to their shuffling excuses, he said,

For years the chief teachers of Ebrington Street have all of them held what they now avow destroys the gospel. Do they not know what Christ was presented? This doctrine was taught, diligently taught; notes of lectures assiduously inculcating it were taken and diligently circulated all over England; tracts, with this doctrine contained in it, written and revised by the teachers, and sold and circulated; tracts, since its being charged as heresy by others, put forth by Mr. Newton, and read and approved by others in MS. and in print, and the doctrine justified and applauded: and now the whole assembly, or those who speak for them, tell us they were wholly ignorant of their existence. If their teachers really held this doctrine, their hearers had lost Christ, or had a false Christ presented to them. And whatever we may judge of the notes of lectures or their accuracy, they prove that the doctrine was assiduously and constantly taught. What that doctrine was we have the declaration of all the teachers to let us know. And will anyone believe that this, even when it was not the express subject, did not affect all the teaching and the action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly.

The declaration merely shows that the effect had been so complete that they had lost Christ without knowing it, had a false Christ presented to them without

knowing it. And what does this speak for the state of the assembly?¹⁷¹

Well, of course such teaching affects everything. The evil of this teaching was at work for years in Ebrington Street and was really a part of BWN's hostility to JND and those likeminded. It was (unmanifested) leaven at work. **Why believe in BWN's integrity and JND's untruthfulness, other than as an expression of zeal for party and/or animosity against JND?** As a rule (may there be exceptions?) where fundamentally evil doctrine is at work, the ministers of the angel of light, who is the father of lies, will work the evil of shuffling and lying¹⁷² among the defenders of such doctrine.

I suggest that the Lord graciously vindicated JND in the whole Plymouth affair. What a trial this was for him to endure. But more was coming. In April of 1848, the Bethesda assembly at Bristol England received several supporters of BWN, as we shall see in Section 9.

In midsummer of 1848, those meeting in Ebrington Street moved to a smaller place in Compton Street, Plymouth.¹⁷³ Also in 1848,¹⁷⁴ BWN published his, *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*. Having sketched the history thus far, we will now return to the famous "retraction" by BWN.

B. W. Newton's Acknowledgment

On Nov. 26, 1847, BWN issued his, *A Statement and Acknowledgment Respecting Certain Doctrinal Errors* (see Appendix 1).

In response to BWN's *Acknowledgment*, JND published, *Notice of the Statement and Acknowledgment of Error circulated by Mr. Newton* in which he said "that it is impossible that anything can be more unsatisfactory in every way; and I shall now say why."¹⁷⁵ BWN **never** retracted the teaching of his 1847 papers.¹⁷⁶ Also, in 1853 JND wrote a letter that speaks of this acknowledgement.¹⁷⁷ Since JND's writings are readily accessible, rather than citing his strictures, I have quoted L. Pilson's brief analysis of the worth of BWN's *Acknowledgment* in Appendix 4.

The worthlessness of BWN's acknowledgement¹⁷⁸ is additionally shown by the fact that in spite of a multitude of voices alleging that he did retract and never taught these things again, he was found to be putting into print similar doctrine subsequently. This will be shown in the next chapter.

After the acknowledgement of Nov. 1847, in 1848 BWN wrote another paper,¹⁷⁹ *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*. Subsequently he wrote other papers, such as *A Letter to a Friend on a Tract Recently Published at Cork*, August 1850, and *Ancient Truths Respecting the Deity and True Humanity of the Lord Jesus*, 1857" -- which has teachings in it as before the *Acknowledgment*, as will be shown later.

In his *Acknowledgment* BWN had withdrawn his two 1847 papers for "reconsideration." The reconsideration was published as, *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*, July 1848. In this paper he shifted away

from the idea of Christ's federal relation to Adam and based the system on Christ's being born of a woman, under the law -- and thus maintained that, though Christ was ever morally near, He was **circumstantially at a distance from God** -- and had to work His way through appointed sufferings (not vicariously, but due to this position) till God could meet Him. What an unspeakable outrage against the Person of Christ!

JND's strictures on this document are found in *Notice of the Statement and Acknowledgment of Error Circulated by Mr. Newton*.¹⁸⁰ JND was well aware how palliators of evil always show themselves strong at times like those. He wrote:

I am aware that I shall be considered relentless;¹⁸¹ but I think of the interest of the church of God in it, and even of Mr. Newton's own.

. . . The present statement is calculated to do more injury than the tracts withdrawn from circulation [for reconsideration, not repudiation].

This last statement proved quite prophetic. See also *Collected Writings* 20:276ff, 288. We shall consider BWN's doctrine in Chapter 8.4, but to indicate to the reader something of the horrible things he said about our Lord I will cite one here:

Moreover the exercises of soul which His elect in their unconverted state ought to have, and which they would have, if it were possible for them to know and feel everything according to God -- such exercises, yet without sin, Jesus had.¹⁸²

JND remarked:

An unconverted man in such a case must know himself to be lost. This clearly confirms what the doctrine is. Did Jesus know and feel this?¹⁸³

B. W. Newton's Restatement of the Satanic Doctrine

Speaking about BWN's course with respect to the unmasking of BWN's system of evil teaching, W. Trotter wrote,

Some months after the withdrawal by Mr. N. of his heretical tracts for reconsideration, he published another, entitled, "A Letter on Subjects connected with the Lord's Humanity." This tract re-affirms the doctrines of those which he had withdrawn, and all the confession now made is of "carelessness," and "a wrong use of theological terms." Brethren must excuse me when I say, that to refer to this tract as an adequate exposition of Mr. N.'s doctrines seems to me either the height of folly, or something worse. First of all, notes of a lecture appear, in which the doctrine flows out freely from the author's lips without reserve and without disguise. Finding the indignation excited by it so very great, he publishes one tract expository of his views, more carefully worded than the lecture, but still plain enough; and another, vindicating those views against the charges of his opponents. Finding his own friends ready to desert him, he confesses his error on one point, and withdraws the tracts for re-consideration. The fruit of this re-consideration is a republication of the doctrine; but, after

months of study bestowed on the subject, who can wonder that the form in which it appears is made as unobjectionable as possible? An acute mind, spending months of study on the stating of the obnoxious doctrine in as harmless and apparently unobjectionable terms as possible, while it is still maintained and asserted as firmly as ever, might be expected to produce just such a tract as this of Mr. N.'s. But who would trust it? Does he hold the doctrines he did when he wrote his former tracts? Yes, unquestionably. Then let us look to *them* to know what those doctrines are; or rather to the notes of his lecture prior to any of them, in which, without a thought of reservation or disguise, he speaks out what was in his soul.¹⁸⁴

W. Trotter could not know of what in the *Fry MS*, namely, that BWN himself states that he subsequently taught his doctrines in a simpler form (see chapter 8.4). However, W. Trotter astutely admonished readers to examine BWN's first papers, where "he speaks out what was in his soul." Concerning BWN's *A Letter on Subjects connected with the Lord's Humanity* (July 1848), W. Trotter's strictures on this paper are found in *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .*, pp. 11-13. For JND's strictures, see *Collected Writings* 15:134-161. What was George Müller's (a leader at Bethesda) reaction? He said,

When, however, the reconsideration came out, I found that notwithstanding all the filing and polishing with regard to expression, his last tract was nothing but a defense of those two former ones.¹⁸⁵

In effect we here have G. Muller confirming what W. Trotter, JND, and others affirmed, namely that BWN had not *repudiated* his teachings (except one point concerning Christ and Adam's federal headship). Withdrawal and reconsideration are not *repudiation*. Chapter 8.4 will demonstrate this in BWN's case. Subsequently he also linked these teachings with vicarious sufferings in Christ's life, thus duping those who believe in vicarious sufferings in Christ's life from seeing the evil.

Those who eventually were called "exclusives" regarded BWN's system as "satanic." This is not surprising in view of 2 Cor . 11:14, 15. But this has several aspects. One is the doctrine of Christ. G. V. Wigram wrote of it thus:

. . . Satan really being the one who is using Mr. Newton to blaspheme Christ, and subvert the faith.¹⁸⁶

Mr. G. Alexander, a brother who withdrew from Bethesda in 1848 because Bethesda received partisan of BWN, stated:

More than one hundred believers at Plymouth have testified of the evil of this doctrine, spoken of it as the work and delusion of Satan. . . .¹⁸⁷

JND wrote repeatedly that Satan was at work in BWN's evil doctrines.¹⁸⁸

The Meetings at Bath, May 1848.

An important meeting of brethren was held in the city of Bath in May 1848. This gave Lord Congleton an opportunity to show the allegedly false charges brought by JND. W. Trotter gave an account of the meeting and its results,

namely the vindication of JND.

But there is another point I must advert to before Bethesda's connection with all this comes in view. In the month of May, 1848, a meeting was held at Bath, attended by about 100 brethren from all parts, the leading features of which were (1), That in it the brethren who had been rescued from the doctrinal errors of Mr. N., and whose confessions have been noticed, made further confession, full and ample, as to their implication in the charges made against the untruthful, immoral system of Ebrington-street, as brought to light in the "Narrative of Facts," and "Account of Proceedings in Rawstorne-street." *They acknowledged that these charges were just.* One, at least, of those who signed their names to "the Plymouth documents," referred to on page 8, confessed that these documents were justly chargeable with trickery and falsehood. (My authority for this statement is Mr. Robert Howard, who was present at the meeting, and assured me of what is above stated.) It is not as delighting in evil, or feeling any pleasure in publishing my brethren's sins, the Lord knoweth, that I mention this. I am only astonished at the grace bestowed on them thus humbly to acknowledge wherein they had fallen; but I mention it because it is of all importance to remember that the false doctrine is not the only thing in question. There was a separation, and solemn necessity for it, before the evil doctrine came to light. And what was made clear to the simplest by the confessions of beloved brethren at the Bath meeting was this, not only that the doctrines must be repudiated, but the system of trickery and deceit guarded against, which preceded the open avowal of the doctrines. Both system and doctrines, however blessed be God, were distinctly confessed, and as distinctly renounced, by beloved brethren who had been most deeply entangled in both. Let this triumph of the restoring grace of our God and Father be our comfort now, and our encouragement to look for further displays of His almighty arm of love.

(2) The other remarkable feature of the Bath meeting was this, that the "Narrative of Facts," and other publications of Mr. Darby on these mournful occurrences, were subjected at that meeting to the strictest scrutiny; Lord Congleton endeavoring for five hours to prove them false, and Mr. Nelson, of Edinburgh, aiding him in his efforts. The result was, that the statements contained in these pamphlets were so fully established that some, who had always mistrusted them till then, exclaimed that they never knew anything so demonstrated. Mr. Robert Howard, of Tottenham, and Mr. Jukes, of Hull, who were present at the meeting, both assured me that nothing could exceed the triumphant manner in which these publications were vindicated from every attempt to call their statements in question; every endeavor to shake their testimony recoiling on the heads of those who made them.

It was immediately after this, that the rulers at Bethesda admitted to communion there several of Mr. Newton's devoted friends and partisans, and this in spite of all the remonstrances of godly brethren among themselves, and of others at a distance, who warned them of the character and views of the persons in question.¹⁸⁹

Concerning this meeting, JND wrote:

The Bath meeting was accordingly held, where my statements were thoroughly sifted for two days in the presence of brethren from various parts, and everything that could be thought of in them, by those who objected to them, sought to be invalidated. Those who were present know that the attempt entirely failed. My statements were fully substantiated. After what passed there, I am entitled to

consider them as indisputable in everything affecting the substance.¹⁹⁰

G. V. Wigram, who attended these meetings, was thankful for the results. He wrote:

. . . showing out into light a system of spiritual and immoral evil, in which some, even at that time, were sticking, though they had given up the bad doctrine months before . . . victory over a work of Satan at the Bath meeting in May.¹⁹¹

"The results were inconclusive," boldly proclaims F. R. Coad.¹⁹² It was W. B. Neatby who vainly labored to show W. Trotter's sketch must be seriously qualified.¹⁹³ However, there were a hundred brethren there who could have unitedly contradicted W. Trotter and JND's published statements, as well as G. V. Wigram's.¹⁹⁴ The carping and caviling cannot change JND's vindication.

Chapter 8.4

Did B. W. Newton Teach His Evil Doctrines Subsequent to His Acknowledgment?

Either Mr. N. is seeking to deliberately degrade and dishonor Christ, or he is a blind instrument of Satan in doing it (JND).¹⁹⁵

B. W. Newton Said That He Subsequently Taught It

In some remarks by BWN, wherein he takes note that E. K. Groves (a son of A. N. Groves; and both of them supporters of Bethesda) had published a book in 1885, we find some very relevant comments regarding his views after the controversy. Speaking of his 1835 paper in the *Christian Witness* that opposed Irvingism, he commented,

Some time afterwards it was reprinted as a tract, and to that reprint I added a preface, in which I inadvertently said that Christ came under the imputation of Adam's sin. Now I couldn't have meant that, because the whole tract was against that very thing. What I meant was the consequences of Adam's sin. That expression, however, I ought not to have used, and as I am and have been particular about the expressions of others, I retracted it and expressed my unfeigned sorrow.¹⁹⁶

That is, he let stand the fact that Christ was under the consequences of Adam's sin. Here, then, is proof from BWN that he continued to hold the evil teachings. But there is more:

Then there were two other Tracts in 1847, which, when the attack was made on me about the sixth Psalm [by J. L. Harris], I wrote hastily and not in that theological precision and care . . . it is not to be wondered at that they were not comprehended by persons who were not accustomed to such subjects. [pitiable, arrogant self-delusion] Still they are substantially sound and I adhere to them. Christ never endured damnatory wrath in His lifetime, but to say that in His lifetime He endured no wrath at all, is wrong.¹⁹⁷

Well that certainly is proof he never gave up these doctrines. BWN went on in the Fry MS in a patronizing way concerning the two papers he published in 1847:

I am not however surprised at their failure to convince. I knew it would fail at the outset, because persons were not competent to judge what they set themselves to judge. **The above mentioned retraction had nothing whatever to do with these tracts, but only with that expression in the reprint of the article on**

Irvingism, which reprint had a large sale and circulation in India especially My withdrawing them was simply as if I said, "You don't understand these publications, then I will state it for you afresh." And I issued the "Letter to a Friend in Cork" [1850] and "Ancient Truths" [1857] and the "Fifteen Propositions" and "Christ our Suffering Surety" wherein the same things are stated more simply Tregelles blamed my writing that retraction ^{aa} very much.¹⁹⁸

The "Reprint" is a reference to the *Christian Witness* article. Observe that BWN said that his "retraction" (the *Acknowledgment* -- see App. 1) had only to do with an expression in that article and nothing to do with his papers. Thus he retracted an expression -- just as JND and others pointed out. There is one more startling comment that I will transcribe from the above quotation from BWN's statement.

Bethesda ^{ab} seems to want to unite the two sections of Brethren. And I am to be sacrificed to cement it. If they *really* believed that I held such things they should not stand aloof from the exclusives, but have joined heartily in my excommunication ^{ac} -- which they did not.¹⁹⁹

A letter of BWN, dated June 1, 1885, says,

During the last forty years, I have, I believe, done every thing in my power to remove misapprehension, and to explain the doctrines I hold on all subjects, clearly and precisely. My doctrines are fully unfolded in the Tracts and Books of which I subjoin a list. They extend over a period of forty years.²⁰⁰

That remark takes us back to 1845, two years before his evil system of doctrine concerning Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God" was brought to light.

BWN's "last words . . . to his circle of Christian friends not long before he died," include this:

. . . that if I had my time over again, I would maintain the same testimonies that I have done, only *more strongly*.²⁰¹

Regarding BWN's paper *A Letter on Subjects Connected With the Lord's Humanity*, published July 1848, i. e., after his *Acknowledgment*, J. M. C. [Code?] wrote, in 1850:

In "Letter on the Humanity" p. 15 [July 1848], the author speaks thus of his two tracts -- "Remarks, &c." [1847] and "Observations," [1847] -- "such then are my principles, and I may add, the principles on which my two recent Tracts are based." And again in p. 17, he disowns any intention "of shrinking from the explanation or defence of more minute statements in those tracts," so that in this

aa. [I suggest that the phrase "Tregelles blamed my writing that retraction very much" means only that one point to which BWN alluded. The next chapter (8.5) tells us that BWN did not write the *Acknowledgement*. Also S. P. Tregelles remained fully implicated in the evil. And, afterwards he continued to support BWN's teaching (*Collected Writings* 10:95).]

ab. [Bethesda refers to the assembly in Bristol, England, which received partisans of BWN during April 1848, the history and results of which will occupy Section 9. By "the two sections," BWN referred to the opens and the exclusives.]

ac. [This statement is false.]

last "Letter" the doctrine of the foregoing tracts is fully confirmed and re-asserted.²⁰²

BWN'S Writings Show That He Continued to Teach His Evil Doctrines

Listen to this from himself:

My withdrawing them [several of his papers] was simply as if I said "You don't understand these publications, then I will state it for you afresh." And I issued the "Letter to a Friend in Cork" and "Ancient Truths" and the "Fifteen Propositions" and "Christ our Suffering Surety" wherein the same things are stated more simply.

In the face of these four last named publications it is most wicked to pretend that I am to be charged with a misunderstanding of former tracts.²⁰³

THE FIRE OF SINAI BURNT AGAINST CHRIST

As an example of how BWN continued to teach his evil system, let us review what he taught regarding the fires of Sinai burning against Christ and scorching Him. On Sept. 1, 1847, BWN wrote:

Israel had formally taken their stand before God, under a covenant of law, and therefore the very first moment of disobedience was found amongst them, they were brought "*under curse*." The fire of Sinai began instantly to burn against them, and therefore, even if every deserved infliction had been withheld from that moment to the time when Jesus was born, yet still he would have been one of the nation that was exposed to all the terrors of Sinai. They were all set in array against Israel.²⁰⁴

. . . and that Jesus became by birth one of that family -- and that that nation because of Sinai and the Law which they had broken, was under *peculiar* inflictions from God, the same reason that has led the Author [whom BWN is trying to refute] to admit, that Jesus drank of the cup of human sorrow, would lead him also to admit that he drank the cup of Israel's woe. And if the sorrow and inflictions which had fallen on Israel are said in Scripture to have been the result of "curse" and of "wrath," then Jesus would have drunk of a cup of sorrow which was the result of such wrath and such curse. This would necessarily follow, as a result of the Author's own principle, if once he admitted, as I think, on reflection he *will* admit, that Israel was under such inflictions when Jesus became an Israelite. He would then see that there is a peculiar class of ~~sufferings~~ sufferings, added to those which flowed from drinking of the general cup of human sorrow -- sufferings which resulted from special inflictions on a peculiar people, and which yet were not the vicarious sufferings of the cross.²⁰⁵

In 1858 one could read:

And although it is true that the fires that burnt on Sinai did not envelope Him in their full devouring power until Calvary, yet those fires burnt against Him as the sinner's Surety always, and from time to time sent forth as it were, their lightning flash, scorching though not consuming."²⁰⁶

CHRIST'S "UNSPEAKABLE CIRCUMSTANTIAL DISTANCE FROM GOD"

In a *Lecture on Psalm 6*, BWN said:

For a person to be suffering here because he serves God, is one thing; but the relation of that person to God, and what he is immediately receiving from His hand while serving Him, is another; and it is this which the sixth Psalm, and many others, open to us. *They describe the hand of God stretched out, as rebuking in anger, and chastening in hot displeasure; and remember, this is not the scene on the cross . . . [the cross] was only one incident in the life of Christ . . . It was only the closing incident of His long life of suffering and sorrow; so that to fix our eye simply on that would be to know little what the character of His real sufferings were.*²⁰⁷

I do not refer to what were called His vicarious sufferings, but to His partaking of the circumstances of the woe and sorrow of the human family; and not only of the human family generally, but of a particular part of it, -- of Israel," (p. 11) [he then speaks of the curse having fallen on them, adding] *So Jesus became part of an accursed people -- a people who had earned God's wrath by transgression after transgression . . . So Jesus became obnoxious to the wrath of God the moment he came into the world . . . Observe this is chastening in displeasure, not that which comes now on the child of God, which is never in wrath, but this rebuking in wrath, to which He was amenable, because He was part of an accursed people; so the hand of God was continually stretched out against Him in various ways. He was chastened every morning. "My loins, He said, are filled with a loathsome disease."*²⁰⁸

In a paper dated July 26, 1847, BWN wrote:

And Jesus as man was associated with this place of distance in which man in the flesh was, and He had through obedience to find His way to that point where God could meet Him as having finished His appointed work -- glorify Him and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places: and that point was death -- death on the cross -- death under the wrath of God.²⁰⁹

In the next several quotations the boldface is mine. In his Sept. 1847 paper , BWN wrote:

He who before He was made flesh had known all the heights of uncreated and eternal glory, was also when here, made to estimate according to the sensibilities of that nature he had taken, the (to us,) **inconceivable distance**, of humanity from God. He was thus made to feel that His association with those thus standing in the fearfulness of their distance from God was a real thing, and that it was so regarded by God. His was no mere pretended, imaginary association.²¹⁰

In 1858 one could read:

[Christ took] His place in the midst of the sorrows of an unparadisial earth. He there subjected Himself to those governmental appointments of God which were bearing afflictively on men as outcasts from paradise, in order that He might drink of this cup of human sorrow *all that was appointed* to Him to drink.²¹¹

Distant only as to circumstances, He was ever *morally* near^{ad} unto the Father at all times.²¹²

Again:

Did He not, from **unspeakable circumstantial distance** from God, but in *essential moral nearness* to Him, work back His way through all the appointed sufferings till God could meet Him as having finished the appointed work, and SO glorify Him? This I believe, and this I have written and this I maintain. God could not meet Christ *as having finished His appointed work* until He had finished it, which is a truism.²¹³

Of course, JND had pointed out the evil of it:

Christ, according to Mr. N. was involved in all the consequences of Adam's sin by necessity of birth. And mark here that "circumstances" is used as the equivalent to "consequences."²¹⁴

"By necessity of birth" is a key phrase. In 1848, after his *Acknowledgement*, BWN wrote:

It would also be necessary to deny that the Lord Jesus was under any of the governmental arrangements of God, which were bearing afflictively on man and on Israel, for those arrangements were God's, and if the Lord Jesus were not above them all, he must have suffered under them, and therefore under the hand of God, thus governing.²¹⁵

[July 11, 1848] Whether it was His intention when He assumed flesh to associate Himself with the human and Israelitish families, so as to share as far as He sinlessly could their sufferings?

If this had not been His intention, He would have suffered nothing. All His sufferings were the consequence of His having assumed a relative position, i. e.,

ad. [As an illustration of BWN's slipperiness, take the following from a letter dated June 1, 1885:

The Tract, "Christ our suffering Surety," has gone through more than one edition, and has been widely circulated, but just at the present moment is out of print, as well as "Ancient Truths" and "Propositions for the Solemn Consideration of Christians." I hope to have these Tracts republished with the least possible delay.

All these Tracts have been by Mr. Darby's followers scornfully rejected. "Ancient Truths" has been spoken of by them as "Ancient Lies," and "Christ our Suffering Surety" and "Propositions" have for the most part been sternly repudiated. . . .

I have never believed that the Lord Jesus was either in life or death in moral distance from God. I have pertinaciously maintained the reverse. . . .

Was Christ ever in moral distance from God? Was the Life He laid down on the cross a defiled life or a pure and perfect life? (Quoted in Fromow, G. H., *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, pp. 159, 160).

Where is the evidence that anyone accused him of stating or writing that Christ was at a *moral* distance from God? I am not aware of it. But this was his habit, namely to press correct sentences and use them as a mask for his evil. At any rate, while he said that Christ was ever in moral nearness to God, the fact is that his doctrine of Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God" entails that Christ would be morally unfit to die for us.

one in which He consented to forego that which was due to His own individual position, and subject Himself to sufferings due to the position of those to whom He stood related by voluntary association.²¹⁶

In 1847 JND denounced and refuted BWN's doctrine that Christ was at a "distance" from God.²¹⁷ In 1848, after BWN's *Acknowledgement* of Nov. 1847, JND showed how BWN's paper on the Lord's humanity (July 1848) continued to place the Lord at this same "distance."²¹⁸ Moreover, JND showed how BWN's doctrine divided the Person of Christ.²¹⁹ While BWN always sought to cover his evil with true statements such as that the Lord always stood in moral nearness to God, JND explained that BWN's doctrine of circumstantial distance in reality does entail moral distance.²²⁰

CHRIST HAD TO FIND HIS WAY TO THE POINT WHERE GOD COULD MEET HIM

In several of the above quotations we saw that BWN taught that Christ had to work his way back . . . till God could meet Him In 1847 he wrote:

Jesus as man was associated with this place of distance in which man in the flesh was; and he had, through obedience, to find his way to that point where God could meet Him.²²¹

And if it be asked, Was then the Lord Jesus subjected to *all* inflictions that were due to man as man, and to Israel as Israel? -- I answer no! To be obnoxious, that is, exposed to certain things is a different thing from actually enduring them. His faith, His prayer, His obedience, all contributed to preserve Him from many things to which He was by His relative position exposed, and by which He was threatened.²²²

. . . and since He was not until the cross punished substitutionally, why was he chastened at all? How could it be but that he was made experimentally to prove the reality of the condition into which others, but more especially Israel, had sunk themselves, by their disobedience to God's holy law, a condition out of which he was able to extricate himself by his own perfect obedience.²²³

CHRIST HAD THE EXERCISES OF AN UNCONVERTED MAN

[1847 - before] Moreover the exercises of soul which His elect in their unconverted state ought to have, and which they would have, if it were possible for them to know and feel everything rightly according to God^{ae} -- such exercises, yet without sin, Jesus had.²²⁴

[1848 - after] The remnant of Israel which is to pass through the fires of the day of the Lord's appearing, have, before they are received and acknowledged by the Lord, as His, before therefore, they 'convert and are healed,' certain apprehensions of the circumstances in which they are. . . . But if there be one single grain of truth brought before the apprehension of their consciences by the external testimony of God, that one grain must have been included in the perfect apprehensions of the Lord.²²⁵

ae. [What they would feel is that they were lost and deserving of divine judgment. Did Christ feel that?]

BWN'S DOCTRINE OF CHRIST'S MORTALITY

BWN's doctrine that Christ's humanity had in it a "necessity of dying" is the "**second branch**" of his system, as A. C. Ord called it. Be sure to understand that it is, in BWN's case, a part of his doctrine of Christ's "**unspeakable circumstantial distance from God**" and has, as taught by him, the character of that teaching impressed upon, and instilled within, it. Here I shall quote from BWN regarding the body of our Lord Jesus, from both before and after his *Acknowledgment*:

[1847 - before] He was exposed, for example, because of his relation to Adam, to that sentence of death that had been pronounced on the whole family of man . . . and if He was exposed to the doom of man, was He not equally exposed to all the sinless penalties that had fallen upon Israel as dwelling under Sinai?²²⁶

[1847 - before] All that pertained to man's nature in Mary, pertained to Jesus; -- its weakness, its dishonor -- sin only accepted. He was in the likeness of sinful flesh; penalties therefore of the fall were connected with even the constitution of His human nature.²²⁷

[1847 - in the *Acknowledgement*] In allowing that the Lord Jesus had a body different from that of Adam in Paradise, I was right. I was right, also, in saying that inherent corruption is not the originating cause of mortality, but the one sin of Adam; "by one sin entered into the world, and death by sin"; I was right also in stating that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a mortal body was one.²²⁸

[1848 - after] The characteristics of the humanity of Adam after he had fallen, were, through His mother, transmitted to the Lord Jesus; but without sin, either communicated or imputed.²²⁹

[1850 - after] . . . I certainly have thought and taught, that the Lord Jesus had a mortal body voluntarily assumed -- that He did of His own voluntary will subject Himself to many a consequence of Adam's sin in this fallen earth -- that He did suffer under the hand of God, both before and on the Cross, though always as the Redeemer;^{af} and that one channel of His sufferings, was His voluntary subjection to the circumstances that were pressing on men and Israel from God . . .²³⁰

[1857- after] We mean by ascribing mortality to him, that His humanity was so constituted, that the vital conjunction of His soul with His body, would, under certain supposed circumstances . . . necessarily cease, unless a miracle was wrought to prevent it.^{231 ag}

af. ["Though always as the Redeemer" is an untruthful statement. He added this here as if he had always held this. Later, we will observe his shiftiness, as well as W. Kelly's comment on BWN's "treacherous memory."]

ag. Henry Craik, one of the two principle leaders at Bethesda, held the doctrine that Christ's humanity had in it the necessity of dying (see Appendix XX). In his paper regarding H. Craik's position, G. V. Wigram wrote:

It confounds "humanity" with "*the state* in which humanity may be;" as if "destroyable by the sword" was part of humanity, instead of being connected with its state.

(continued...)

BWN referred to this teaching in his *Acknowledgment*. A. C. Ord remarked:

He adds, "I was right in stating that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a mortal body was one." So that the two main branches of false doctrine are adhered to in the only concession he has ever made; and this latter point has formed the subject of a series of tracts published *since* his "Acknowledgment," elaborately attempting to prove not only that our blessed Lord was able to die, but mortal and corruptible, as we are; and as man (in the form He adopts, under the same "necessity of dying." ²³²

Commenting on BWN's teachings, A. C. Ord wrote:

It should be remarked that the expression "sinless penalties" is illusive, ²³³ for no penalties inflicted by the hand of God could be anything but righteous, whether temporal wrath, death, or final damnation; also, that whilst every Christian believes that Christ was mortal, in the sense of being able to die, the idea of inherent mortality is entirely subversive of the glory of His person, opposed to the statements of Scripture, and unfits Him for dying as a sacrifice, for a life already attained could not be offered to the justice of God for others. The word of God tells us expressly that death can only come by sin, either inherited or imputed (Rom. 5:12; 6:23); and the miraculous action of the Holy Ghost in the conception of our Lord, removed not only the sinfulness of nature, but the seed of physical corruption and decay which exists in all others, so that in this sense we can discern the meaning of the words "that *holy thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." ^{ah} Various old writers, such as Hawker, &c., have regarded our blessed Lord as suffering penally before the cross, but, however mistaken in this, they looked upon Him as a substitute throughout, and *never* as a *part*, by birth or association, of that which was exposed to the judgments of God. ²³⁴

The reader who desires to see JND's remarks on the subject that Christ was not subject to infirmities, ²³⁵ JND's strictures on BWN's use of "sinless penalties" ²³⁶ and "sinless infirmities," ²³⁷ hunger, thirst, etc., ²³⁸ the use of the word "mortal" as applied to Christ, ²³⁹ and BWN's doctrine that Christ was obnoxious to wrath by birth, ²⁴⁰ may consult the notes indicated.

The word "mortal" is an ambiguous word; it may be used in the sense that there is a "necessity of dying" (subject to death), or only meaning "capable of dying." No Christian would doubt that our Lord was capable of dying, but the truth is that he was not subject to death. Because of the ambiguity of the word "mortal," it is best not to use the word concerning our Lord.

(...continued)

It supposes that the humanity of the Lord had no perfect relationship to God *per se*, as being of the obedient one; and it overlooks THE grand difference of the state of Christ's humanity from ours; how it is *sui generis*, as being united to Godhead, which no one else's humanity ever was. (*An Answer of G. V. Wigram to "Mr. Craik's Letter, dated 15th November, 1848,"* notice page).

See John 10:17, 18 concerning the fact that Christ died as an act of will.

BWN denied that Christ's humanity was *sui generis* (*Collected Writings* 15:149).

ah. [Luke 1:35; found in the Gospel which emphasizes the perfection of His manhood.]

J. G. Deck had used the word mortal in a hymn, but he repudiated it.²⁴¹ BWN and S. P. Tregelles not only used the word but insisted on it. See Appendix 6 where there is more evidence that BWN did, in fact, use the word "mortal" of our Lord's body in the sense that it had within it the necessity of death. This really accounts for the insistence on its use and comports with the rest of his scheme of dishonoring Christ.

* * * * *

J. E. Batten, who had been one of the four principle supporters at Ebrington Street, Plymouth, of BWN against JND, and who, with them had fallen into the evil doctrines, was delivered and wrote a splendid confession and outline of the doctrines. This is found in Appendix 3. also, In various papers JND summarized the teaching.²⁴²

Some thoughts written by JND on our precious Savior's sufferings and manhood may be found in Appendix 8.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Be mindful of W. Trotter's astute comment:

Does he hold the doctrines he did when he wrote his former tracts? Yes, unquestionably. Then let us look *to them* to know what those doctrines are; or rather to the notes of his lecture prior to any of them, in which, without a thought of reservation or disguise, he speaks out what was in his soul.²⁴³

Also, subsequently, A. C. Ord exposed BWN with quotations from BWN's writings both prior to, and after, his *Acknowledgement*, as was shown above. There really was no excuse for persons ever having thoughts that BWN gave up his evil teachings or ceased to hold them.

* * * * *

In concluding this chapter I suggest that BWN's teaching be known as:

B. W. Newton's doctrine of Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God."

This is BWN's phrase, written after the *Acknowledgement*, and is descriptive of its character as he taught it both before and after the *Acknowledgement*.

BWN is Acquitted by Open Brethren

Now, F. R. Coad (Open Brethren) examined the *Fry MS*, pp. 375, 376²⁴⁴ and said,

In later years Newton published several further booklets on the subject of the sufferings of Christ. Although his opponents denounced each one, the judgment of objective readers has invariably agreed that the erroneous teachings had disappeared.²⁴⁵

Is it that to him the idea that Christ's humanity had in it a necessity of dying is

not an erroneous teaching? And, does he think that the doctrine that Christ was at "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God," is not erroneous teaching, not to say fundamental evil? Let him tell us plainly And *he* is concerned about what he calls docetic tendencies among "exclusives"! (See Appendix 5). At any rate, slashing at JND, here is how he spoke of JND's rebuttal of BWN's *Acknowledgment*:

The unbridled language of Wigram and Darby over many months, combined with Newton's own silence, ^{ai} had sufficed to sow sufficient doubts concerning Newton's integrity in the minds of men at large, to allow Darby's prompt dismissal of the Statement and Acknowledgment as a trick * ²⁴⁶ to seem just credible. ²⁴⁷

* This description is used advisedly. Darby's *Notice of the Statement and Acknowledgment of Error Circulated by Mr. Newton* (Coll. Writings Vol. 15) is a lengthy attempt to show, by semantic and doctrinal juggling, that Newton had not renounced his errors despite his clear profession to have done so.

We have already been exposed to BWN's "semantic and doctrinal juggling." Notice how the guilty is exonerated and the faithful opposer is characterized. Moreover, I wonder if he read the Acknowledgment at all. BWN did not profess to do what F. R. Coad attributes to him. But he does seem to indicate that he read it. He wrote:

There, in common charity, the dispute should have rested. Newton's *Acknowledgment* was a long and detailed confession and withdrawal of erroneous teachings. Because of its importance to the history it is printed in full in Appendix B, ^{aj} and from it the reader may judge for himself as to Newton's sincerity. It was carefully and fully worded. He traced back the beginning of the teachings to some writings of his own in 1835 over the Irvingite controversy, in which, in opposing Irving's teachings on the peccability of Christ, Newton had suggested that Christ, while sinless, had taken certain of the consequences of sin upon Himself through the "federal headship" of Adam.

Newton had clearly thought more deeply into his teachings than any of his opponents, and his intention was to deal with his offence at its root. He may also have thought that, by showing that the root of the teachings had been freely circulating for twelve years, some of his attackers might well pause to consider whether, if they themselves had not noticed them, Newton himself was really as deliberately culpable as they alleged. In this his judgment was at fault. ²⁴⁸

We are dealing with a matter of unjudged, fundamental evil, not "common charity," which "common charity" has repeatedly palliated such evil, as we see being done in this very quotation. Why, he tells us that:

The teaching hardly touched orthodox doctrine concerning Christ's Person, but it was considered by many to have dangerous results in relation to the doctrine of the atonement. " ²⁴⁹

ai. [What silence? BWN wrote several major papers on the issue during 1847, reaffirmed his basic evil in his *Acknowledgment*, and polished it in a major paper in 1848.]

aj. [Appendix 1 herein.]

The reason it affects the atonement is because the Christ of BWN is not a Christ that could atone for the sins of others. BWN's doctrine sets aside Christ's true relation to God.

Now listen to F. F. Bruce (Open Brethren):

Newton, indeed, may still be looked upon as a heresiarch (for ought I know to the contrary) by some representatives of the Darbyite tradition; it is an amazing testimony to the perverse capacity of the ecclesiastical mind that such a charge should stick to a teacher whose whole career proclaims his absolutely uncompromising orthodoxy.²⁵⁰

This really says that BWN never was unorthodox, as F. R. Coad implies. On the other hand another of the Open Brethren, H. H. Rowdon, wrote:

In spite of Darby's fears and suspicions, Newton returned to an orthodoxy that was fully recognized outside the ranks of the prejudiced.²⁵¹

Pity the ranks of these unprejudiced ones! At any rate, this, in effect, says that before the *Acknowledgement* BWN was unorthodox. But what a perversion and total reversal of the fact for H. H. Rowdon to say:

One alleged error Newton would not retract.²⁵²

Rex A. Koivisto (Open Brethren), chairman of the Bible and Theology department at Multnomah School of the Bible, wrote:

Darby soon set up a rival meeting for disenchanted Brethren at another location in Plymouth. Watching Newton carefully for several years afterward, Darby and his supporters snatched onto a clearly heretical statement he made about the person of Christ in the spring of 1847 and, despite his written retraction of the error, he was driven from the movement by Darby and his supporters.²⁵³

It is ironic that Darby was later (1858) to promote a virtually identical heresy as Newton's, which led to some significant disenchantment on the part of his followers.²⁵⁴

He has been, he says, accused of "Darby bashing"²⁵⁵ but hopes his "assessment of Darby's negative influence on the movement . . . is a bit more realistic than that." Vain hope for one who is able to pack so many "Darby bashing" untruths into one sentence, a characteristic ability evident in his book when speaking of JND. Also, note well the excusing BWN while fastening Newtonism on JND, something those who resist evil must expect to be done to them (this will be taken up in Section 10 in vol. 3). He quoted A. N. Groves' statement approvingly ("I would INFINITELY RATHER BEAR *with all their evils*, than SEPARATE FROM THEIR GOOD").²⁵⁶ How about bearing with the alleged evil of JND's "virtually identical" Newtonism?

W. Kelly wrote:

. . . the blinded author of this fundamental heterodoxy printed "A Letter on subjects connected with the Lord's Humanity;" in which, *after* the so-called "Acknowledgement of Error" he re-affirmed the principles of both the "Remarks" and the "Observations" which had horrified even his own oldest friends . . .²⁵⁷

Moreover, we have had before us statements by BWN later than that. Also, the Fry MS contradicts these Open Brethren. What is their problem? W. Kelly, writing before their time, said:

I have never known a child of God among Churchmen or Dissenters, any more than "Brethren," to hesitate as to its real source and character, as of the enemy, **save only where souls had been themselves corrupted** [my emphasis].²⁵⁸

Let us heed the following from JND:

Our judgments, beloved brethren, sometimes, nay always, prove our own state as much, and more than that of which we judge.²⁵⁹

The views regarding BWN and these doctrines by other Open Brethren, and non- Open Brethren, are given in Appendix 9.

Predecessors that BWN Quoted for Support

In various papers BWN cited previous writers who believed that Christ's life was vicarious. He kept hidden the fact that this is materially different from his own heterodoxy. Those known as "exclusives" have, however drawn attention to this most significant fact. W. Kelly, for example, pointed out the difference between BWN's doctrine and one who believes that Christ's life was vicarious.

For briefly the heresy is, that Christ was by birth, relatively in man's distance as a sinner, and in Israel's special ruin under a broken law; that He was therefore obnoxious to the penalties of this double relationship, not imputatively, nor vicariously, but by association as one of them; that He extricated Himself by obedience, faith, and prayer, out of some of those inflictions by which He was threatened, passing notably by baptism out of law into grace -- from Sinai to Zion; that He had the exercises of soul which the elect in their unconverted state ought to have; and that He had, spite of this, to find His way to a point where God could meet Him, -- death under God's wrath; the anointing of the Spirit having come on Him at Jordan only, in virtue of His own foreseen sacrifice. If all this be not an audacious contempt of God's testimony to our adorable Lord; if it be not a systematic overthrow of all that is really taught of His relation to God as made of a woman, made under the law, if it do not inevitably destroy the atonement and Christianity itself, words have lost their meaning. No heretic that I know ever set himself to debase Christ, -- neither Arius nor Socinus, neither Mr. Irving nor Mr. Newton. None of them insinuated personal sin in Christ -- Mⁿ. perhaps the nearest to it, in that awful illustration, "If I were to send a faithful servant heavily burthened, to scale the sides of an icy mountain, and were to see his foot slide, should I marvel?" (Remarks, p. 17, note.) Most heretics have said excellent things -- Mr. Irving, perhaps the most. The true question is: Did the peculiar doctrine of each supplant and destroy God's truth as to His Son? Who doubts that Irvingism did? Who can pretend that Newtonism is less anti-christian? The only right experience, under man's distance and a broken law, such as an elect man would feel if he felt as he ought in that condition, is that of a lost man; and if Christ, *not* vicariously, had to find His way to death under wrath as a meeting-place with God, all foundations are gone, and He must die for Himself, and therefore not for us.²⁶⁰

Philaethes (A. C. Ord) likewise pointed out this difference:

Various old writers, such as Hawker, &c., have regarded our blessed Lord as suffering penally before the cross, but, however mistaken in this, they looked

upon Him as a substitute throughout, and *never* as a *part*, by birth or association, of that which was exposed to the judgments of God.²⁶¹

JND likewise commented on this matter:

Nor has Witsius. He, like Hawker, holds Christ's sufferings through His life to be a part of His vicarious work; but he merely speaks of "vicissitudes of human misery," and has no such thought as that of Mr. N. at all.²⁶²

. . . they never dreamt of His being obnoxious to it [God's wrath] otherwise than vicariously.²⁶³

BWN'S Shiftiness

BWN twice shifted his system. He had originally held the doctrine of Christ's vicarious sufferings in life.²⁶⁴ He then began the development of his thoughts that the Lord's sufferings in life were not vicarious. W. Trotter wrote about BWN's teachings concerning the Lord's sufferings in life:

. . . he defines the sufferings he specially writes of to be "sufferings which pertained to Him, *because He was a man, and because He was an Israelite* ; sufferings *therefore* which cannot be *restricted* to the years of His public service, but which must be extended over the whole of that period during which he was made sensible, under the hand of God, of the condition into which man had sunk, and yet more into which Israel had sunk in His sight." The sufferings he carefully distinguishes in a note (page 2) from "those which were vicarious," and "which latter," he says, "began at the cross." Now this makes all the difference possible. I should regret to hear any one say that our blessed Lord endured God's displeasure, even *vicariously*, all his lifetime. It would be an error and a serious one, to assert even this. Still, it does not so entirely overturn the foundations of our faith. But to assert that the hot displeasure of God, rested on Jesus throughout His life, *not vicariously*, but "because He was a man, and because He was an Israelite," does subvert the faith; because if *as a man and as an Israelite* He was obnoxious to this, how could he voluntarily endure it on the cross instead of others?²⁶⁵

BWN's confession of error was that he had attributed the consequences of the fall of Adam to Christ on account of Christ's relation to Adam through Adam's federal headship. This confession did not involve giving up his evil system. Instead, he continued to maintain it, shifting his system off the foundation of a connection between Christ and Adam's headship and basing the system of consequences, penalties and circumstantial distance from God on the fact of Christ "having been made of a woman." Thus, the system was maintained. Shifting the base for leaven does not unleaven the leaven.

In 1847 BWN took the position that only the sufferings of Christ on the cross were vicarious. In a paper dated July 26, 1847 he wrote:

. . . it was on the cross alone He took the vicarious place²⁶⁶

In another paper, dated Sept. 1, 1847, he wrote:

I should, therefore, confine the word "vicarious" to His place on the cross²⁶⁷

On July 11, 1848, he wrote:

Whether the living sufferings of Christ were vicarious in the strict sense of "instead of?"

They were not²⁶⁸

Observe, then, that after the *Acknowledgement* he was maintaining the same system as before the *Acknowledgement*. A shift is clear in an 1850 paper:

Christ has not so suffered hunger and sweat of the brow for me, or rejection, or scorn, as that I do not myself know in part, what these things mean: but He has so suffered damnatory wrath^{ak} for me, that I never in any sort know what *that* meaneth. This gives to the vicariousness of the Cross, a special and peculiar character. Therefore, when we speak with strict precision, we say . . . , that all Christ's sufferings were vicarious, in the sense of being for us and for our redemption, and in order that there might be no necessity for our tasting of the like again: -- but His suffering damnatory wrath on the Cross was in such strict sense "*instead of us*" that we never do, or can suffer the like, or taste of similar suffering.²⁶⁹

Notice that while he calls Christ's pre-Cross sufferings vicarious, he did not use the word vicarious regarding *those* sufferings in the sense of "instead of us."

At some later point he shifted again. In *Propositions for the Solemn Considerations of Christians* (1864), *Proposition 4* reads: "The Life of Christ Vicarious as Well as His Death." This was a clever move. It provided him an 'orthodox' sounding base by which to propagate his evil teachings. He used this posture as a shelter to continue teaching his lie. This paper was well received by persons who believed that Christ's life was vicarious.²⁷⁰

This shift seems referred to in an 1867 letter by JND, if I mistake not.

But Mr. N. did state that He suffered not expiatorily, if words have any meaning, and enlarged upon it, for he stated that He suffered not vicariously. However, he relinquished this afterwards, and it is not now material.²⁷¹

Well, it is material; material to showing how BWN operated.

BWN and the 1866 Controversy Regarding JND's Teaching Concerning the Sufferings of Christ

A letter by BWN, dated Nov. 14, 1866, that I have not been able to locate, was circulated. This was noticed in *The Bible Treasury*. It bears on BWN's continuance to teach evil and also bears on his shiftiness. Certain persons attempted to fasten BWN's doctrines on JND; that is the background for the following comments:

. . . Mr. B. W. N. has just written on this subject (14th Nov. last). Does he then hail as his allies the men who, as calumny pretends, have adopted doctrine so

ak. [He here used "damnatory wrath" for wrath endured on the cross to distinguish it from what he alleges was non-damnatory wrath that he claims Christ suffered during His life.]

similar to his own? If Mr. D.'s doctrine were in the least like that of the M^rN.'s tract which was condemned in 1847, he might well triumph that old foes were now (unwittingly perhaps) his friends. But mark the solemn fact. M^rN., instead of the smallest agreement with those he calls "Darbyites," evidently feels that, of all men living, they are the most opposed to his views . . . He certainly betrays a treacherous memory (in the face of what he has written and what we too well know) when he denies that he "ever maintained that the Lord Jesus suffered either in life or death except sacrificially and expiatorily as the redeemer"^{272 al}

Let me add that it exhibits the usual lack of plain honesty which characterizes both real heretics and those who would make others seem such who are sounder than themselves. It denies what the author is not accused of, and conceals what he really maintained. False itself in doctrine, it confesses that those who have of late been wrongfully charged with his views, *he* knows to be his strongest adversaries; and it presses the same error or ignorance as to Christ's sufferings which has been broached in other recent assaults.²⁷³

B. W. Newton's doctrine of Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God" is blasphemous, fundamental evil.²⁷⁴

"Thoughts on the Apocalypse"

Such is the name of a book by BWN, published in 1844²⁷⁵ and answered by JND in 1845²⁷⁶ with his *An Examination of the Statements Made in the "Thoughts on the Apocalypse" . . .*²⁷⁷ In response to it, BWN issued a paper, *Letter to the Brethren and Sister Who Meet for Communion in Ebrington Street*, replied to by JND in *Answer to a "Letter to the Brethren and Sister Who Meet for Communion in Ebrington Street."*²⁷⁸ To this, BWN responded with *A Second Letter to the Brethren and Sisters Who Meet for Communion in Ebrington Street* which JND met with his *Answer to "A Second Letter to the Brethren and Sisters Who Meet for Communion in Ebrington Street."*²⁷⁹ A few more comments are found elsewhere.²⁸⁰ BWN had, of course, previously issued papers against the recovered truth.²⁸¹ Concerning JND's answer on *Thoughts* . . . , W. Kelly said it was "his ablest critique";²⁸² while a clergyman, W. Reid wrote of JND:

But his most searching and sustained criticism is to be found, probably, in his, "Examination of B. W. N.'s Thoughts on the Apocalypse," which he simply and fairly crushed to annihilation.²⁸³

Because they resisted his teachings about Christ's circumstantial distance from God and the concomitant doctrine of Christ's mortality, BWN criticized his opponents with deifying the humanity of our Lord Jesus. He even called J. G. Bellett docetic. No wonder, for BWN even deified the saints. There are connections between *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, in which he deified the saints, and his evil teachings concerning Christ. W. Trotter pointed out one such:

al. [What choice do we have? -- did BWN lie, or was he abiding under the Satanic delusion of Plymouth? He betrayed a "treacherous memory" in Plymouth also.

A few years ago, Mr. N. wrote and published to the world, a volume containing the following statement. "But there is yet another character of power which *the Church* is to exercise in the glory . *Admission into the counsels of God*, is represented by the throned elders, -- omniscient power of superintendence, by the seven spirits; but the execution of the will of God, and *the omnipotent power*, necessary to such execution, is also *committed to the redeemed*." ²⁸⁴ Thoughts on the Apocalypse, p. 51 [1844]. Now think of the person who wrote this, -- speaking of "the deification of the humanity of Jesus," as one of the most marked features of the apostasy . Nothing to my own soul, so marks the power and delusion of the enemy , as this degrading of the humanity of Christ, along with what is really the "deification" of the saints. It is not a thought of man's unassisted reason; and assuredly it is not what God has taught. The source of it, however solemn the reflection, is obvious enough. ²⁸⁵

JND remarked, "there are some things which to refute is as foolish as to state." ²⁸⁶ Having copies of the first and second edition of BWN's *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, I have personally verified W . Trotter's and JND's quotation of BWN, and this evil of BWN is repeated in his second edition, revised (1853, p. 60). Thus, BWN continued to teach the deification of saints.

His evil doctrines concerning Christ were held by him when he published this in 1844. It remains now to indicate the connection between his prophetic system and his teachings regarding Christ's circumstantial distance from God, and this was done by JND. It will help the reader to know that BWN (a posttribulationist) believed that there would be a future Jewish remnant in the time of the tribulation, but that this remnant will not have divine life, and also that there would be a future Christian remnant in the tribulation. It may be seen, then, that Christ's connection with an unconverted Jewish remnant is connected with BWN's doctrine of Christ's circumstantial distance from God. Hear JND:

I believe that what has been the instrument of ripening this terrible doctrine as to Christ, subversive as it is of the truth, is really the prophetic system of the writer. And in this way: he does not admit the existence of a Jewish remnant which has life, and which is consequently within the reach, and the immediate object, of the sympathies of Christ. Hence he is obliged to associate Christ in His condition with the sinful and rebellions nation, (and the consequence follows immediately,) instead of His being the gracious vessel of feeling, thought, and faith, for the believing remnant in the position of which He did put Himself, and sympathy with which He perfectly has; though it must indeed, in its application, be based upon that in which He was alone -- the atoning work which He wrought for them as for us. Psalm 16 shows this association. All their sorrow was His, and He enters into and associates Himself with it. He had that which was His own, whether bearing or feeling and anticipating the curse and the sin of others. But the means of falling into the error, though important as a guard to the saints, are nothing to the error itself, because the person, relation with God, and condition and work of Christ Himself, are concerned in it, and have been lightly sacrificed to these notions. The paper in the "Witness" shows that the principle has long been adopted by the writer of the tract. ²⁸⁷

This is merely the root of all this grievous error, and connects Mr. N.'s prophetic system inseparably with his horrible views as to Christ; because he makes the sympathies, associations and experiences of the Lord to be those of the unconverted Jews, His prophetic system requiring Him to treat them as such; and if He does, the book of Psalms obliges him to put Jesus in that position and

relationship to God.²⁸⁸

Well did JND speak of a "seducing spirit" at work.²⁸⁹ Indeed, he saw an analogy with the Enemy's delusive work in Irvingism:

I have not the least doubt (from circumstances I have heard lately of the authenticity of which I have not the smallest question) that Mr. Newton received his prophetic system by direct inspiration of Satan, analogous to the Irvingite delusion.²⁹⁰

W. Kelly concurred in the judgment that BWN's teachings concerning Christ were connected with his prophetic system:

A prophetic system drew its devotees into anti-christian error, without any direct assault on the truth of the Person; for it was rather an overthrow of Christ's true relation to God.²⁹¹

Chapter 8.5

H. W. Soltau's Account of What Happened at Plymouth

A manuscript called, *Transcript of an Account of What Passed at Plymouth Relative to Mr. Newton as Told by Mr. Soltau -- 1866* is printed below. The reader will recall that H. W. Soltau was one of the principle supporters, at Plymouth, of BWN, but finally broke with him and made a humble confession of the evil and his complicity in it. It should be remembered that he went with the Bethesda assembly (Bristol, England), which treated the evil with indifference and complicity, as we shall see in Section 9. Here, we will learn from him the machinations that transpired among BWN's leading supporters and of special interest is the story of how BWN's *Acknowledgement* was not written by BWN!

[The following was transcribed from a photocopy of an old handwritten document that is in the Christian Brethren Archive of the John Rylands University Library and was kindly supplied by the curator, Dr. David Brady. The original may not have been in Mr Soltau's own hand -- at least, two blanks were left in the text as though the copier had not been able to cope with Greek. The name "W Cooke, Hereford" in a similar handwriting is inside the front cover. Asterisks in square brackets stand for letters that could not be deciphered. Some abbreviations were spelled out and some punctuation was added to preserve the sense. Dennis Ryan].

Transcript of an Account of what Passed at Plymouth Relative to Mr. Newton as Told by Mr. Soltau -- -- 1866

I have long thought that it might be desirable and according to the will of the Lord that I should leave on record a brief acct. (as far as I am able to remember) of what happened in Ebrington St. as connected with Mr. N. and his false doctrines with which I was involved. I begin my acct. with the summer of 1847. It was Mr . Newton's wish that I should accompany him to London in order that we might endeavor together to disabuse the minds of saints there of the prejudice which then existed against Mr. Newton -- the questions which then especially occupied our thoughts were concerning the Holy Spirit's rule in the Church, gifts of His power and grace to individuals and subjects connected with the Lord's return. It was hoped that we might deliver lectures on these points which would disabuse many of false ideas they had formed of Mr . N. and the meetings in Ebrington St. Accordingly I set off with my wife and we took up Mr. Newton at Bath and proceeded into Town by express. We were greeted there kindly by Mr. and Mrs. Bla*** -- and the same evening we arrived, a party of saints was gathered to meet us I believe at his house. Mr. N., Dr. Tregelles, my wife and myself lodged at Hughes' boardinghouse in the City. We had meetings at a room in **** St. where the London University College Lectures were

delivered there jointly by Mr. Newton and myself. We were welcomed by Miss Stacey [** **].

Haydon came and saw us. Woolston was in town at that time. We had a kind of conference meeting at a room in our boarding house about ministry especially. We broke bread at the room in Duke St. Chandos St. with several on the Lord's day. Things seemed to prosper and I thought there was decidedly an impression made as to the soundness of Mr. Newton's views on the points connected with ministry and the Spirit in the Church and the Lord's coming. The only rumor that reached us whilst in London was that G. Wigram had been reading out to the saints in Rawstone St. some extracts of Mr. N.'s teaching which he denounced as Socinian. I remember hearing this and laughing at it, as if in anything I thought Mr. N. to be more distinguished as to the soundness of his views than another it was on the subject of the Lord Himself and His work of redemption. One morning also at breakfast, before we left (we all breakfasted together at the boarding house) letters were opened by Mr. Newton from his mother and from Miss A. Toulmin from Bath stating that Mr. Harris at Exeter had got hold of some of Mr. Newton's notes of a lecture and had stated to the saints at Exeter that they contained fundamental error as to Christ. Miss T added that they were her notes. What the subject was I could not conjecture, I could not understand what it all could mean, but it was settled that we should stop in Bath on our way to Plymouth and there see Miss Toulmin and the notes. * * * *

On our arrival in Bath we had a meeting for reading prophecy at Mrs. Brown's^{am} where Aitcheson^{an} was present. Miss Toulmin was there and shewed me the copy of a note she had written to Mr. McAdam claiming the notes which were notes of a Lecture on Ps. VI taken by her and carefully revised. Authenticating them as genuine notes of the author and as containing very precious truth and requesting to have them returned. I do not think she had a copy of them with her. It was arranged that we should proceed in a day or two to Exeter and hold a meeting there at Mr. Juffry's with as many saints as could be collected when this subject of the notes was to be discussed by Mr. Newton and their minds were to be cleared of misconceptions. Mr. N. preceded us to Exeter. I arrived there with my wife and found 20 or 30 collected, chiefly brethren in Mr. Juffry's drawing room. Mr. N. was there. The question was opened as to what it was that troubled the saints and the points at issue were desired from the notes as to Christ's experiences of wrath from God, because He was a man, though sinless, and bearing wrath, therefore 'His' not substitutionally -- this doctrine gathered from the notes was authenticated as the true doctrine of Scripture by Mr. N., who argued upon the V. Rom. and said it was there, and that [blank left here] should be translated "upon the supposition that all have sinned." That Christ came under the imputation of guilt because he was born a man and an Israelite though sinless -- and that God treated Him with His chastening rod of displeasure! That Christ kept the Law, and proved Himself holy and thereby earned a life (the promise of the Lord) which He laid down on the Cross for others. All this was verified by an appeal to Mr. N's paper in the Christian Witness. * * *

Matters went on much as usual till the notes of Ps. VI were published by Mr. Harris with his observations. They made no impression on me, indeed, I question whether I had patience to read them through. Though I remember Mr. N. pointing out to me what he said was false doctrine in Mr. Harris. I went with my family to [blank left here] and whilst there Mr. N. completed his "Remarks." Great portions of them were read out to

am. [This may be the Mrs. Brown (sometimes Browne) received by Bethesda.]

an. [This may be the Aitcheson (sometimes Aitchison) who signed the *Letter of the Ten*, subsequently, at the Bethesda assembly, Bristol, England.]

me -- were sent to G. Walker and W. Dyer -- The manuscript was read as it was written also to companies of saints by Mr. Newton gathered of an evening for the purpose. The only one who disliked it was dear old Caleb, [blank left here] who, I remember found it very tedious and unprofitable. He was a simple minded, true hearted lover of Christ and delighted in hearing of "the blood of the Lamb." He found these papers had "no [Grace?] in them" though he had not power to see their error. It is important here to remember that the "Remarks" were the result of Mr. Harris's attack on the notes of Ps. VI. which notes Mr. N. had justified by the "Witness" doctrine. Also these "Remarks" were to contain the avowed statements of what Mr. N. really held; yes, he thought it better first to put into a pamphlet what his doctrines really were, and next to write one in distinct vindication of his notes of Ps. VI and in answer to Mr. Harris's objections-- also these "Remarks" were most carefully written, read and re-read. Many passages I know were much altered and some entirely cut out at the suggestion of Batten, or Dyer, or Walker, or myself. Some expressions I well remember startling even me and one passage in particular about an icy mountain and the Lord going up was greatly modified at the suggestion, I think of Batten. I am quite sure Batten, Dyer and Walker will verify this. I only wish the M.S. had been left alone, to be published as Mr. Newton wrote it I believe then it would have horrified souls far more than even it does now. The "Remarks" were published at the expense of the Tract Depot by dear Clulow and myself and one edition speedily disappeared chiefly given away. And we printed a second. Next came the "Observations" which were submitted in like manner with the "Remarks." I remember Mr. Newton in answer to a question of my wife as to what he thought Mr. Darby would take up as the point of attack in the Tract? saying, he believed it was the doctrine of the 5 Romans (so familiar was it to our minds that we knew at once it meant Christ being under Adam's imputed guilt).

I was returned to Plymouth and we were going on holding meetings (reading) much as usual. I remember in almost the last I think in which we read 1 Cor. XV and Mr. Newton connected Christ's body with all those passages relating to the buried body, only He was preserved from corruption by the power of God. Also I well remember Dr. K. holding an argument with him on the subject, Mr. N. declaring that the Blessed Lord was, as a man, liable to all the ordinary process of digestion of food which was a process of corruption. Dr. K. argued as a scientific man that digestion was no process of corruption. * * * *

The next event of moment in this solemn history that happened was that my elder sister, now Mrs. Hill was greatly distressed in soul about the Tracts of Mr. Newton and Mr. Darby's reply. She told me that she was sure that Mr. N. did not hold Christ to be the son of God. That his Tracts had destroyed all the gospel of John and so [on?]. I thought her half out of her mind. What she said had not the least effect upon me.

The next occurrence was a letter from E. C. at Yeovil summoning Mr. Newton to come immediately for Dear Mr. Murly was greatly troubled. I did not see this letter. Newton could not go that day, but was to set off early the next. He had a reading meeting that evening at a sister's house, of which I heard the acct. next day, and which must have been a most distressing one. He seemed quite overwhelmed, cried much, entreated them to pray for him and was quite unable to collect himself. There seemed to have been some intimation from God of what his course must lead to. But he had no counsellors to lead him aright. He had many followers but he never sought friendship and never had it or valued it. He went with Mr[s?] N---- on his return late on Friday evening (I think it was Friday). I called to see him with W. Haydon and Tregelles and I think one of the Woodfalls to G. H. to enquire the result the result of his being so suddenly summoned? Before he told me the history of his visit Mr. N. asked me whether I believed that the Lord earned life by keeping the law? I replied that I had been asked

the same question some time before and that I had answered that having life in Himself it was impossible that He could have earned it. He said I was right and next he asked me if I believed Christ had guilt imputed to Him by God as born into the human family? My answer to this was that I had felt a shrinking from attributing guilt in any sense to Christ. ** To this he again replied that I was right and then proceeded to tell me that the object of his journey to C--- was the doctrine of Adam's guilt as imputed to Christ as contained in the "Christian Witness," which he had agreed to retract as erroneous. Indeed he said they would hardly shake hands with him, till they were assured he would retract that error, and that he had promised to write a retraction of it and print it. I believe he also made some allusion to a letter, but it was so slight that it altogether escaped my memory, till an event afterwards happened which has made me endeavor to recall what passed that evening, and my wife tells me that she heard on a subsequent occasion some allusion to a letter. It may be therefore, that Mr. N. did mention in some passing way a letter that evening.

Days passed away and the letter of retraction was not begun. I felt no uneasiness about it, because by some strange forgetfulness of mind I never for a moment connected the "Christian Witness" doctrine with the Tracts though I had heard Mr. N. at Exeter and had done so myself afterwards to justify the notes on Ps VI.

We went on reading S.S. together once a week and I thought all the strain had passed away. About a fortnight or more after Mr. N's return, a letter came from W. Dyer who was living at Yeovil to enquire when the retraction were coming out? Whether this was replied to or not, I do not know, or to whom written, whether to Batten or to Mr. N. I do not now remember, but I think to Batten, still the matter was left to slumber and no steps were taken to draw up the retraction. Some of us seemed to think it to be a matter of missing a moment. After about a fortnight or three weeks, down came another letter from Dyer in very strong and urgent terms written to Batten, and calling on all to account for not having urged on Newton the writing the retraction. Batten read the letter to me and I said, "I cannot think what Dyer means by writing in such a strain, how can it matter about the retraction of an old doctrine shut up in a "Witness" printed years ago? He must be in a strange state of mind to write as he does so strongly about it and to call us thus to account!" What was to be done? I am not sure whether it was at my suggestion but I know that Batten agreed before we parted to write to Dyer and ask him to come down and explain himself for that we really did not know what he meant. Accordingly Batten wrote and asked him to come. So little did I think of the weight of error of that false doctrine and so little did I trace its results, that I remember Mrs. N. being seriously troubled and her confidence entirely shaken in Mr. Newton by it, so that she hesitated to continue in communion and Mr. R. her husband asked me to speak to her, and I did, in Mr. Newton's favor and I believe much of what I said helped to keep her in the place of darkness which she has since retained. And when Deck wrote to me sending me large extracts in MSS of Mr. Newton's teaching and requesting me in a very gracious way to examine them with Mr. Newton I did not fairly read them over nor did Mr. N. read them with me. I pitched upon one or two extravagant statements, which I thought could never have been made by Mr. Newton and shewed them to him and he repudiated them and returned the MSS with a letter half justifying Mr. N's doctrines and treating with contempt the notes.

It was late one night my wife had retired to rest, and I had the candle in my hand about to retire also, when a ring at the bell called me to the door and I found W. Dyer. I greeted him and his first words were, "Soltau, what have you been about in delaying Mr. Newton's retraction?" I answered, "Dyer, what do you mean by writing such letters? What does it signify about the retraction of an old doctrine in a "W itness" which has never had any fruits?" "No fruits!" he replied, "What do you mean by no

fruits? What do you think of G. Murly's letter?" I replied, "I never heard of it, what is it?" "Why do you not know that we sent for Mr. Newton chiefly about his letter to G. Murly" he answered. "No," said I, "This is the first I have heard of it." He then put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a letter in Mr. Newton's writing to Geo. Murly dated Jan. 26, 1845 (a copy of which is subjoined marked M). It seems this letter was written by Mr. Newton in reply to one from Geo. Murly in which he told Mr. Newton that some of the clergy, converted men, in the neighborhood with whom he was intimate, had objection to the doctrine of Adam's guilt imputed to Christ at birth, and had denounced it as heresy. This had troubled G. Murly who was answered by Mr. Newton in the appended letter which Mr. N. also accompanied by a tract containing the "Christian Witness" statements.

Here follows a statement of how the Tract and the Christian Witness became identified -- viz. by a reprint of the number of the Witness containing the article which had subsequently been printed in the form of a Tract. To another edition of the Fact Mr. Newton appended the passages containing the false doctrines. It was one of these Tracts with the appended false doctrines that Mr. Newton forwarded to Geo. Murly in vindication of his error which Geo. Murly had imbibed from Mr. Newton and had circulated.

To return to Mr. N's letter to Geo. Murly. After cautioning him about speaking on these subjects to the clergy because of their ignorance, Mr. N. then translates "in the supposition that all had sinned" i.e., every one who bears the nature of man after the fall has the guilt of the federal head of mankind connected with himself, all the characteristics of human nature (sin only excepted) and which the responsibilities of it attached to Him through His mother. Hence his sufferings, before he took the place of the sinner's substitute on the Cross. That was only at the close of his life of trial. Christ freed himself from all the consequences of Adam's imputed guilt by keeping the Law and so proved his title to life." I read this note, and the scales seemed suddenly to fall from my eyes. I felt that I had been connected with a false doctrine that had been bearing fruit. That what I had considered as a dead letter had been vigorously germinating. Also I felt my confidence shaken in Mr. Newton's openness. Why had he not mentioned that letter? Why had he talked about his visit to C*** and L***** as involving the "Christian Witness" doctrines only? My confidence in his integrity was gone. And I felt like one that had been duped, and taken in by a friend. ***

These things opened to me rapidly and I felt terribly shaken in every way. On the morrow after this eventful interview it was agreed that we should meet Mr. N. at Mr. Rive's with all the leading Brethren and W. Dyer. Accordingly we met, the chief object being to arrange about Mr. Newton's retraction. The conversation turned upon the "Christian Witness" doctrine which Mr. Newton was quite ready to retract, but he persisted that it had never had any fruits. This was tender ground. He argued that he never had deduced any results from this error, indeed that it had only been an old error, buried in an old "Witness." Dyer endeavored to get him to admit that it might have come out in his teaching, that it might have affected his representations of Christ. But no, he could allow no such thing. Till Dyer at last drew the former letter of Geo. Murly from his pocket and read it to convince poor Newton of the fact. This only made him angry. He rose up and left the room, saying "I did not expect this from you" or words to that effect.

(I must here mention that what made Dyer so late at my house the night before was that he had spent two hours with Mr. Newton imploring him to consider this evil doctrine and to trace its results putting all things then plainly before him, but without avail). I followed Mr. Newton out of the house (Mr. Rive's***** he seemed very angry and upset. I had some conversation with him in the road. He expressed his determination to

go to St. A[*****] and desired me to help in drawing up the retraction. He left Plymouth for some days and Brethren met at my house to draw up Mr . Newton's retraction. These were N--, WHaydon, Dr Tregelles, H. Woodfall, Batten, Dyer, and myself. Dr . Tregelles brought a sketch of what he had himself drawn up with Mr . Newton, I think. We met three [or, these] mornings at my house at Woodside. The last morning I do not think Dr. Tregelles or W. Haydon were present. I have a paper of Dr. Tregelles in his own handwriting which seems to be his draught of the proposed confession.

We considered sentence by sentence. I was the one who held the pen, and wrote out the proposed retraction. I had written all the first part containing the withdrawal of the Adamic imputation of guilt to the Blessed Lord when I remember saying if this were all, we might as well throw the whole into the fire for that nobody would be satisfied. On being asked what I meant, I replied -- that there was another branch of error equally offensive and upon which I perceive the Tracts were built as much as upon the Adamic error and that was the doctrine that the blessed Lord being born into the nation of Israel under curses became obnoxious, as an Israelite, to all the curses on Israel. That God dealt with Him as an Israelite under the judgment of fallen Israel as much as He was supposed to have dealt with Him as a man under Adam's imputed guilt. So that the Tracts would stand every bit as well on the Israelitish ground as they did on the Adamic and if the latter were withdrawn, the former would remain. Batten and Dyer both expressed themselves thankful to hear me say what I had. They said, as they had just the same judgment. We then drew up the 2nd part of the retraction, acknowledging the Israelitish error as may be seen by the manuscript, which I have also in my own house, writing as marginally corrected some gracious sentences were added and the whole was copied out fair by one to be presented to Mr. Newton when he should return from St. C*****.

I may here state that previous and subsequent to the drawing up of this retraction, I had conversation upon conversation with Mr. Newton relative to the Adamic doctrine and how it would result in its effects in teaching respecting the Lord and so confused was I by his clearness and plausibility that I had more than once to return home and re-read passages of the T racts in order to persuade myself that I had not been wrong, but that error was really there.

To proceed -- I copied out the retraction and went to meet Mr. N. at the Coach on his return from St. A***** It had been agreed that I should present the paper to him. After we had walked a little way the first question he asked was whether I had finished the retraction? I said, Yes, and in order to break him in a little for what he would find there I told him we had withdrawn the Tracts, and had acknowledged the Israelite side of the question. I saw he was greatly moved, and became moody and silent. He went to [*****] H. and I gave him the papers, leaving it with him to peruse it and saying I would call again in a short time. G. W alker and myself accordingly saw him in the evening.

He was much annoyed evidently and declared that the Adamic error never had had any results, that he would stand in full by his Tracts. Walker three times read out to him in my presence pages [*] of "Observations" to prove that the Tracts were infected with the error, but he would not allow it, and I left. Seeing it to be a perfectly hopeless matter Sisters ²⁹² got round him, flattered him, said he was an ill-used persecuted man and said the retraction was the work of the Devil. Dr. Tregelles also stood by him and he cast me off, as regards having anything more to do [with?] my counsel or help in drawing up his acknowledgment and took Dr. Tregelles into his counsel, whom he found to be a more agreeable and pliant helper than myself. It was curious to see how all turned around with the exception of Batten and Dyer. W. Haydon, Mr. Rivel, Dr. Tregelles and

H. Woodfall^{ao} now seemed to think that the Tracts were comparatively innocent of the error. Though at our meetings there had been no question for a moment entertained of their being full of the Adamic error. Indeed, the retraction had been written chiefly to withdraw them, as full of it. Though it was done in the mildest form as we knew they were Newton's special favorites on which he had bestowed extreme labor and thought. And on which he had staked his reputation. I had to bear the chief brunt and got no very measured blame from several.

A curious incident happened during the drawing up of Mr. N's retraction by Dr. Tregelles. He sent me a note, I think it must have been late one evening, enclosing a passage of the proposed retraction and asking my advice. I went the first thing in the morning to him and found him at breakfast and said to him, "Tregelles, are you mad? How could you think of putting such a sentence in the retraction?" The sentence was something to this effect. That no results had ever flowed from the erroneous doctrine respecting Adam. I continued to Tregelles -- "What do you think of G. Murly's sletter and what will those who know the whole of the case say if they read such a statement as this in the retraction?" Dr. Tregelles with great readiness, I will not call it adroitness, asked me to return him his note to me and the extract which I did, my desire being truly to help poor Mr. Newton and my hope still clinging to the expectation that he would see his error at last. At a meeting for prayer the same day Dr. Tregelles took me aside and said, "You will be glad to hear that Newton has agreed to alter the sentence as you suggested." I confess, I was not glad to hear it -- I began to perceive that the whole matter was only one of expedience and that words were written as expressions of conscience and withdrawn and changed at a moment's notice. I saw also how foolishly and wrongly I had acted in helping on in any way what, if worth anything at all, should have come spontaneously from Mr. N. That I had been prompting his conscience when really he did not feel at all the things that had been suggested to him -- This little incident proved to me the hollowness of it all as before God, however well it might appear in the eyes of those who had not been behind the scenes. This was the last of our Ebrington St. acts of collusion in which I have been guilty and I trust I shall never again act in such a way. No affection for Mr. Newton ought to have influenced me to help him and to dictate to him terms of confession, which ought to have been the genuine act of his conscience towards God. Had he been left to himself and had I not through mistaken kindness interfered as above related, a document would have been put forth which would more clearly on the face of it have proved the evil of the whole affair. But the confession thus concocted was at last produced and I can truly say, it satisfied none. But even this meager as it is, is now disowned by Mr. Newton for in his last Tract directly on the subject he alludes to it as only a confession of a "confusion in the use of theological terms" (see "A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity" Page 32.) and as only a confession of carelessness in so doing.

After this Mr. N. again went down to St. A[*****]. Previous to his doing so, I said I thought it incumbent on him to call the saints together that we might humble ourselves with them as to what had happened. He said he would come to such a meeting, only he was afraid I should confess too much! I told him if this were the case he had better not come, as I should feel myself before the Lord and could not be hampered as to what I should say. Upon this he said he should not come.

It was suggested by Batten I think, that previous to such a meeting it would be well that the saints should be informed about the whole matter as they were very ignorant of

ao. [The *Acknowledgement* removed one point. This H. Woodfall, a partisan of BWN, was received at Bethesda in April 1848.]

all that had passed and it seemed to be an unseemly thing to ask them to come together for prayer and humiliation respecting a subject of which they were ignorant. Accordingly it was arranged that a meeting should be held on Monday evening Dec. 13th for the purpose of stating what the questions at issue were and on the following Wednesday evening a meeting as the result was to be held for prayer and confession. On Sunday 12th after communion at the close of the meeting I gave out that a meeting to that effect would be held and in giving it out I stated that there were differences of doctrine amongst us. I had used the word doctrine with no intention to wound any, but I found afterwards that I ought to have said differences of opinion or of judgment, for that they would not allow that there were any matters of doctrine in question. This was made clear to me the same night when I received a long letter from Dr. Tregelles who had been present at the morning meeting and who wrote to say that there were only differences of judgment, that he feared I should make too strong statements the next evening and that if I held there was difference of doctrine I ought to withdraw from them. Next day Monday 13th I met Dr. Tregelles, H. Woodfall, W. Haydon at the vestry at Ebrington St. and they asked me what I was going to relate to the saints in the evening? I replied that it was my intention to relate to them the two errors which I had been instrumental in circulating. 1st the error that the Lord was under the guilt of Adam imputed. 2nd that he was born under the curse of Israel -- for that I had been at the expense of publishing with Clulow Mr. N's Tracts and had and had widely circulated them. Mr. H. Woodfall asked me if I could not put the two into one, and simply confess the Adamic error? I answered that on the coming evening I considered myself to be responsible to God to confess before Him what I believed I had been instrumental in circulating and that I could not consent to be bound by any motives of affection or expediency to blink the solemn truth. Dr. Tregelles then said that if I would read the letter which he handed to me which had that morning been received from Mr. Newton I should find all explained. I took it and cast my eyes over it, handed it back to Dr. Tregelles saying to him, "If that letter is read this evening I shall immediately withdraw from communion." He asked me Why? I told him that I would tell him "Why, when our meeting was over."

Batten was then asked what he intended to say [and so on?]. The meeting then closed and I said to Dr. Tregelles in private that my reason for saying what I had was that I would neither consent to stay with the saints and allow dust to be thrown in their eyes, nor would I stay to expose the subtleties of poor Mr. Newton and consequently I had no option but to withdraw if an attempt were made to conceal or cover over the false doctrines, which the letter he had shown me most distinctly endeavored to do.

We met in the evening a full room under Ebrington St. I stated the doctrines which I had helped to uphold and circulate and shewed how they virtually destroyed the glorious Person of our Lord and rendered Him (if true) unfit to be our sacrifice. I did not mention Mr. Newton's name once in all my discourse. Batten next spoke and he introduced Mr. Newton's name and spoke more personally than I had done. Mr. W. Haydon made an attempt at a defence of Mr. Newton and Dr. Tregelles said he could clear up all if he were allowed to read a letter he had received from Mr. Newton, but that he was not permitted to do so. I said to him "Do read it, do not consider me, if you place such importance on it." Bn---- was evidently frightened and walked down the room to dissuade Dr. Tregelles from doing so, but holding the letter in his hand instead of reading it, Dr. T. accurately repeated the contents. The object of the letter, a copy of which I have not [?], was to say that all Mr. N. meant by the Lord being born under the infliction which had fallen on Israel was that he was born at a time when Israel was under a Gentile power and that his mother had to pay a tax to Caesar and arguments of this sort. Which were perfectly frivolous if read beside the statements of the T tracts and were only intended to mystify or mislead. When he had concluded I said I now saw my way made plain and that I could no longer to minister among them, if what I considered serious

error were treated as nonsense. I could no longer expect to be of any service to them, or if I remained, I must expose the evil of the whole mode of proceeding which course I did not like to take, so I withdrew from being one ministering among them.

I declined joining the proposed meeting on the Wednesday for prayer and humiliation as I felt my mouth was tied. Thus Dr . Tregelles succeeded in doing what he had intended, and what he had advised me to do. Though I doubt not he regretted that he had been the means of sending me out instead of its being an act of my own unaffected by any statements of his, just at this time.

Thus the meeting at Ebring' St. took its place as an upholder of Mr. Newton, refusing to judge the errors in question and so it has continued ever since.

Notes for Section 8

1. *The Present Question* 1848-1849, p. 48.
2. *Three Letters* . . . , p. 71. G. H. Lang, *Departure*, p. 101, repeated this claim.
3. *Collected Writings* 20:30; see also p. 71.
4. *The Present Testimony* 1:198.
5. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:224. See also *Collected Writings* 20: 60, 61, 63; 8:32-34, 36, 325. Perhaps this influenced Bethesda to act independently, as well as those that followed suit.
6. *Fry MS*, p. 339.
7. See *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 4:173, 174.
8. B. W. Newton, "A Statement and Acknowledgement Respecting Certain Doctrinal Errors." See Appendix 1 for the document.
9. Comments by JND concerning this preface and the doctrine contained in it will be found in the *Collected Writings* 15:38-40, 98-101, 113, 117, 118, 136, 157, 179.
10. *Collected Writings* 15:38.
11. *Collected Writings* 15:136.
12. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 4:316, note.
13. *The Present Question*.
14. *The Present Question*, p. 2. S. P. Tregelles said:

I think with you that those who for years (ever since 1835) had circulated the paper on the Doctrines of the Church in Newman Street, in which the erroneous statements were contained, have to bear their share of blame, and that it is not right that they should triumph over Mr. Newton's acknowledgement of error which they themselves were slow to detect. *

* The appendix to Mr. Newton's paper, signed by me, was an account which I had previously written as to how the additions were made to the Tract on the Newman Street Doctrines, and how the paper with those additions had been inserted in the "Christian Witness" when reprinted.

I had a distinct recollection of these facts; and I wrote them down in consequence of a report which was spread far and wide, and which was afterwards printed, that Mr. Newton had in some underhanded manner caused the paper with the additions to be so inserted; a thing with which he himself had nothing to do; this number of the "Christian Witness" was re-printed in *London*.

I am glad to have this opportunity of mentioning a circumstance which I could not state in that appendix, because I was ignorant of it, from its having occurred before I was staying at Plymouth: this circumstance is that some copies of the paper on the Newman Street Doctrines had been worked off as a Tract when the type was originally set up for the "Christian Witness": these copies are therefore without the additions. For this information I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. J. L. Harris. (*Three Letters* . . . , p. 24,25).

What has the printer's residence to do with it? Certainly the editor, J. L. Harris, had nothing to do with it. Notice that S. P. Tregelles kept it a secret who did it.

Palliators of evil, ignoring the trickiness of BWN, and the facts as presented above, say this:

We would ask our brethren, whether it would be quite fair to designate persons "partisans" of Mr. N., because they did not at once perceive his errors? Let it be remembered, that the unsound doctrine which lies at the root of all the controversy amongst the Brethren is of such a subtle character, that it remained undetected for years in their leading periodical. (*Philadelphos* (Mr. Bewley), *The Basis of Peace*, p. 23).

15. *Collected Writings* 15:42, 43.

16. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:237 indicates that he had received letters about the degenerating condition at Plymouth.

17. R. Nelson, *Protest Against the Proceedings of Mr. John N. Darby*, p. 3, says it was in Sept. 1846, while W. Trotter, *The Origin of the (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 12, 13, says it was soon after April, 1846.

18. *Collected Writings* 20:200.

19. *Collected Writings* 20:56, 68-69.

20. *Collected Writings* 20:139. Concerning other testimony to the change in principles see *ibid.*, pp. 147, 181.

21. *A Vindication of the Separation . . .*, pp. 10, 11.

22. *Collected Writings* 20: 19, 21, 22, 144-146, etc.

23. G. H. Lang, *Departure*.

24. W. H. Dorman, *A Review of Certain Evils and Questions that have Arisen Among Brethren*, p. 27.

25. *Five Letters . . .*, p. 27.

26. *Five Letters . . .*, p. 21.

27. "Teulon's Plymouth Brethren," *The Bible Treasury* 14:269, 270. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:89.

28. I possess a copy of the paper by Lord Congleton that is cited by L. Pilson, but prefer to quote from L. Pilson for the benefit of his comments about Lord Congleton:

I advisedly produce one who is well known to have hostile feelings towards him [JND], and stands apart from him to this day, who cannot, therefore, be considered his partisan. I mean Lord Congleton. In a tract entitled, "Reasons for leaving Rawstorne Street Meeting, London," dated February 27th, 1847, he published the following statements:-

"I have all along, ever since I was at Plymouth, in December, 1845, said I felt that there was a sectarian and clerical spirit among the people of Ebrington Street," (p. 5) In a letter to Mr. Gough, dated December 22nd, 1846, given in this tract, p. 11, he says -- "I cannot identify myself with Ebrington Street meeting." Again, whilst assigning his opinion that "Mr. Darby had no *palpable* reasons for his act of separation," he admits, p. 21 -- "There seemed to be much deficiency, much failure, a sectarian spirit, a clerical spirit, but nothing sufficiently decided to warrant such an act." Again, "Evils there were." (p. 10.)

It will be seen by these acknowledgements how fully Lord Congleton corroborates Mr. Darby's charges against Ebrington Street. The difference between them is, that he thinks there may be divisions organized, clericalism established, and evils allowed, within the assembly; and Mr. Darby believes that the allowance of them is a sufficient reason to leave any assembly. The former, without any warrant from scripture, would not break bread with them in Ebrington Street, "simply on these grounds, that they did not do all they might have done to prevent the division," (p. 5). The latter, submitting to the paramount claims of God's Word, (Rom. 16:17,) withdrew from their meeting because division *had been made by them -- sectarianism professed by them*. Lord Congleton retired from Rawstorne Street because the brethren there received Mr. Darby and Mr. Wigram without taking any notice of his charges against them for leaving and judging the evil which he *admits* existed in Ebrington Street. (See p. 10).

This tract of his is as curious a specimen of special pleading as ever was presented to the public. After saying, in page 9, "there was no true bill brought against Mr. Newton," he himself finds one against him in p. 21, as above quoted. Whilst advocating the innocence of his client, he transforms himself into a witness, and proves his guilt. What strange inconsistencies we fall into, when we allow our own wills and feelings to guide and influence us, instead of God's Word and Spirit! I never heard of any one proclaiming himself "author of a remonstrance to the separating brother," Lord Congleton; although, according to his own confession, he separated on grounds "wholly unwarranted by the word of God," both from Ebrington Street and Rawstorne Street (*A Vindication of the*

Separation . . ., pp. 11,12).

Ebrington Street refers to the place of meeting at Plymouth and Rawstorne Street to a place of meeting in London. The problem with Lord Congleton was that he was like A. N. Groves when it came to dealing with evil. See Appendix 2.

J. S. Oliphant, who had been in fellowship with Lord C. and had separated from what he called "Bethesda fellowship" (see Section 9), writing to some brethren, pointed out to them:

You have received several brethren of the Bethesda party, and one (Lord C.) who from the first outbreak of the evil opposed those who were God's instruments in exposing it, and who has not ceased to do so till the present time . . . (*A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship* . . ., sec. ed., revised, p. 38).

. . . I will now give you the statements of Lord C., with whom I used to be in fellowship, and his answer to inquiries which I made as to the fellowship of the assembly at which we broke bread with Bethesda or Mr. N's followers. He wrote me as follows:

-- "Have you tried these brethren?" {those who have separated from evil} "I have tried them ('try the spirits, whether they are of God') and found them FALSE prophets, in every sense of the word FALSE. They are FALSE in what they say of their brethren, they are FALSE IN DOCTRINE, they are FALSE in their walk (*ibid.*, p. 19).

Referring to another correspondence with Lord C., J. S. Oliphant wrote:

The question I asked was as follows: --

"Would persons *coming from Bethesda* (Bristol) [in Section 9 it will be shown that the assembly at Bristol, England, namely Bethesda, received partisans of BWN] be allowed to sit down at the Lord's table with the simple statement that they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, without reference to their walk or *where they came from?*"

The answer I received was as follows: --

"Every dear child of God that is walking consistently with such a profession, *come he from whatever quarter he may, would be received.*"

Now here I find that the ground taken by Bethesda in 1848 is fully maintained, and professed in unmistakable words in 1864. Lord C. is anxious to be clear that there is no objection to intercommunion and fellowship with an assembly where FALSE teachers, in every sense of the word FALSE, are allowed, and where FALSE doctrine is held and unjudged. I say intercommunion and fellowship; for saints are to be allowed to go without restraint from the one meeting to the other, and *vice versa*. The answer to my question, although indirect, is not to be mistaken. "Come he from whatever quarter he may" clearly includes Mr. N. and Bethesda, and is an endeavor to make it appear that there is nothing inconsistent in fellowship with persons who have held, taught and never repudiated, evil blasphemies.

I may add here, from my own personal knowledge, that persons in fellowship with Mr. N. were allowed to break bread at meetings in London in fellowship with Bethesda as late as last year, and that persons who held Mr. N.'s doctrines were in the habit of breaking bread at Welbeck Street only three years ago [1862], whenever Mr. N. was out of town and his chapel was closed (*ibid.*, pp. 19, 20).

It is not surprising that persons holding such principles are so opposed to JND. Their spiritual discernment is corrupt; and the more corrupted, the more they denigrate and vilify JND, and Lord C. certainly did his best at it. There are references to Lord C. by JND: *Collected Writings* 20:34, 44, 49, 53, 57, 73, 82, 85, 109, 111, 113, 114, 118, 126, 134-136, 147, 183; and by W. Trotter, *The Origin of the (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, pp. 27-29, 38, 42. He charged G. V. Wigram also, with helping JND make division at Plymouth. For such as W. B. Neatby (*A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, pp. 147-149) he is a hero, a not surprising view by one who could say "I know not where to turn for a parallel to usage so cruel and unrighteous as that from which Newton suffered" (*ibid.*, p. 153). F. R. Coad says that Lord C. "was always noted for an intense sense of that which was honorable . . ." (*A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 146). The Scripture tells us that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he. The doctrines that we hold affect our conduct and

sense of right and wrong. Lord C.'s principles of unholiness that J. S. Oliphant (see above) called attention to, reveal much about why Lord. C. conducted himself the way he did.

29. JND wrote (*Collected Writings* 20:135, 136):

I will now turn to what is said in the "Narrative," and Lord C.'s authority, and I shall relate his interview. He came to me, I thank God, with more friendliness than heretofore, though of course blaming me, and I was very glad to see him. He declared he had been distressed, but had got quite happy on taking up Matthew 18, and meant to bring me before the church. Well, I had had a good dose of all these things; but however I said of course he could do what he thought right. He called on me to retract certain things in the "Narrative." Two were mere misunderstandings -- one a mere mis-stopping, and the other easily explained. The others I declined retracting, though willing to explain anything, and not doubting additional circumstances could be added. He said he should go and bring others. He came with Mr. G---h [Gough?]. I told him then, his acting on Matthew [18:15-17] could not be sustained, he was not the brother wronged, and the real difference was obvious. If I refused to retract to Mr. N., who said he was wronged, and then to two or three more, Mr. N. must then go before the church, which was just what he would not do. Mr. G---h also told him it did not apply. He said he had given up doing it, they would not hear him before. I said, I was ready to answer them anything. In result, Mr. G---h told him, that he had confirmed all he had impugned, save the letter of one passage -- that was, the words "any longer," in page 66 of the "Narrative"

The desperate and ignorant attempt by Lord C. to use Matt. 18:15-17 to serve his purpose tells a tale.

30. J. E. Howard, a very hostile critic of JND and G. V. Wigram, cited the following from G. V. Wigram concerning why he (GVW) withdrew:

"The cause of withdrawal was *not* difference of judgment upon the prophetic question, *neither* was it a question of doctrine: my act of withdrawal took place solely and simply because a new and a human *church system* had been introduced, and one which appeared to screen guilt. I am thankful for this; because while it forced me to separate from the *congregation* as such, it left me free to have fellowship with any as individuals in the congregation. THEY ARE ALL ACCREDITED AS CHRISTIANS, AND I CAN ACCREDIT THEM AS SUCH WITHOUT ANY QUESTION. The hinge of all is *anew ecclesiastical polity* having been introduced, and acted upon and avowed in Ebrington Street, new, and opposed to what I had known there from the beginning." (*A Caution against the Darbyites*, p. 35. Cited from G. V. Wigram, "A Reason for Withdrawing from Ebrington Street Plymouth," date about 1846 (?) or 1847.)

There are three points to observe.

1. G. V. Wigram was among the brethren in Plymouth when they first began to break bread there. He here states that the system at Ebrington Street, Plymouth, from which he separated, was "opposed to what I had known from the beginning."
2. He denied that the separation was based on differences concerning prophecy.
3. He accredited the Christians there *after* the separation on ecclesiastical grounds. But note carefully that this was at that point in time, and once BWN's evil teaching concerning Christ's circumstantial distance from God became known, he refused all in fellowship with BWN and his supporters. See W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, pp. 8-11.

31. W. Trotter wrote a very long, published letter originally entitled the *Whole Case of Plymouth and Bethesda*, presently titled, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*. It is an excellent, highly informative document, from which the following is extracted.

But in process of time it became very evident that many had been attracted to the position by other motives than those which swayed the brethren who originally took it . . . They preferred to be among brethren, not because they had gone through the exercises of soul which originally brought brethren out of the different sects to meet simply in the name of Jesus, and in dependence upon the Spirit of God alone, but just as people would prefer one denomination to another, choosing that one where all were happy and united, and the ministry such as they approved, never troubling themselves about other matters.

... The system introduced by Mr. N., and most speciously disguised for a time, was directed to the undermining all the truth by which God had acted on the souls of brethren, and thus to the setting up afresh in another form of all that had been renounced.

After some further explanation, he said,

Such were the leading features of the system which silently grew up at Plymouth, and I was quite aware of its existence and of the concern felt by many brethren respecting it from the time that I became acquainted with the brethren between six and seven years ago [thus 1842/1843; RAH].

32. *A Review of Certain Evils & Questions that Have Arisen Amongst Brethren*, pp. 36, 37. Some letters by W. H. Dorman are found in the *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:87, 88, 92, 95, 153, 162.

33. For example Mr. N---r, probably Naylor, editor of *Words of Truth*, published between 1840-1853, quoted by JND, *Collected Writings* 20:125. References to Mr. N---r occur frequently in the *Narrative of Facts* (see p. 154 for a latter reference). Another was Sir A. Campbell. (*Ibid.*, pp. 182, 186-188. He wrote a paper (*ibid.* p. 169) which I do not have. At first he and four others had drawn up a paper to clear BWN (*ibid.*, p. 174). Do you think that JND cited these, and others, to give them all an opportunity to show he lied?

BWN attempted to use something in this magazine to support himself. (*Collected Writings* 15:36, 155.

34. *Collected Writings* 20:109, 112, 138, 143, 159, 160, 171, 175.

35. Concerning H. W. Soltau, the author of some well-known books on the priesthood, offerings and the tabernacle, L. Pilson wrote:

I will bring another witness to testify the sad state in which the Plymouth meeting was, prior to the separation, in regard to the party spirit that was fostered, and the non-recognition of the Spirit that was practiced there. He is one who had been Mr. Newton's coadjutor in all his varied forms of iniquity, and a most indefatigable supporter of his evil system; one who keeps aloof from Mr. Darby, and is one of the most determined opposers to those doctrines of the New Testament. I allude to Mr. Soltau. In his "Confession of Error," published Dec. 22nd, 1847, p. 5, he says:

"And now I found myself, whilst hoping I had been a guardian of truth, really holding and circulating error. Here then I question not is that which the hand of the Lord has been more immediately against. He has allowed these errors in doctrine to develop themselves, in order to awaken myself and others to our sin, in forming or making one of a party for any object however right -- He has confounded all I have been *thus* seeking to sustain, because the way in which it was sustained was not of his Spirit.

"And what have been the effects of this upon my own soul, and the souls of others connected with me in it? *Man's guidance has in measure been substituted for the guidance of God.* Human wisdom and expediency have too often taken the place of faith. Individual responsibility has been sacrificed to united judgment and action. Service has supplanted communion with God. Energies which, if they had been the result of personal love for the Lord, and faith in Him, would have flowed out happily in caring for the poor of the flock, have too often been used to *sustain a system* in the midst of which grievous error has now been found to be working; and natural energy has been frequently *substituted for the power and presence of the Spirit.* In my own breast I am conscious an *antagonistic*, as well as over-anxious spirit has *hereby* been engendered; and that wisdom which is from above, which is 'peaceable, and without partiality and without hypocrisy,' has been greatly lacking. I do, indeed, desire to confess this as great evil in the sight of God, and to beg any of those brethren in Christ whom I may have grieved by these things, or their fruits, to pardon the want of grace and love that has been in my heart or ways towards them.

"What I have already said may suffice to act as a warning to others, not to lose sight of personal communion with, and love for the Lord, in the midst of the activities of service. *Not to form a party* for any, even the holiest objects. Not to forget in local interests the whole Church of God, purchased by the blood of

the Lamb.

"In conclusion, I will only add that I have endeavored, with prayer to God, to write this paper truthfully, neither stating, in exaggerated expressions, my sense of my sin, nor wishing to extenuate or palliate. I am well aware how difficult this is, and I pray the Lord to forgive all, even in this confession, wherein I err, either from want of truthfulness, or from too feeble an appreciation of the evil. I doubt not that my estimate will daily (as it has hitherto) deepen, both as to the *doctrinal errors* I have held, or been implicated in, and as to the *wrong position* in which I have stood. I am almost in the worst circumstances for fully appreciating either, seeing I have but so lately myself perceived them.

"Henry W. Soltau."

Here again, we have another witness confirming all that Mr. Darby has alleged about God having been practically displaced at that meeting -- the Spirit's presence and guidance not being owned, and man's authority, or clericalism, substituted, and sectarianism cultivated. I do not adduce this confession to show that Mr. Soltau apprehended Church truths, which alone would deliver him from Mr. N.'s "system," but to prove the party that was formed, and the spirit that actuated them. Had he seen these truths, doubtless he would have confessed his own erroneous views about the Church; but this he does not, for the doctrines which he acknowledges to be wrong are those concerning the Lord Jesus, as we shall presently see. And what is the consequence of his faith not rising to the height of the Church's calling? His present position. (*A Vindication of the Separation . . .*, pp. 13, 14).

36. *Collected Writings* 20:199-202.

37. *Collected Writings* 20:173 discusses this.

38. *The Point at Issue; or, Observations, by R. C. Johnson, on "Remarks by J. N. Darby," on "A Letter on Subjects Connected With Our Lord's Humanity,"* p. 20.

39. *Collected Writings* 20:200.

40. *A Review of Certain Evils and Questions . . .*, pp. 2-5.

41. JND wrote:

At this time, about three years ago, I suppose, I was thoroughly unhappy in the meetings. I felt the Spirit utterly quenched, and if I went to the meetings happy, returned miserable. It was only at the last I was at I found it in my heart to pray. I had communication on the subject with Mr. H., who remonstrated with me. I returned abroad. While abroad (I cannot here give the date) Mr. Newton wrote to me that I was an apostle.* This did not, I confess, inspire me with confidence. About three or four months before my return to England [in March 1845] I had a correspondence with Mr. H. [J. L. Harris], one of whose letters, from the great change in its tone, convinced me that every barrier was gone at Plymouth; for he had long sought to keep himself free from the influence that ruled most things there. From that moment I felt that conflict and trial awaited me, though I knew not what: but I was satisfied before God that nothing which could be ventured on would be spared. I passed through much more conflict of soul then than after I came to England. Nor was I mistaken in my judgment

Mr. H. invited me, however, to come to Plymouth. I was greatly exercised as to leaving Switzerland, having the conviction that troubles, which nobody else then believed, would certainly break out, and I lingered there till violence and revolution took place, and all the brethren judged me better away than there. Ministry was impossible, and I should have rather occasioned trouble to them, as well as been particularly obnoxious myself, as having been the active person there.

I returned to England, and came directly down to Plymouth.

* This explains to me a statement in the letter sent to the London brethren, signed by the five leading brethren at Ebrington Street, saying, that they recognized no one in the position of Timothy now. At the time he wrote the letter alluded to in the text, Mr. N. in England denounced my views as subverting the foundations of Christianity. (*Collected Writings* 20:19,20).

42. JND wrote:

Lately I have received more than one letter speaking to me of the propagation of Plymouth views, one adding that you had yielded . . . But the subject is one of sorrow to me. As to mere details of prophecy my mind is quite open, nor do I find that difference of view, when the view is kept open towards Christ, hinders the fullest sympathy in service. But I do feel the position of Plymouth in the testimony of the latter day is completely changed. It was the power of union and brotherly love, the Philadelphian spirit, which stood as a burning bush in the church; and this was a distinct and positive testimony; as poor dear -- said of you, Get into that slough of love at Plymouth and you are lost. Various portions of light and truth might be furnished by different brethren, and supposing difference or mistake, they dwelt together in unity and were glad to communicate to each other their thoughts even that they might be corrected; and progress was made in the truth. But this has, if not absolutely, all as one disappeared; a hard and rigid dogmatism of view has entirely replaced it: nor am I aware of any one place where the views adopted at Plymouth have been the means of gathering the saints, though they have been propagated in many gatherings, and this is not an unimportant feature to my mind and worthy of your study. I do not say that there is no love at Plymouth: there is in many a Wesleyan or dissenting church within. But Plymouth has ceased to represent this: it represents an opinion, and, alas! yet -- is not conscious of what an immense FALL this is, but rather glories in it. If a strange Christian or a brother from another place were to go there, the consequence would be, not that he would find the testimony of the power of love in union and the truth delighted in and sought out, but that he would be instantly subjected to a process of imbruing his mind with certain views. Alas! how sorrowful! and as I have said -- not to be aware of what a dreadful fall this is.

. . . Of the future that this holds out I do not pretend to judge: whether the Lord means to sink the testimony into the general mass, and so annihilate it, and have views as the only result; or raise up a new one by the determinate action of His Spirit -- of this I know nothing, but I have the most perfect and entire confidence in His fidelity and love, so that I am entirely happy as to it, looking simply to Him. I trust to be enabled by Him to walk abidingly near Him in respect of this, for I doubt not His fidelity.

If I know my own heart I am not anxious for an opinion: **I feel assured that the doctrine of the church is lost in this teaching.** [The emphasis is mine. R. A. H.] This I think serious, but I am ready to hear everything; but the more I study the more I see (and it has greatly increased in clearness to me lately) this doctrine overlooked, or unknown, or obscured in their views. God's teaching is not to me doubtful on this *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:237, 238, 1844).

43. *Collected Writings* 20:1-72.

44. R. Nelson, *Protest Against the Proceedings of Mr. John N. Darby*, p. 3.

45. *Letters* 1:88-90.

46. *Collected Writings* 20:29.

47. *Collected Writings* 20:27.

48. *Fry MS*, p. 338.

49. *Fry MS*, pp. 328, 329.

50. *Fry, MS*, p. 332.

51. *Fry MS*, p. 333. Palliators of evil never seem to be able to comprehend anyone acting for God without personal feeling against opposers. Surely they judge from their own feelings.

52. *Fry MS*, p. 335.

53. *Fry MS*, p. 336.

54. *Fry MS*, p. 337.

55. *Fry MS*, p. 337.

56. *Fry MS*, p. 338.

57. *Collected Writings* 20:30; see pp. 29-31; cf. pp. 1, 34, 45, 46, 56, 76. See also 4:173, 174; *Letters* 1:79, 88.

58. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:88. Read the whole letter to see what was going on -- with comments on B. W. Newton and the suppression of the Friday night meeting.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 34. Cf. p. 30. *Collected Writings* 20:34; cf. p. 30.

60. *The Sufferings of Christ, as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered by J. L. Harris*, p. 23.

61. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:79.

62. This was done in the form of a letter written by BWN:

Mr. C--w [Clulow] had printed a letter written to him by Mr. Newton to give an account of the April meeting of the 15 -- both having been there. Mr. S. [Soltau?] got it suppressed as soon as he saw it, but Mr. N. himself subsequently circulated it again. This (though so bad and sectarian, that some brethren counted it as bad as what was said) is, confessedly now, not a true account of the meeting, *Collected Writings* 20:34. See also p. 132, 133.

See H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of The Brethren*, p. 241. See also L. Pilson, *A Vindication of Separation*, p. 21.

63. *Three Letters*, pp. 73, 74.

64. *Collected Writings* 20:31.

65. [The reader should observe that this notion denies the unity of the church.]

66. *Collected Writings* 20:56.

67. *Collected Writings* 20:57.

68. *Collected Writings* 20:56.

69. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, pp. 241, 242. See *Collected Writings* 20:31.

70. *Collected Writings* 20:33; cp. p. 18n and 127n (they would not come to Plymouth).

I note here the unreliability of S. P. Tregelles, an accomplice of BWN in his seeking to overthrow recovered truth and who supported BWN in connection with his evil teachings. He distorted and omitted matters in his effort to justify BWN. W. H. Dorman wrote:

Mr. Tregelles has been Mr. Newton's promoter in some things; and his zealous partizan from the beginning; and from the character of what he has written in this controversy, has disentitled himself to any examination of his own unsupported statements (*A Review of Certain Evils & Questions that Have Arisen Amongst Brethren*, p. 27).

As an example of SPT's style, consider this effort to convince the reader that BWN's system was original at Plymouth (in spite of how absurd such a notion is). He wrote:

This was then the principle acted on in Plymouth before there was any other gathering for communion in England. This was what I found to be professed and practiced in the early part of 1835 -- a period when there were no similar meetings for communion in England in any place, with the exception of Bath and the port of Salcombe in this country. When such meetings did arise in other places, there was no thought, at least for several years, of setting up liberty of ministry in the sense of unrestrainedness. I have had pretty much acquaintance with several localities, and I may specify Exeter and London as places in which it was believed to be right to judge whether ministry was to edification, and put a stop to that which was considered to be not so. In London this was done *repeatedly*, -- far oftener, to my knowledge, than ever in Plymouth.

Thus for a long time, at least, the practices in several other localities did not differ in any way from those at Plymouth. I might, if needful, mention other places besides London and Exeter (*Three Letters*, pp. 9, 10).

1. Notice that he did not say what was the practice in the two meetings he first named (and assuming he was correct that in 1835 there were only those two others in England). This is **omission** of relevant information.

2. Observe his not referring to Ireland, where there were meetings established before Plymouth, and where the work had begun. This is **omission** of relevant information.
3. G. V. Wigram was a principle brother at Rawstorne Street, London, and he opposed BWN. Is it not evident that SPT wanted his readers to think that the practice in London was not only like that in Plymouth, but even more so? This is **distortion**. (It is possible that G. V. Wigram was breaking bread in London in 1835). At any rate, he was among the first to break bread in Plymouth, even having bought the building in Raleigh St. We saw his testimony cited in note XX about practice at Plymouth at the beginning.
4. Others agreed that unifying 'ministry' should be prohibited. That in itself was not the issue. Here we have, then a **diversionary** tactic.
5. Earlier we cited from W. Kelly regarding BWN's article in the *Christian Witness* 5:83-99, "On the Apostasy of the Present Dispensation. He quoted BWN showing that he held the same teaching regarding the Spirit's presence in the church and His distribution of gifts.
6. We have the testimony from JND that BWN had told JND that he (BWN) had changed his principles (*Collected Writings* 20:139. Concerning other testimony to the change in principles see *ibid.*, pp. 147, 181). Thus, with SPT, we have **contradiction of the facts**.
7. I would add to all this the fact that J. L. Harris was happy among the gathered saints in Ireland tells us of his upset over the degenerated Plymouth conditions. The gathered saints in Ireland were uninterruptedly continuing in original practice.

The reader of volume 1 will remember that SPT ascribed what he called the "secret rapture" to a demonic source in E. Irving's church. Moreover, he unrelentingly, and unrepentingly, stood with BWN through the controversy over BWN's evil teaching that Christ was at a circumstantial distance from God and had to work His way to where God could meet Him. All this tells a tale. The integrity of such persons, likely unknown to themselves, is compromised. SPT viewed spiritual matters through the filter of the Satanic delusion at work at Plymouth, in which he was an active and zealous participant and partisan.

71. *Fry MS*, p. 342.

72. *Fry MS*, p. 342.

73. *Collected Writings* 20:41, 173. (This was about three months before he withdrew).

74. An explanation of the use of this meeting, its abuse by BWN, its cessation, and the subsequent unsuccessful efforts reinstate it, may be found in *Collected Writings* 20:25, 33, 35, 36, 52; 4:173

75. The letter appears in *Fry MS*, pp. 343-346. See also, *Collected Writings* 20:20, and *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:84, 85; 3:243.

76. *Fry MS*, pp. 346, 347.

77. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 144.

78. *Collected Writings* 20:36, 204. See *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:120 for the character of Plymouth; and *ibid.* 3:243, 244 for what he brought before them.

79. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*. . . , p. 22.

80. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:84-91.

81. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:87,88. Read the whole letter for spiritual profit.

82. *Collected Writings* 20:57.

83. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:90.

84. *Collected Writings* 20:64. L. D. Pettegrew, *Central Baptist Quarterly*, Fall, 1977, p. 38 alleged of BWN and SPT ". . . Plymouth Brethren who had been excommunicated by Darby in the 1840's for their posttribulationial views." What else is this but humbug?

Interestingly, after JND withdrew from Ebrington street, they held him to be excommunicated -- thus trying to forestall JND from bringing matter before the congregation. (*ibid.*, p. 65).

85. *Collected Writings* 20:203; see *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:85.

86. *Fry MS*, pp. 343-346.

87. *Fry MS*, p. 347.

88. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*, p. 22.

89. J. L. Harris was present at a meeting in London, Feb. 4, 1847 and JND in an account of the meetings wrote:

. . . he felt bound to give brethren, at any time, one or many, his reasons for leaving Ebrington Street. That he felt it was humbling to himself to do so, as he had been decidedly helping on the evil, and had to accuse himself of want of spiritual discernment, in not seeing that growing up which had caused trouble; that Mr. W. H. D----n [Dorman] had warned him four years before of clericalism, and he had repudiated the charge. There was an esoteric teaching, as well as a public one, of which he was quite unaware; that it had required the whole weight of the party system to fall on his own head, before he was roused from the delusion into which he had fallen, for he was quite satisfied they were blinded by delusive power . . . that the system which was carried on there was the ruin of the public morals of the saints (he did not speak of their private conduct) . . . (*Collected Writings* 20:182).

90. *Collected Writings* 20:40.

91. *Fry MS*, p. 347.

92. *Collected Writings* 20:45, 46 (see also pp. 110, 115, 120, 122). His objections were stated in a letter to Lord Congleton and his co-signatories. They insisted (*Fry MS*, pp. 351, 352) but JND refused (*Fry MS*, pp. 352, 353).

93. *Collected Writings* 20:49.

94. *Fry MS*, p. 354.

95. *Fry MS*, p. 355.

96. *Collected Writings* 20:51; H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 247.

97. *Collected Writings* 20:52.

98. Lord Congleton, *Reasons for Leaving Rawstorne Street Meeting, London*, pp. 9, 24.

99. Lord Congleton, *Reasons for Leaving Rawstorne-Street Meeting, London*, p. 14.

100. *Reasons for Leaving Rawstorne-Street Meeting, London*, p. 24.

101. *Collected Writings* 20:51, 52. See p. 43 for more on the matter of breaking bread.

102. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:206,220.

103. "Account of the Proceedings at Rawstorne Street . . ." *Collected Writings* 20:82.

104. *To the Saints Meeting for Worship in Ebrington Street*, p. 6.

105. This is a ludicrous statement considering that Bethesda was in fellowship until nearly mid-1848 with JND, GVV and others who had separated from Ebrington St., Plymouth. It is a sample of the anti-JND ranting that went on at this era.

106. *Darbyism . . .*, p. 15.

107. *Darbyism . . .*, p. 15.

108. W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open-Brethrenism*, p. 12.

109. *Collected Writings* 1:67.

110. W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open-Brethrenism*, p. 12.

111. *Collected Writings* 20:76, 77.

112. *Collected Writings* 20:43. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:86-89.

113. *Collected Writings* 20:42, 79, 106.

114. *Collected Writings* 20:16, 17, 19.

115. *Collected Writings* 20:19, 41, 42, 79, 80, 106-109. On Jan. 19, 1846, Miss Jeremie wrote a letter to BWN explaining what she had done (*Fry MS*, pp. 363-365).

116. *Collected Writings* 20:42.

117. This title is found in BWN's *A Defense in Reply to the Personal Accusations of Mr. Darby, in Correspondence, Etc., Relating to Mr. Newton's Refusal to Appear before the Saints at Rawstorne Street, London . . .*, and is referred to on p. 25, as is the time of publication.

118. See *Collected Writings* 20:41, 108, 128.

119. [See *Collected Writings* 20:106, 107.]

120. [See *Collected Writings* 20:34, 132, 133.]

121. *Fry MS*, pp. 370, 371.

122. This is taken from L. Pilson, *A Vindication of Separation*, pp. 13, 14, who quotes at more length.

123. [See also *Collected Writings* 20:41, 42, 79, 106, 107n, 108, 114, 126, 127-131.]

124. *Collected Writings* 20:128.

125. See *Collected Writings* 20:35.

126. *Collected Writings* 20:117, 120.

127. *Collected Writings* 11:1-23.

128. W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 12.

129. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 248.

130. *Collected Writings* 20:55. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:120.

131. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 24.

132. *Collected Writings* 20:81. W. Trotter, *Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 13.

133. *Collected Writings* 20:131.

134. *Collected Writings* 20: 132-135. W. Trotter, *Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 14. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 249.

135. *Collected Writings* 20:158, 159.

136. *Collected Writings* 20:150. See p. 151.

137. W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 14.

138. *Collected Writings* 20:160.

139. *Collected Writings* 20:167-177.

140. W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 14.

141. *Collected Writings* 15:45.

142. *Collected Writings* 15: 136, 137; cp. 20: 179; G. V. Wigram, *An Answer of Mr. G. V. Wigram to "Mr. Craik's Letter, Dated November, 1848*, p. 3.

143. *Collected Writings* 15:44, 46; 20:179n, has some comments on this.

144. *The Whole Case of Plymouth and Bethesda*, pp. 17, 18.

145. *The Sufferings of Christ as Set forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI considered by J. L. Harris*, p. 21.

146. *The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in A Lecture on Psalm VI Considered by J. L. Harris*, pp. 21-23.

Palliators of evil attack chiefly JND, but J. L. Harris also on two grounds:

(1) ". . . some incorrect notes" (C. B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism*, p. 84).

(2) J. L. Harris wrote a tract attacking these notes without contacting BWN concerning their validity (C. B. Bass, *ibid.*, p. 84).

One of the marks of palliators of evil and their hostility to those who oppose and expose it, is their trying to make the way a thing was done the issue, thus diverting attention from the real issue.

147. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

148. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

149. B. W. Newton on Psalm 6 is more fully examined in W. Trotter, *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .*, p. 13ff.

150. Comments by JND concerning this preface, how it was inserted, and the doctrine contained in it will be found in the *Collected Writings* 15:38-40, 98-101, 113, 117, 118, 136, 157, 179.

151. *Collected Writings* 15. H. H. Rowdon, with Open Brethren, calls this paper "a bitter attack on the integrity as well as the orthodoxy of Newton" (*The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 259).

152. *The Whole Case of Plymouth and Bethesda*, pp. 17-24.

153. *Collected Writings* 15:44

154. *Observations on the Doctrines of Notes of Lectures on Psalms XXIII, XXXI, XXXVIII . . .*, pp. 17-18, 31.

155. *Collected Writings* 20:207. JND's *Bethesda Circular*, quoted in full in Section 9, makes the same charge about G. Muller. His course was a zig-zag one as Section 9 and Appendix XX shows.

156. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 130, saying, however:

. . . but surely the term may be justified, however much we regret that so excellent a man as Harris should have shared, in an evil moment, in a policy that denied to Newton the common rights, I do not say of a Christian brother, but of a fellow creature.

This pretention to righteous indignation is because J. L. Harris did not go to BWN about it first. One would think that this absurd remark and its justification of G. Muller was about a word or phrase, instead of about various papers circulated in manuscript form. The character of what fell into J. L. Harris's hands precludes the necessity of having to have spoken to BWN about it before exposing its character, because what fell into his hands was an elaborate scheme. Moreover, it:

. . . came, indeed, from his [BWN's] own family, and was circulated by his friends . . . The person from whom it came, residing in his house with him, was apprised that it would be kept, and stated that it was the substance of Mr. N.'s lecture correctly given . . . Is it evil, if the proof is clear of its character and origin, to show what it is, and whence it comes? . . . No; I publish plainly what it is, and who it is. *Collected Writings* 15:44.

See also *Collected Writings* 20:179n.

157. I do not have a copy. The date was given in G. V. Wigram, *The Present Question 1848 - 1849*, p. 2, where he speaks of it as Harris' and M'Adam's tract. That probably is Christopher McAdam.

158. *Collected Writings* 15:34-96. In his *Letters* 1:271 he remarked that his comments on the Psalms in his *Synopsis* are more precise.

159. W. Trotter, *What Are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .*, p. 9.

160. *Collected Writings* 15:98-116.

161. *Collected Writings* 4:174; 7:221; 10: 69; 14:265; 15:95, 98, 117; 31:307, 466; *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:482.

162. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*. . . , p. 25.

163. *Collected Writings* 10:94.

164. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*. . . , p. 34.

165. On the previous Saturday he and S. P. Tregelles met together and SPT wanted a meeting for prayer. SPT wrote:

. . . this he *refused*; he said that he could not pray when sin was in question.

It was quickly manifest how much Mr. Soltau felt that there was something very unsound in my statement (though I believe it to be borne out by all the Scriptures which speak of the Lord as being of the seed of David and of Israel as concerning the flesh), and he showed that he did not think that fellowship could continue (*Three Letters*, p. 27).

H. W. Soltau was ready to make a confession of the evil. It is clear from SPT's own words that he was implicated in the doctrines of BWN

166. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*. . . , pp. 27, 28. See *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:121.

167. The "present position" of H. W. Soltau was that he had gone with Bethesda in the division that will be discussed in Section 9. However, this confession does support what JND had been saying regarding Ebrington Street. Apparently H. W. Soltau was prepared to enter into mutual concessions (J. N. Darby, *Letter on the Confession of Error by Some*," *Collected Writings* 20:200).
168. Cited by L. Pilson, *Vindication of Separation . . .*, pp. 31-32.
169. JND's comments on it are found in *Collected Writings* 15:188. See also W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, pp. 21, 22.
170. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*, pp. 30, 31.
171. *Collected Writings* 15:127. See also p. 132 (top). See also W. Trotter, *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines*, p. 10.
172. See *Collected Writings* 20: 19, 20, 28, 29, 35, 45, 52-56, 62, 63, 66, 84, 101-103, 153, 163, 170, 176, 180, 182.
173. S. P. Tregelles, *Three Letters*, p. 34n.
174. I do not know in what month. W. Trotter says it was some months after BWN's *Acknowledgement (The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 25).
175. *Collected Writings* 15:117; see also pp. 118, 119, 122, 137.
176. *Collected Writings* 15:174.
177. *Collected Writings* 15:179, 185, 187, 198.
178. Its worthlessness is noted by W. Kelly in *The Brethren and Their Traducers*. On pp. 23-25 he summarized BWN's heresy and roundly condemned it: "inevitably destroy the atonement," etc.
179. *Collected Writings* 15:186.
180. *Collected Writings* 15. See also *ibid.* 15:136.
181. JND well knew the character of broad-path indifferentism. A modern example of one accusing JND of relentlessness is H. H. Rowdon (*Open Brethren*), "A Nineteenth-Century Nestorius," *Vox Evangelica*, p. 65, (1962).
182. *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered,"* p. 36.
183. *Collected Writings* 15:108n.
184. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, pp. 25,26.
185. Quoted in N. Noel, *History of the Brethren* 1:151 -- *Letter of G. Muller to J. G. Deck*, Dec. 12, 1848.
186. *An Answer of G. V. Wigram to Mr. H. Craik's Letter, Dated 15th November, 1848*, p. 4, note.
187. Cited by L. Pilson, *Vindication of Separation . . .*p. 43.
188. *Collected Writings* 15:122-124, 126; 20:150, 151, 201.
189. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, pp. 27-29.
190. *Collected Writings* 20:199. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:131.
191. *The Present Question 1848-1849*, pp. 3, 10.
192. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 157.
193. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 148.
194. *The Present Question; 1848 - 1849*, p. 3; and on p. 10 he called the meeting a "victory over a work of Satan."
195. J. N. Darby, *Collected Writings* 15:88n.
196. *Fry MS*, p. 375.
197. *Fry MS*, p. 381.
198. *Fry MS*, p. 375, 376. The emphasis is mine.
199. *Fry MS*, p. 376.
200. Cited in G. H. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, p. 159.

201. *Fry MS*, p. 444 (the last page).
202. *Remarks on Mr. Newton's Doctrines on the Sufferings of Christ*, p. 2, note.
203. *Fry MS*, p. 376.
204. *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered,"* p. 15.
205. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
206. *Christ, Our Suffering Surety*, p. 58. Cf. *Collected Writings* 15:119 where JND says he did not withdraw such doctrine in his *Acknowledgement*, but maintained it. In after years, he taught it more subtly.
207. *The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in A Lecture on Psalm VI Considered by J. L. Harris*, p. 7.
208. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
209. *Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus*, pp. 31, 32.
210. *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered,"* p. 36.
211. *Christ our Suffering Surety*, p. 7.
212. *Christ, Our Suffering Surety*, p. 15.
213. From "The Eternal Sonship of Christ," in G. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, p. 91.
214. *Collected Writings* 15:154.
215. *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*, quoted in John Cox, Jr., *A Refutation of Certain Charges Made by the Brethren*, p. 15.
216. *Brief Statements in the Form of Answers to Questions*, p. 4.
217. *Collected Writings* 15:63, 64, 107.
218. *Collected Writings* 15:140, 142, 150, 152. See also pp. 175, 181 and 182.
219. *Collected Writings* 15:94, 162; see also p. 147.
220. *Collected Writings* 15:129, 150.
221. *Remarks . . .*, p. 31.
222. *Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus*, p. 8.
223. *Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus*, p. 12.
224. *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered,"* p. 26.
225. From *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*, quoted in John Cox, Jr., *A Refutation of Certain Charges Made by the Brethren*, p. 17.
226. *Observations*, p. 9.
227. *Observations*, p. 34n.
228. See Appendix 1.
229. *Letter . . .*, p. 33; quoted by A. C. Ord, *Is There Not a Cause*.
230. *Letter to a Friend, Concerning a Tract Recently Published at Cork*, p. 19.
231. *Ancient Truths*, p. 15 (p. 16 in sec. ed., 1869). Concerning this statement, N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:176n, says that this statement was repeated in 1867 in *Foundation Truths*.
232. *Is There Not a Cause?*, p. 33.
233. [W. Trotter dealt with this in his *What Are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .*, pp. 17, 18, where he called the expression "sinless penalties" a "paradox." He pointed out that sinless means exempt from sin; and penalty means punishment, censure, judicial infliction.]
234. *Is There Not a Cause?*, p. 35.

235. *Collected Writings* 15:151.
236. *Collected Writings* 15:99, 105, 106, 108, 138n, 148.
237. *Collected Writings* 15:148, 150, 151.
238. *Collected Writings* 15: 149, 150, 154n, 159n, 172, 180.
239. *Collected Writings* 15:125, 147, 147, 149n, 151, 161
240. *Collected Writings* 15:51, 52n, 54, 59, 64, 67, 98, 63, 65, 107, 181, 184.
241. *Confession of a Verbal Error in a Hymn* .
242. *Collected Writings* 4:174; 7:221; 10: 69; 14: 236; 15:95, 98, 117, 153; 31:307, 466; *Letters* 1:482.
243. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism* , p. 26.
244. See his *A History of the Brethren Movement* , p. 154, note 29.
245. *A History of the Brethren Movement* , p. 152.
246. [Some of JND's comments on the *Acknowledgement* are found in the *Collected Writings* 15: 117-119, 122, 137, 174, 179, 183ff, 198.]
247. *A History of the Brethren Movement* , p. 150, note.
248. *A History of the Brethren Movement* , p. 149.
249. *A History of the Brethren Movement* , p. 148.
250. Foreword, *Teachers of the Faith and Future: B. W. Newton and S. P. Tregelles*.
251. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
252. "A Nineteenth Century Nestorius," *Vox Evangelica*, p. 62, (1962).
253. *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 222.
254. *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 378, note 28.
255. *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 381, note 38.
256. *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 221.
257. *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism*, p. 9.
258. *The Brethren and Their Traducers*, p. 26.
259. *Collected Writings* 20:134.
260. *The Brethren and Their Traducers*, pp. 24, 25.
261. *Is There Not a Cause?*, p. 36.
262. *Collected Writings* 15:112.
263. *Collected Writings* 15:46.
264. Vicarious means substitutionary -- taking another's place. It does not mean that the one acting vicariously is himself in the *state* of the others. For example, if we speak of vicarious sufferings of Christ in the three hours of darkness on the cross we mean that He was the sinner's substitute but that does not mean that He Himself was a sinner. He was there in the place of the sinner.

In the *Christian Witness*, then, BWN spoke of Christ's place being "vicariously incurred" (Cf. *Collected Writings* 15:179.) Soon he dropped that, speaking only of vicarious suffering as having occurred on the cross. W. Trotter pointed out how he had shifted in his use of this term as applying to the Lord's life.

JND remarked upon BWN dropping the word vicarious (*Collected Writings* 15:136, note. Cf. pp. 162, 179, 152 note, 40, 41). He would later, after all was exposed, again shift to hiding his evil system under the word "vicarious" thus deceiving more people. BWN was a shifty man to deal with. Not only was he shifty, he was sneaky.

Further, subsequently Mr. N. taught that Jesus was a constituted sinner, born such, and based this on Romans 5:19, as is publicly and universally known.

Having broached this doctrine some four years ago at a reading meeting, the doctrine was subsequently objected to by one present; and Mr. N. justified it in a long letter, but told the person to keep it secret, as the saints were not prepared to receive it yet. It was then taught privately, and, circulated under the strictest guard against its enunciation to those not "prepared to receive it," was, through God's mercy, detected, and was then, on some of Mr. N.'s own friends declaring that they could have nothing more to say to him if he did not retract it, retracted as a sin. When he left Plymouth to go to Cornwall, consequent upon the convictions which flashed on the minds of many, he declared that he wished it to be clearly understood that he went voluntarily away as a humiliation, because God, having entrusted him with a new and special truth, which was also said to be a truth which was to save the church, he had failed by bringing it out before the church was ready to receive it.

Now, he declares, it is well known that he never held or taught anything new or peculiar (*Collected Writings* 15:136).

For points of contact between BWN's doctrine when it was brought to light and the *Christian Witness* article, sec. ed., see *Collected Writings* 15:40, 116, 117, 120, 125, 136, 139, 157. This was more fully pointed out by W. Trotter, *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .* pp. 5-9.

265. W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 19.

266. *Remarks on the Suffering of the Lord Jesus*, p. 19. See also pp. 2 and 3n.

267. *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as Set Forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered"*, p. 48. See also pp. 15, 21, 34, 38, 43.

268. *Brief Statements in the form of Answer to Questions*, p. 6.

269. *Letter to a Friend Concerning a Tract Recently Published at Cork*, p. 11.

270. It was well received by *The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, Jan. 1865; *The Morning Advertiser*, April 17, 1865; *The Record*, Feb. 21, 1866; and *Old Truths*, Oct. 1864. See *The Perilous Times*, July 1909, p. 203.

271. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:497.

272. *The Bible Treasury* 6:205.

273. *The Bible Treasury* 6:238. See also p. 255.

274. Following are some characterizations of BWN's doctrine by JND:

"doctrines which overthrow the gospel," *Collected Writings* 4:173;

"subverts the truth of Christ," *ibid* 15:34;

"heresy," *ibid.*, pp. 38, 39, 135;

"work of Satan," *ibid.*, p. 39;

"leaving the pure unmingled heresy of wrath on Christ, which was not vicarious," *ibid.*, p. 41;

"blasphemies," *ibid.*, p. 88;

such a Christ "could not make expiation," *ibid.*, p. 187.

W. Kelly wrote:

The doctrine overthrows Christ as come in the flesh and would make him wholly unfit to be made sin for us, *The Bible Treasury* 15:24.

W. H. Dorman wrote:

Mr. Jukes professing his hatred of Mr. Newton's errors; Mr. [R. M.] Beverly making light of them, and even scoffing at the idea of Satanic agency connected with them; but both agree in maintaining there is no power to shut out the evil from the gatherings of the saints: nor any warrant, except on the most sectarian grounds, to refuse association with those who are known to be its most effectual abettors. *A Review of Certain Evils & Questions that have Arisen Amongst Brethren*, p. 14.

275. I have seen the date 1843 used. My copy is dated 1844.

276. *Fry MS*, p. 320.

277. *Collected Writings* 8:1-320.

278. *Collected Writings* 8:321-343.

279. *Collected Writings* 8:344-377.

280. *Collected Writings* 11:4, 8, 14, 37 and 190-192 where some of the very gross parts are reviewed.

281. What appears to be the earliest printed comments on prophecy by BWN were found by F. Marotta and myself during 1989 in the prophetic journal, *The Investigator*:

The Times of Restitution: Acts 3:19-21, vol. 2, pp. 53-55 (1832), signed "B. W. N., Plymouth, June 15, 1832."

The Future Siege of Jerusalem, vol. 3, pp. 45-49 (1833), signed B. W. N.

On the Book of Daniel, vol. 4, pp. 286-292 (1834), signed B. W. N.

S. P. Tregelles noted that there was a paper by BWN in *The Investigator* (*Three Letters*, p. 69n). This verifies that the papers in *The Investigator* were written by B. W. Newton.

The reader of volume one will recall that BWN had held a competitive meeting against the 1834 Powerscourt meeting and he printed *Answers to the Questions Considered at a Meeting held in Plymouth on September 15, 1834 and the Following Days; Chiefly Compiled From Notes Taken at the Meeting*. BWN's *Five Letters on Events Predicted in Scripture as Antecedent to the Coming of the Lord* was first printed in 1845 but had been circulated in MS from 1840 in various forms.

282. Letter dated Feb. 22, 1901.

283. *Literature and Mission of the so-called Plymouth Brethren*. This W. Reid subsequently came among those whose writings he favorably reviewed in this paper. He edited *The Bible Witness and Review*, 1878-1881, three volumes, (*Bible Treasury* 13:366n). He is to be distinguished from another W. Reid who wrote, *Plymouth Brethrenism Unveiled and Refuted*, of which I have the third ed., 1880. According to this W. Reid (Presbyterian clergyman in Edinburgh), the other who had written so favorably, was an English Presbyterian clergyman.

284. "The doctrine of the author [BWN] on the communication of life is fundamentally unsound now . . . He confounds Deity with communicated life, and hence expressly in terms attributes omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience to the saints, *Collected Writings* 15:115n.

285. *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .*, p. 57.

286. *Collected Writings* 8:63.

287. *Collected Writings* 15: 42, 43.

288. *Collected Writings* 15:159, 160. Also see *The Bible Treasury* 11:299.

289. *Collected Writings* 20:178.

290. *Collected Writings* 15:109n.

291. *The New Development 1890*, p. 14.

292. Sisters had been quite active all through the development of the clerisy at Plymouth. Some references are: *Collected Writings* 20: 18n, 24 (ruling sisters!), 28, 40, 53, 64n; 4:174.

Section 9

Bethesdaism: Corporate, Public Ratification of Unholiness in Christian Fellowship

Introduction

I accept the principle of grace fully, but grace which is not holiness is not God's grace, and holiness is by truth. "Sanctify them by thy truth." Thus saith "he that is holy, he that is true" *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:222.

B. W. Newton and his meeting were now no longer connected with the saints with whom they had been in fellowship. But quickly there was a new assault on the recovered truth. The next snare was to take a position of "indifference" ^a to the evil doctrine concerning Christ by association with BWN's partisans as if such fellowship did not leaven those who would receive BWN's partisans.

"Exclusive brethren" ^b received this name derisively from the fact that they would not receive persons associated with, or coming from BWN's fellowship -- whether or not they had imbibed his evil teachings. Nor would they receive from those whose principle of reception allowed receiving such. Scripture declares that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. The meeting where BWN was associated was a leavened lump and persons coming from there who had not expressly and deliberately judged the evil and separated from it were judged to be leavened. Today in some fundamentalist groups this very issue of such fellowship is being considered under the name "secondary separation." So, the question was, and is, are persons coming from places where evil is tolerated leavened? Yes, they must be refused as are those wicked persons engaged in

a. By *indifference* I mean this: if a congregation of Christians receives a teacher of fundamentally evil doctrine, or receives persons coming from under such teaching (whether they imbibe it or not) without having judged and separated from it, that is *indifference* to Him that is Holy and True.

b. J. G. Bellett said, "We are now called 'Exclusives.' If this title belongs to us, it belongs to the apostle who tells us to act upon the principle which has given us the title (*The Bible Treasury* 16:304).

evil practices or doctrine. Those who did not take this position of separation from evil were called "neutrals"; and subsequently , "Open Brethren." However, there can be no neutrality in divine matters without, in effect, and in reality, supporting evil.

The issue was, then, whether or not association with evil leavens a person. The answer that Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, England, gave was "no." And they acted on this by receiving partisans of BWN to the breaking of bread, some who even held BWN's evil teaching; or so said the "exclusives" who exclude the evil doer (or teacher) and those associated with him. We shall see if the charge is warranted. It is fundamental to the position of Open Brethrenism to deny that receiving a person who comes from a place where evil is tolerated (thus leavened) is the reception of leaven. Indeed, their position is that if an adulterer, say, or a teacher of fundamentally evil doctrine, is tolerated in fellowship in the assembly, the assembly is not a leavened lump.

In connection with being leavened by such reception, Bethesda sought to deny the real character of those persons Bethesda received from BWN's meeting. ¹ This should not be a surprise; for when evil is being done, it is often, if not indeed invariably, accompanied by a lack of uprightness. This seems to be the general experience of those who have had occasion to resist evil among professed Christians. Perhaps those advocating evil courses are not conscious of an accompanying loss of integrity that is quite manifest to those resisting the evil. At any rate, keeping in mind that a loss in integrity accompanies the toleration, indifference to, or support of evil will be helpful to the reader as he reads the documentation of Bethesda's course. If a course is holy before God, why would it be accompanied by a loss of integrity?

JND was an instrument in God's hand to resist Bethesda's course. It is likely that this is the reason so many Open Brethren have slandered him. It is the common lot of those who resist evil to be attacked; for who would listen to a denounced man? G. V. Wigram was much used of the Lord in resisting Bethesda's toleration of evil and so he, too, was depreciated.

*Chapter 9.1**Brief Background to
The Bethesda Division***G. MULLER, H. CRAIK AND THE RECEPTION AT BETHESDA**

Among the 'elders' at Bethesda there were two principle brethren, George Muller^c and Henry Craik. G. Muller was born in 1805 in Prussia and lived a dissolute life until 1825. He was preparing for the Lutheran ministry at that time but was converted at a prayer meeting at a believer's house, to which a fellow student had taken him. In 1829 he went to London to prepare for mission service with the London Missionary Society but soon left this endeavor because he felt he could not accept the human authority entailed. He had also read A. N. Groves' *Christian Devotedness*.

He next went to Teignmouth (1830), became convinced of "believer's baptism" and also in the same year gave up pew rents and fixed salary in connection with a small chapel of which he was in charge. He also met Henry Craik in this year, a former tutor to the family of A. N. Groves, who had gone to Baghdad on a missionary journey. H. Craik went to Bristol and his labors there were successful. He sent to G. Muller to come and help and so in April 1832, these two Baptist ministers began a lifelong partnership. Soon after they began to break bread on Lord's day evenings, with a few others. These two moved their sphere of labor to the city of Bristol, England. There already was in Bristol a little company of saints gathered together to the name of Christ (Matt. 18:20) on the basis that there is one body (Eph. 4:3). W. Kelly wrote:

Meanwhile the Baptist brethren at Teignmouth had migrated to Bristol, and, after giving up their peculiar principles, had at length professed to own the great truth of the presence and free action of the Holy Ghost in the assembly; so that a little company of brethren previously separate were induced to be with them on the common ground of saints gathered to Christ's name.²

This involved reception of an entire congregation. Looking back upon this many years later, C. H. Mackintosh remarked:

It had been my conviction for many years, that this reception of a congregation was a fatal mistake on the part of brethren . . . Conscience is an individual thing; and unless we act individually before God, there will be no stability in our course. A whole body of people, led by their teachers, may profess to take certain ground, and adopt certain principles; but what security is there that each member of that body is acting in the energy of personal faith, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and on the authority of the word of God? It is of the very last importance that, in every step we take, we should act in simple faith, in communion with God, and with an exercised conscience . . . The fact is, Bethesda ought never to have been

c. His last name has been spelled in various ways. We will use Muller.

acknowledged as an assembly gathered on divine ground: and this is proved by the fact that, when called to act on the truth of the unity of the body of Christ, it completely broke down.³

At any rate, over the years preceding the Bethesda division, many, many souls were added to this company. A. N. Groves was quite attracted to Bethesda.⁴ See Appendix 2.

It is evident from reading Section 8, concerning Plymouth and BWN, that saints in many locations had not generally judged the evil as they really ought to have. There was not a thorough humbling. There had been much defence of BWN as well as palliation. God was not indifferent to this dishonor to His Son and so there had to be further chastening. JND knew this:

But I look upon B. [Bethesda] as a mere occasion in God's hands, for chastening us for our own previous unfaithfulness. Why did we fail rightly to judge and put away the evil? I admit brethren did. But how came this? Why did God permit them to be thus sifted by an evil they did not know how, had not the wisdom and courage, to deal with? Does God lightly and for no cause send such affliction and humiliation?⁵

SUMMARY OF THE BETHESDA MATTER

The following is a summary of the Bethesda matter in a letter by JND. This over-all survey should help us get our bearings and see some of the moral issues involved. The rest of Section 9 will enlarge upon this and document the facts. Indeed, the case will be seen to be worse than here described by JND, who wrote:

First I must tell you that I believe that if one meeting receives the members^d of another, and the members of the former go there in their turn, there is a bond between the two,^e although I own that in the present case other motives have power over me. This is how it is then as to B. Doctrine is not in question, but faithfulness to Christ with respect to doctrine or holiness. I would not receive a person who knowingly formed part of a meeting which admits heretics, or persons whose conduct is bad, because the principle of indifference to good and evil, to error and truth, is as bad as the wrong action, and even worse. Let me be clearly understood. I believe that the church is bound to be jealous with respect to the glory of the Person of Christ. If Christ is despised, I have no principle of union. I believe that B. [Bethesda] has acted with profound contempt for the Lord, to say nothing of brethren. Here there is nothing equivocal. Mr. N. [Newton] was maintaining a doctrine of which Mr. Muller himself said that if it were true, Christ would have needed to be saved as much as he did. This doctrine placed Christ under the effect of Adam's sin by His birth, in saying that He had to gain life by keeping the law. We had driven away this doctrine and those who upheld it, and the struggle was ended. The persons who had supported MN. [Newton] had published confessions

d. [When writing formally on the subject of *membership*, JND denies that *membership* is in the local assembly. This is because in Scripture *members* are said to be members of Christ and members of one another, of one body. Here, he is speaking conventionally.]

e. [He is speaking of a bond *in practice*. There is always existent the bond of membership in one body, by the Spirit. But this is generally not expressed in practice; and where 'practiced' it is often accompanied by indifference to holiness; i.e., it is a form of ecumenicalism.]

with respect to the doctrine, and had made confessions before the brethren publicly of the falsehoods and wickedness by which they had tried to make good their views and to justify themselves; it was a truly extraordinary work of Satan.

Well, a lady wished to introduce Mr. N. [B. W. Newton] to teach in a meeting near Bethesda; this meeting refused; she left the meeting accordingly. She was introduced at B. [Bethesda], Mr. M. [G. Muller] knowing that she was maintaining and propagating this doctrine, Mr. Craik the other pastor having had to do with her. She went there because they admitted such persons into that meeting. At the same time, two gentlemen, who made part of the meeting which Mr. N. had formed when he was obliged to leave on account of his doctrine (those who had supported him having left him and made confession), these two communicants of Mr. N.'s, I say were also admitted to B. It is proved true that these three disseminated Mr. N.'s tracts in the B. assembly. The lady induced a young lady to go who was the most active and intelligent agent that Mr. N. had, in order to spread his doctrines. In consequence of these circumstances, several godly brothers of B. asked that all this should be examined; they said that they did not ask even that the judgment of the brethren should be taken thereupon, but that they should examine the matter and the doctrine themselves. This was decidedly refused. I received a letter from Mr. [H. Craik], blaming me as sectarian for making these difficulties, even when he was not prepared to receive *everything* that Mr. N. was teaching. They had many meetings of the flock and the ten laboring brothers (of whom two were really disciples of Mr. N. [B. W. Newton]), Messrs. M. [G. Muller] and C. [H. Craik] at their head, presented a written paper^f to the assembly at B. [Bethesda], declaring that this was a new test of communion, which they would not admit; that many excellent brethren did not give so decided an opinion upon Mr. N.'s doctrine; that they were not bound to read fifty pages to know what Mr. N. taught, the members of his flock being -- mark this! -- already admitted at B. A brother asked permission to communicate some information about Mr. N.'s doctrine, in order that the assembly might understand why they held to it that the doctrine should be judged; and this was peremptorily refused, and the paper which said that many had not a bad opinion of the doctrine, was laid down as the absolute condition of the pastorate of Messrs. M. and C., without which they would withdraw from their ministry in the midst of the assembly. Those who justified them on the ground of this paper were to rise, which was done by the assembly, thirty or forty forthwith leaving B. So that, with knowledge of the matter, they laid down as the basis of the B. assembly, indifference to the truth as to the Person of Christ; and they preferred to see about forty godly brethren leave, rather than to examine into the question, having in fact in their midst the members of the N. meeting. This was so much the more important in my eyes, because Satan was seeking at that moment, and still seeks, to forbid the assembly of the children of God to examine into and to judge any heresy whatsoever; that once a person has been acknowledged as being a Christian, one has no right to know what he holds. This has been plainly laid down as a principle by many persons who blame us, and they desired to take advantage of it to force us to receive a young man who distinctly denied that there was such a Person as the Holy Ghost. I do not say that all lay down this principle, but the enemy sought to bring it in, and amongst the brethren who opposed me on this question, some of the most violent maintain it.

f. [This is a document known as the *Letter of the Ten*. It is a document stating a principle of reception, signed by 10 principle leaders at Bethesda, two of which were BWN's sympathizers. It was sanctioned by the congregation standing up to accept it. This letter will be discussed in Chapter 9.3 while Appendix 10 contains G. V. Wigram's detailed analysis of it.]

Now the principle of indifference as to the Person of Christ being laid down at Bethesda, and the assembly having publicly accepted it, I refuse to admit this principle. They have admitted persons put outside amongst us on account of blasphemy. Messrs. M. and C. are the pastors of the assembly in virtue of this principle. This letter has never been withdrawn: they claim to have done right. Many things will doubtless be told you in excuse, and to make it appear that they have done things which nullify this: I know how it is with them. For me their condition before God has become much, *much* worse. I should be ready to say why I believe that they are themselves more or less infected with false doctrine, but I cannot enter into the story in detail. Mr. M. [Muller] said to *me* (after having acknowledged that Christ would have needed to be saved as much as we, if this doctrine was admitted) that they maintained the *Letter of the Ten* to the full, and that they had done well in all that they had done. Well, indifference to Christ is a grave sin: an assembly which bases itself publicly on this principle I cannot accept as a christian assembly. Assemblies which are connected with B., which go there and receive from thence, are one with B. -- save the case of persons who are ignorant of the matter, an exceptional case of which it is not necessary to speak. For my part this is what I do; having distinctly taken my position I judge each case individually according to its merits, but I will not receive a person who keeps up his connection with B. with knowledge of the matter. Faithfulness to Christ before everything; I know not why I labor and suffer if this is not the principle of my conduct.

The fact is that brethren had fallen into a state of spiritual demoralization which required this sifting, and as they get out of it individually they reject B., which is taking place, thank God, every day. Persons who have written tracts against me write their own condemnation, while declaring that they were deceived at Bristol [where Bethesda meeting was]. As to that, my resolution is taken: I am deeply convinced that the basis of the B. meeting is contempt of Christ^g and I do not walk with those who accept it, and I will not mix with it; it would be indifference to my own conduct. If consequently I walk alone it is well: I am content as to myself; I deplore the condition of souls. I do not say that all that has been done to oppose it has been wise. I do not think so, but my judgment of the matter in the main is definitely taken. I believe B. [Bethesda] in a much worse condition than at the beginning of the question.⁶

g. [That is, the practice, in reality, has that meaning of contempt for Christ, Who, professedly, is in the midst (Matt. 18:20), though those who do so think that they thus serve God. When Paul persecuted Christians he thought that he was serving God, doing God's will.]

*Chapter 9.2**The Reception
of Leaven***LEAVEN LEAVENING THE LUMP**

1 Cor. 5:6 calls our attention to the fact that a little leaven leavens the whole lump, for there was a case of incest among the saints at Corinth. The aspect of leaven presented in 1 Cor. 5 is that its tolerated presence alters the character of the lump. There is another aspect of leaven, namely, that it diffuses itself, assimilating all to itself. This last is not the primary aspect of 1 Cor. 5. The view that everyone in the lump must be engaging in the acts before the lump is leavened ought to be understood to be an attempt to escape responsibility for the tolerated presence of evil in a congregation of Christians. Such a view of leaven leavening the lump is an effort to evacuate this Scripture of its force; for that would mean that each in the assembly would actually have to engage in, say, incest before the whole lump is leavened. This view suits those indifferent to the person of Christ. Such prefer brethrenism to separation from leaven; and so they define the meaning of leaven leavening the lump in such a way that it is virtually impossible for the (whole) lump to be leavened.

Verse 7 says, "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, according as ye are unleavened." Saints are unleavened, looked at according to their standing -- in Christ. Saints are to answer in practice, to their standing and thus in practice to be unleavened. Thus will they be a new lump, i.e., an unleavened lump. Therefore to maintain the character of being a new lump (which is collective, i.e., corporate) they must, in practice be free of leaven among themselves. So the Corinthians were told to purge the leaven out, that they may be a new lump, answering to their standing. Had they refused they would have lost the new lump character and become a leavened lump.

Someone coming from a leavened lump is, obviously, a part of a leavened lump, leavened. The only way to free oneself from leaven is to judge it, separate from it, and have no fellowship with it.

Gal. 5:9 applies this to doctrine. Fundamentally evil doctrine, if tolerated instead of being purged out, also leavens the whole lump (not merely a part of it). Thus, if one came from BWN's fellowship, or held his doctrine, or supported his doctrine (2 John 9,10), he would be leavened. Now, the assembly is told to purge out the leaven -- not, to receive it.

THE TWO-FOLD CHARGE AGAINST BETHESDA

The Bethesda meeting refused to act on these Scriptures. JND wrote,

The breach with what, from the name of a chapel, is called Bethesda . . . was because they received those who came from, and in some cases were imbued with, the teaching of Mr. Newton.⁷

The charge is two-fold:

1. The reception of those who came from BWN's fellowship;
2. The reception of some who held BWN's evil doctrine concerning the humanity of Christ.

G. V. Wigram wrote:

The primary charge against Bethesda was the sin of receiving and sanctioning the agents of the system, the immoral system of Compton-street; ^h clearly, if not tainted with the blasphemous errors, yet, if agents of such a system -- a system in which men of the highest natural rectitude had proved that (being deluded) they could state as fact that which they knew to be the very opposite of it, and deny to be fact what they knew was fact -- I say, if agents and under the energy of such a system, their being individually free from error in doctrine mattered not. I knew in Ebrington-street those who are now in Compton-street who repudiate with horror the doctrine, and perhaps do not hold it, and who yet are under the power of this spell, so that they circulate the books and are utterly regardless of truth. The primary charge against Bethesda was, that it made itself the home of some that were such.⁸

Lord Congleton, the well-known defender of BWN and of Bethesda, represented the case this way:

The real state of the case is this -- that persons known as friends of Mr. Newton, though not known as holding his errors, but as denying that he himself holds the doctrines laid to his charge, have been received into communion. Bethesda brethren considered that they ought to receive such into communion, if they were *individually* sound in the faith and walking orderly. But in addition to this, Bethesda refused to take up *as a body*, the consideration and investigation of the Plymouth errors. She did not refuse to inquire into the doctrines held by those who came to her from Plymouth, when there were *credible* grounds for suspicion; ⁱ but she refused to take up *corporately* the inquiry of the amount of error held by Mr. Newton, or put forth by him in his tracts. The question that arises is, Should we refuse to receive from a congregation that has acted as Bethesda has done?⁹

The reader will decide whether or not this is a fair representation of the case regarding Bethesda's reception of BWN partisans. Bethesda and her supporters have claimed:

h. [Compton St. was the location where BWN and his party met in the city of Plymouth after leaving Ebrington St., Plymouth, where the meeting was originally located before the troubles arose.]

i. [A few pages below we will note the reception of Henry Woodfall, which completely refutes Lord Congleton's palliation of the evil course pursued at Bethesda.]

1. Some were received who held BWN's doctrine, but it was not known.
2. Bethesda never received anyone who held BWN's doctrine.

The facts of the case give not the slightest warrant for any of these positions.

JND's VISIT TO BETHESDA AFTER THE RECEPTION OF THE WOODFALLS

In April 1848 JND visited in Bristol, where the Bethesda assembly was, after the reception by Bethesda of some partisans of B. W. Newton. Since the fact of this visit was used to imply that JND was inconsistent (on the assumption that he knew of the reception of a partisan of BWN), we will consider this visit in connection with that reception, concluding that, in fact, JND did not know of that reception. Let us now direct our attention to the case of the reception of BWN's partisan, Henry Woodfall. H. H. Rowdon, who supports Bethesda, wrote:

Henry Woodfall was one of Newton's principle supporters after the *debacle* of December, 1847. *Fry Letters*, 1847, folio 9 (letter of H. Woodfall to B. W. Newton of 15 December, 1847).¹⁰

This is true; and thus Henry Woodfall and his brother Col.¹¹ Woodfall, were **partakers in the wicked works** of one who went forward and did not abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11). The letter by H. Woodfall is reproduced here:

Wednesday Evg., 15 Dec. 1847

My dear Newton,

You have heard what took place on Monday Evening ___ I can only say it was unsought by any of us, on the contrary we had done all we could to dissuade Soltau & Batten from giving the Meeting on Monday Evg. *Such* a turn as would *constrain* us, as conscientious men, to openly differ with them -- our counsel was all in vain, and the result has been the withdrawal of Soltau and no doubt of Batten also.

Now, dear Newton, it will be our endeavor to turn them from their apparently fixed purpose, for this I know is what you would approve but I honestly tell you I have not the most distant expectation that we shall succeed, and if we do *not* and they persist in their separation I feel quite satisfied you *must* come back and resume your post and that very speedily --

It will be pretty clear to me the Lord has formed the opening for you and that your *duty* recalls you to your post at Plymouth.

My present path appears to be to comfort and strengthen Tregelles in every way in any power so as to keep things together quietly for ten days or so, but we shall not be able to go on much longer and I do not see how you can refuse to come to our help --

And now in returning I have a hint or two to lay before you but for the present I merely advise you to take very independent ground if any are dissatisfied, from any cause whatever, they had better get satisfied, or after calm deliberation leave the gathering --

[S. P.] Tregelles has been much supported, and I have felt happy because I

think I have seen things fashioned by the Lord, without any planning on my part, and although it will be hard work to fight even for the short period of your absence I shall inflect support because I feel in the *path* of righteousness --

Let me have a line in return & believe me -- my dear Newton

Yours affectionately, Henry Woodfall

[Postscript] I have been almost surprised to witness the general feeling spontaneously manifested in your favor

That was written on Dec 15, 1848. Then, during April 1848, Henry Woodfall and his brother, Col. Woodfall, visited Bristol and desired to break bread at Bethesda. Henry Groves (son of A. N. Groves) wrote:

About the 20th April, 1848, after the reception of Col. Woodfall and his brother [Henry], Mr. Darby came to Bristol, and as usual called on Mr. Muller, by whom he was asked to preach the following Sunday evening at Bethesda. This is mentioned as showing that up to this time no breach between Mr . D. and Bethesda had taken place. In the intercourse between them nothing passed that indicated the course that a few days later Mr. Darby initiated. Mr. Darby stated his inability to preach in Bethesda, having previously engaged to preach somewhere on his road to Exeter. But notwithstanding this friendly intercourse, not many days after, he intimated publicly, at a large meeting of laboring brethren in Exeter, that he could no more go to Bethesda because the Woodfalls had been received. All were not prepared for this hasty manner of withdrawal, and it was asked whether any intimation had been given to those concerned, before so solemn an act as separation took place. This had not been done, though subsequently, on the remonstrance of others, Mr. D. did write a letter from Exeter to Mr. Muller, intimating his decision in the matter , and thus closed the fellowship which for years had been maintained. ¹²

Much blame has been heaped upon JND by Open Brethren that he gave no word of warning on the occasion of this visit. Be that as it may , the subsequent refusal by Bethesda to deal with the matter when complaints poured in (besides complaints by local brothers), indicated that the complaint against JND concerning this point in time is merely a polemical tactic to place blame elsewhere and make him seem hypocritical. However, such conduct seems out of character for JND. Is it possible he did not know of the Woodfall's reception at the time of this visit? Lord Congleton wrote:

About the end of April, 1848, Mr. John Darby, who had previously told Mr. Muller he should be glad to go to Bethesda, heard that the Messrs. Woodfall had been received there, and thereupon wrote to Mr. Muller to say that he could not go there. ¹³

So this shows that others have manufactured yet another complaint against JND. A remark by JND in his *Bethesda Circular* (printed in Chapter 9.4) also indicates that, on the occasion of the visit to G. Muller in April 1848, JND did not know of the reception of the Woodfalls.

Chapter 9.3

Sheltering the Leaven by Principle

THE RECEPTION OF LEAVEN AT BETHESDA

J. S. Oliphant, who left the Bethesda adherents in 1864, wrote:

In the year 1848, those meeting at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, *received into communion persons known to be in fellowship with Mr. N.*; and this was done in spite of the entreaties and warnings of brethren both in Bristol and elsewhere, *charging these persons with being implicated in the evil.* In Bath a meeting had been held, and the doctrines had been judged, and one person, who stood separate from the Bath meeting because Mr. N. would not be received, was amongst those received at Bethesda. The two Messrs, W. [Woodfall], *both charged upon the testimony of many witnesses with being accomplices in the evil, wer e also received.*¹⁴

Thus there was public knowledge that Henry Woodfall was a partisan of BWN, and there was ample warning concerning the character of the persons that the leaders at Bethesda were bent on having received. In particular, the connection of Henry Woodfall and some others with BWN was well known at Bethesda. In April 1848, G. Alexander, a brother in fellowship at Bethesda, wrote to Henry Craik, a principle brother at Bethesda, and the laboring brethren there, as follows:

The last paper published by Mr. N.[B. W. Newton], which Mr. W. [Woodfall] *is now circulating* here (I have known two copies given away by him, and one is now before me), contains extracts from Bishop Pearson's 'Exposition of the Apostles' Creed,' which Mr. N. commends to the saints as 'illustrating the Scripture doctrines of the real humanity and sufferings of our Blessed Lord.' In this paper I find, amongst several extracts of a like character, the following in page 9: --

"As He [Jesus] was truly and properly Man, in the same MOR TAL^j nature which the SONS OF ADAM HAVE, so did he undergo a true and proper death, in the same manner as we die; for Christ, who took upon Him all our infirmities, sin only excepted, *had, IN HIS NATURE not only a possibility* and aptitude, but *also a NECESSITY OF DYING.*

Again, "This body of Christ, really and truly human, *was also FRAIL and MORTAL*, as being accompanied with *all the natural pr operties* which necessarily flow from *the condition of a FRAIL and MORTAL body.*"

j. [The subject of the alleged mortality of Christ is taken up in Appendix 6.]

I would simply put it to your heart and conscience, dear brother and the brethren, whether, by any interpretation, we can get over passages of this nature, especially that quoted from Mr. N.'s own recantation. If the Lord Jesus, in consequence of Adam's sin, became possessed of a mortal body, and *therefore* MUST HAVE DIED, independently of laying down his life for the sheep, -- for instead of a voluntary, vicarious laying down of life, he *must die* in CONSEQUENCE of Adam's sin, -- then we have no atonement; the Lord of Glory, the Son of God, the Second Adam was of dust and ashes like us! as our brother Chapman so exactly stated."¹⁵

G. V. Wigram told how this letter was answered:

To this letter there was no definite answer. The question was again considered; and most said they saw no responsibility to do anything. All felt not so, for some one or other said, "Well, then, all one can do is, to act individually, and save one's own conscience," or words to that effect. Mr. Alexander said he should visit Mr. H. Woodfall. After the meeting, others agreed to go also. Mr. . A. went next morning, when Mr. H. W. said he should not teach, because he did not understand the doctrines, but would not promise not to circulate the tracts.¹⁶

In May, 1848, a second letter from G. Alexander to G. Muller and H. Craik read:

Whether I regard Mrs. Browne's case, or that of the Woodfalls (which has only been noticed by two or three amongst us), or the declaration of our brother Aitcheson,^k that he felt perfectly at liberty to circulate all Mr. N.'s tracts, though through respect to others he might feel restrained (which Mr. . H. Woodfall likewise declared); in fact, which ever way I look, it seems to me that, duly considering our present circumstances, and all that has gone on around (which, as members of the same one body, we are bound to consider) we are most imperatively called upon to inquire and judge in this matter. I solemnly believe it is the *first* work, the *chief* thing we have now to do. Let me ask here, dear brethren, how could you meet Mrs. Brown, were she pleased to defend Mr. Newton's tracts, to justify his doctrine regarding the Person of Christ our Lord, to state her wish to invite Mr. N. here (as she did state her wish and intention so to do at Bath)? what could you say as not having satisfied your minds respecting the tracts and doctrines? Could you scripturally refuse fellowship to Mr. Newton, or to accredit him as one accustomed to teach the saints? I believe not, unless the question be judged.¹⁷

As to the case of Mrs. Brown, G. V. Wigram commented:

Mrs. Brown was "*not received*" at this time, though she was breaking bread. That is, Bethesda has a technical term "*not received*," like the domestic denial of politeness, "*not at home*." She was breaking bread, but something or other had not been done; or it did not suit them to admit she "*was received*." I beg it may be noticed that I do NOT say "she had been received," for fault has once been found with me for so saying. I only say she *was breaking bread*.¹⁸

Shortly after these letters G. Alexander wrote a third time, withdrawing from fellowship at Bethesda.

k. [Robert Aitcheson was one who signed the *Letter of the Ten*. The sequel will show that he was a partisan of B. W. Newton, along with J. Withy, another who signed the *Letter of the Ten*.]

J. M. CODE'S DESCRIPTION OF BETHESDA'S POSITION

J. M. Code, a brother in fellowship at Bethesda, who refused to rise up to endorse the *Letter of the Ten* which sanctioned the principle of reception that Bethesda acted on in receiving the Woodfalls, gave an address at the Brunswick Street meeting. L. Pilson wrote:

Mr. Code told us that, "at the first," persons were allowed to remain in communion at Bethesda who held Mr. Newton's blasphemous opinions, and others were let in against all warnings. The Woodfalls and Mrs. Brown were recognized as belonging to Mr. N.'s [Newton] meeting. He brought the case of a lady who not only held but was circulating tracts containing the false doctrines before Messrs. Muller and Craik, (the leading teachers at Bethesda) at their Friday meeting in the vestry-room, where church matters were considered. In order to prevent the Plymouth question being brought forward at that meeting, they removed it to Mr. Muller's own house, Code, Stancombe, and Naish being excluded, whilst Aitchison was present (a known partisan of Mr. Newton's) who acknowledged his agreement with him, and has since left Bethesda and joined him. Some of those in fellowship called for an examination and condemnation of tracts that were diffusing their poison in their midst, alleging that they contained "deadly heresy," doctrines subversive of the atonement, and touching the Person and glory of Jesus Christ our Lord. This was after the publication of the confessions of the error by Batten, Soltau and Dyer.¹ These confessions, Mr. Code informed us, Mr. Muller had read; yet such was the infatuation and perversion of Messrs. Muller and Craik, that the former said he had *the testimony of the Holy Ghost that they ought not to judge the doctrines* up to that time; and the latter said that he should almost need a revelation *from heaven* to induce him to read the tracts.

By this obstinate refusal to judge the evil, they forced out a number of godly and gracious brethren, whose consciences would not permit them to be associated with it.

Mr. Code also said that when on one occasion he was urging the necessity of removing from communion the lady above referred to, who was an active emissary of Mr. Newton's, that Mr. Craik replied to him, in the presence of Mr. Muller and the lady herself, by asking him this awful question - "If the Lord Jesus had taken poison, would He not have died?" Mr. Code very properly answered that he would not trust himself to reply to such a blasphemous and irreverent question. If this question be a little analyzed, it will be seen that it contains the germ of Mr. N.'s false doctrine. But I dare not pursue the thought further . . .

(I have extracted the above from MS. notes taken of Mr. Code's address, and afterwards read in your meeting at Brunswick Street, by Mr. H. Bewley.)¹⁹

"THE LETTER OF THE TEN"

In response to G. Alexander's (faithful) letters and withdrawal from Bethesda fellowship, ten principle persons at Bethesda composed and signed a paper vindicating themselves in receiving what were, in reality, partisans of

1. [These are brethren who had supported B. W. Newton at Plymouth and subsequently acknowledged their complicity in the evil. J. E. Batten went with the "exclusives," while the other two went with Bethesda.]

B. W. Newton. G. V. Wigram tells us that:

On Sunday, the 25th of June, was read at each of the three places of meeting this notice.

It is intended, the Lord willing, to have an especial meeting of all the brethren and sisters in communion, next Thursday evening at Bethesda, at seven o'clock, at which explanations will be given relative to the printed letter of our brother, Mr. Alexander. All the brethren and sisters are especially requested to be present. The usual meeting at Salem will be given up that evening.

On Thursday June 29, and on Monday, July 3, 1848, was read at Bethesda, to the meeting so convened, a paper signed by H. Craik; G. Muller; J. H. Hale; C. Brown; E. Stanley; E. Feltham; J. W. ithy; S. Butler; J. Meredith; Rt. Aitchison.²⁰

They did so in the face of all the remonstrances regarding the evil of it. Of course, the *Letter of the Ten* contained self-serving, partial truths. G. V. Wigram^m cited it in full, dividing this *Letter of the Ten* into 46 sections and carefully examined these sections in his *The Present Question*. This examination is reproduced in Appendix 10. It denies that they received anyone holding B. W. Newton's views. It also enunciated a *principle of fellowship* that has characterized Open Brethren ever since, which is what we should pause to consider.

W. Trotter observed:

There is a most dangerous principle asserted in this document. "Even supposing that those who inquired into the matter had come to the same conclusion, touching the amount of positive error therein contained, this would not have guided us in our decision respecting individuals coming from Plymouth. For supposing the author of the tracts were fundamentally heretical, this would not warrant us in rejecting those who came from under his teaching, until we were satisfied that they had understood and imbibed views essentially subversive of foundation truth;" especially as those meeting at Ebrington-street, Plymouth, last January put forth a statement disclaiming the errors charged against the tracts." That is, a man may for years teach doctrines admitted to be fundamentally heretical (say Socinian); the congregation which allows him thus to teach (say Socinianism), puts forth a statement disclaiming the doctrines which are still, nevertheless, known to be taught amongst them, and thus accredited by them; members of the congregation apply for communion elsewhere, and unless they can be individually convicted of having "understood and imbibed" Socinian doctrines, this Bethesda principle would require their reception. They are members of a congregation which allows amongst them a Socinian preacher, and boasts of him as deeply taught in the Word, etc.; but unless we can prove that they themselves have intelligently embraced Socinian errors, we have no warrant,

m. The reader interested in some personalia regarding G. V. Wigram will find it in Appendix 11.

n. [J. G. Bellett wrote, "I could not refuse to say that such principles of Church action as this would make any place a defiled place, in Levitical language, leprosy would be detected by the priest to be in the house (*A Letter as to "Bethesda,"* Sept. 18, 1849).]

Bethesda says, for rejecting them. Do saints need more than this to open their eyes as to the ground Bethesda has taken? And this is no "fable," no "exaggeration!" it is Bethesda's recorded judgment of what the fellowship of God's house is. The words above cited, to which "the ten" subscribed their names, and which were adopted by the vote of the congregation, tell a louder and more solemn tale in the ear of conscience than anything which has been advanced by those whom Bethesda looks upon as her adversaries.²¹

So to those who were called "exclusives," i.e., those who rejected evil and those associated with it, this represents "indifference" to Christ.

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN BETHESDA ADOPTED THE LETTER OF THE TEN

The *Letter of the Ten* was presented at two meetings at Bethesda (June 29 and July 3, 1848). G. V. Wigram described the procedure:

A very large majority stood up to signify their concurrence, some retained their seats, -- Mr. [J. M.] Code^o among the number. He rose and protested against the whole proceedings; stating, that he considered the Spirit of God had not guided them in reference to that paper; and that their mode of voting seemed to him wrong.

{This seems to me to have been the proper course for any one who went to that meeting.}

Mr. H. Woodfall is said then to have defended and eulogized Mr. N., and said that he had brought out much deep truth as to the living sufferings of Christ Jesus, etc. Mr. Code said, "That ought to be stopped;" but he was allowed to go on. This looked so like partiality, that one left, and many were grieved. Mr. Muller afterwards said, he could not agree with all that Mr . H. W . had said; and, besides, "Mr. N. has confessed himself in error."²²

What can be said in palliation of this? Lord Congleton stated:

There the matter was brought to a termination, but not happily, as several, from that time stood aloof, complaining that they had not been allowed to be heard at that church-meeting. The fact is, that an effort was made at that church-meeting, *then and there* to consider the merits of the tracts; and this the ten elder brethren who had called the church-meeting, not to consider the tracts, but to hear and receive their answer to Mr . Alexander's paper, resisted. But the opposing brethren were told, that they were at liberty, after the church had either received or rejected that paper, to do what they thought proper. Several went out: the paper was received. Amongst those that left, were MrNash and MrStancombe.

Note that he says "the church." Yes, it was the church, as such, that took this position. They VOTED. The ten demanded that there be no comments until a decision was reached and the saints were threatened with the loss of their ministry! So the mass rose up to signify acceptance. Yes, then the opposers could do what they thought proper. Well, the proper thing was what a number did do. They separated from the evil. And as to having a meeting for the investigation of B. W. Newton's doctrines, Lord Congleton wrote:

^o. [However, he did not separate from Bethesda.]

It is true that Mr. Muller said he should not attend a meeting for the investigation of Mr. Newton's tracts; and for this reason, that he considered it would be an act of unrighteousness to have such a meeting, when Mr. Newton had, in part, acknowledged his error, and whilst his tracts were under re-consideration.²⁴

This sickly excuse, and this concept of 'righteousness,' and this palliation of BWN, are not acceptable.

WHO SIGNED THE LETTER OF THE TEN?

At this point we will call attention to two of the brethren who signed the *Letter of the Ten*; namely John Withy and Robert Aitchison. W. Trotter wrote:

That is, they severally and jointly disclaim Mr. Newton's published views on these subjects. And yet it is well known that one of those who signed the paper agrees with Mr. Newton on these points; and in the very last tract I have seen, written by Mr. [A. N.] Groves, brother-in-law to Mr. Muller, and an active agent and zealous advocate of Bethesda, Mr. and Mrs. Aitchison are named as among the known friends of Mr. Newton, and Mr. Aitchison is one of the ten who signed the paper. The simplest saint can see the want of uprightness in a course like this. Ten men sign a paper, in which they disclaim views held, and known to be held, by at least one of those who signed it.²⁵

W. Kelly stated:

Mr. T. seems not aware that Bethesda subsequently was so roused by the remonstrance of their friends as to hold seven meetings [Nov. - Dec. 1848] in which they did publicly judge the errors to be as blasphemous as Brethren had affirmed. But even so they got rid of the Newtonian partisans privately! so that two of the Ten leaders went out, in avowed dissent from that theoretic judgment, and set up a cause of their own and had Mr. N. [Newton] to help at the Music Hall. The movement failed however; the other Newtonians left Bristol; and the two leaders (who had thus joined in open support of an anti-christian teacher on Bethesda's own showing) were allowed to come back on their own terms that they should not have left Bethesda, without one reference to the real wickedness of supporting an Antichrist!²⁶

W. H. Dorman also called attention to these two signers (R. Aitchison and J. Withy) as those who, regarding B. W. Newton's doctrines on Christ, as "themselves avowed them and have since joined Mr. Newton's party."²⁷

THE LETTER OF THE TEN UPHELD BY LEADING OPEN BRETHREN

It was Upheld in 1857 by H. Craik. George Rymer (an "exclusive") stated that he wrote to H. Craik in 1857 begging him to have the *Letter of the Ten* withdrawn.²⁸ W. Trotter cited H. Craik's entire response to G. Rymer, dated Sept. 5, 1857:

My dear brother,

I have just this morning received yours of yesterday. I am thankful that your enquiries are of such a kind, that they can be very easily answered.

The so-called 'Letter of the Ten' was never intended as a church rule. It was simply a statement of the judgment to which a number of laboring brethren amongst us had come, in reference to the peculiar circumstances in which we were at that time placed as a church. This expression of our judgment was

deferred to by the overwhelming majority of the body , and there the matter ended.

Afterwards, for certain party purposes, the above paper was printed and circulated by those who were opposed to our mode of action. It was not printed by any one connected with Bethesda. Those who published it represented it was a statement of church principles. Some time ago we were earnestly requested to *withdraw* the Letter. *We entirely objected to do so*, inasmuch as that which never had been *enacted* could not possibly be *repealed*. But to take off any occasion of misapprehension, it was clearly stated to a large meeting that the 'Letter of the Ten' had never been intended as a rule; and that, in fact, we had no rules at all, except such as were to be found in the word of God. *The judgment expressed in the 'Letter,' has never been repudiated*, so far as I am aware, *by any of us*; and I believe that if we were at the present moment to be placed in such circumstances as those in which we then found ourselves, most of us might probably come to the same judgment as is expressed in the document above referred to. We have, as a body, no code of laws but those contained in the New Testament; and we feel bound to receive all those who give satisfactory evidence of belonging to Christ, and who, maintaining the essential verities of our holy faith, are, at the same time, walking consistently as Christians. We recognize no limited or sectarian bonds of fellowship, and desire to be considered in communion with all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

We have no sympathy with any system that would necessitate a sectarian position; nor can we allow ourselves to belong to any other brotherhood, except that which is common to the whole family of God.

To say that the '*Letter of the Ten*' had been *withdrawn*, would be *incorrect in expression, and fitted to mislead in its effect*. Today that we do not recognize that 'Letter,' nor any other human document, as a substitute for the rule of the word, would be both correct in expression, and fitted to prevent all misapprehension.

I shall esteem it a favor if you kindly keep this note. If you could get it copied, that I might be able to lay it before my fellow-laborers, I should be thankful.

I thought you might be interested in the accompanying paper

Yours in the faith of Christ.
(Signed) Henry Craik.

Wednesday, September 9, 1857.

I wrote the enclosed last Saturday. At a meeting last evening, I showed it to all my fellow-laborers who were present. I have reason to believe that it expresses the sentiments of the other brethren.

(Signed) H. C. ²⁹

It is preposterous to say it "was never intended as a church rule." It contains a principle of reception that in effect denies that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. In fact, it was adopted by the mass at Bethesda by rising up to signify acceptance. It is a characteristic principle of reception held by Open Brethren generally.

What Lord Congleton Said. J. S. Oliphant had some correspondence with Lord Congleton in 1864 and reported the following, which exposes Lord C.'s

hypocrisy, animus and indifference to what is due to Christ:

To complete the facts up to the present time, I will now give you the statements of Lord C., with whom I used to be in fellowship, and his answer to inquiries which I made as to the fellowship of the assembly at which we broke bread with Bethesda or Mr. N.'s followers. He wrote to me as follows:

"Have you tried these brethren?" [those who have separated from evil; the "exclusives"] "I have tried them ('try the spirit whether they are of God') and found them FALSE prophets, in every sense of the word FALSE. They are FALSE in what they say of their brethren, they are FALSE IN DOCTRINE, they are FALSE in their walk."

Again, in another letter,

"I am anxious to be clear on three points: --

1st. There is no attempt or desire on our part to prevent any one amongst us from going to hear the teaching at North Row [where brethren meet who are called *false* prophets, in every sense of the word *false*] or elsewhere. It would be lording it over the consciences of our fellow saints.

2nd. There is no reciprocal excommunication. They excommunicate any that break bread with us, but we do not reciprocate it.

3rd. I do not for a moment deny that there is much precious truth with them. They could not deceive saints without having some precious truth along with their erroneous and divisive course.

I may state here, from my own personal knowledge that persons in fellowship with Mr. N. were allowed to break bread at meetings in London in fellowship with Bethesda as late as last year [1863], and that persons who held Mr. N.'s doctrines were in the habit of breaking bread at Welbeck Street only three years ago, whenever Mr. N. was out of town and his chapel was closed.

The question I asked was the following: --

Would persons *coming from Bethesda* (Bristol), or those who go and hear Mr. N. be allowed to sit down at the Lord's table with the simple statement that they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, without reference to their walk or *where they come from?*"

The answer that I received was as follows: --

Every dear child of God that is walking consistently with such a profession, *come he from whatever quarter he may, would be received.*^p

Now here I find that the ground taken by Bethesda in 1848 is fully maintained, and professed in unmistakable terms in 1864. Lord C. is anxious to be clear that there is no objection to intercommunion and fellowship with an assembly where FALSE teachers, in every sense of the word FALSE, are allowed, and where FALSE doctrine is held and unjudged. I say intercommunion and fellowship; for saints are to be allowed to go without restraint from the one meeting to the other,

p. [The reader should note that a person coming from a place where fundamentally evil doctrine is taught and held could be -- walking consistently with a profession of loving the Lord Jesus! Such is Bethesdaism.]

and *vice versa*. The answer to my question, although indirect, is not to be mistaken. "Come he from whatever quarter he may" clearly includes M&N, and Bethesda, and is an endeavor to make it appear that there is nothing inconsistent in fellowship with persons who have held, taught, and never repudiated, evil blasphemies.³⁰

What W. Yapp Said. J. S. Oliphant wrote:

Now the answer published, and I believe generally given by brethren of the Bethesda party, is the following: "Evil cannot defile the assembly of God, but only those who accept it."

In a tract published by Mr. Yapp, entitled "The Church of God according to Scripture," I find the following statement: "Meetings of believers cannot be defiled by the allowance of false teaching in them:" and again, "The Corinthians, in failing to judge the wicked person, were guilty of disobedience and indifference to sin, but were still *unleavened*."⁹

From another tract, entitled, "A Drop of Oil on Troubled Waters, or Remarks on the Fellowship and Mutual Responsibility of the Churches of the New Testament," I take the following extract: "That no individual in any church was held responsible for evil existing in it, either doctrinal or practical, simply because he was one of the worshippers."

Thus we have *assembly responsibility* and *assembly defilement* entirely denied.³¹

What G. Muller Said.

21, Paul-street, Kingsdown, Bristol,
Sept. 18th, 1866.

My dear Brother,

With regard to your letter respecting a paper commonly called 'The Letter of the Ten,' I send you this as my reply

As a body or assembly, *we have no standard but the Word of God* -- no code of laws, or regulations, or Church principles, but those contained therein. We desire in all things to be subject to the Word of God, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The paper to which you refer was never intended to be more than a mere statement of facts and explanation of reasons for pursuing the course which the laboring brethren thought to be right at that time, under the peculiar circumstances of the case. It is to be regarded as having passed away with the occasion which gave rise to it. That paper was never intended for publication, and was read to the Church with explanations. It should not have been published without our consent, or without the explanations which accompanied the reading of it. I am, dear Brother, yours affectionately in the Lord, George Muller.³²

F. W. Grant (an "exclusive") remarked:

In a letter to Mr. Deck, in 1872, Mr. Muller gives distinct expression to the faith and practice of Bethesda in respect to this point: --

All who love the Lord Jesus, and are fundamentally sound in the faith, we receive, though they may not be able, as we could wish, to forsake certain

q. [Had the Corinthians not obeyed the apostolic injunction to put the man away from among themselves, the assembly would have thus become a leavened lump.]

persons or views or systems. In this way we purpose to persevere, because we consider it God's order (Rom. 15:7).

Again, we have received persons, these sixteen years, who come from persons preaching damnable heresies; but we examined them, and as we found them sound or not in foundation truths, so they were received or rejected.³³

Apart from the consideration that such persons are part of a leavened lump, and thus leavened by their fellowship with "damnable heresies" (2 John 9-11; 1 Cor 5; Gal. 6), having observed the character of Bethesda's 'examination' of such persons leaves us skeptical. See also chapter 9.10.

It was Upheld in 1883 by James W right, son-in-law and successor to G. Muller.

Charles Stanley (an "exclusive") wrote:

Is it true then, that Bethesda really does now receive from those in fellowship where those minister who teach errors? Certainly not, many will say. C. L., a Christian young man in London, being much perplexed as to this question, wrote to Bristol to inquire at the fountain head. He received the following: --

*New Orphan Houses, Ashley Down,
Bristol: 19th Dec. 1883.*

Dear Sir,

In reply to your enquiry, the ground on which we receive to the Lord's table is soundness in the faith, and consistency of life of the *individual* believer. We should not refuse to receive one whom we had reason to believe was personally sound in the faith and consistent in life *merely* because he, or she, was in fellowship with a body of Christians who would allow Mr. Newton to minister among them; just on the same principle that we should not refuse a person *equally sound* in faith and consistent in life simply because he, or she, came from a body of Christians amongst whom the late Mr. J. N. Darby had ministered, though on account of much more *recent* unsound teachings of the *latter*,³⁴ we might well feel *a priori* greater hesitation.

I am, faithfully yours,
Signed. JAMES WRIGHT.³⁵

F. W. Grant remarked:

Here the reference to Mr. Darby makes the purport of the letter quite conclusive. As to Mr. Newton, although never having publicly confessed this dreadful error, it might be argued that he had given it up, if his published writings were to be the test of this. But in the case of Mr. Darby no giving up of any views of his could be similarly alleged, and moreover, according to Mr. Groves, this unsound teaching of his received "open endorsement by the leaders of his party." Thus those in fellowship with him are more fully identified with the evil, if evil there be, than could ever be said of those with Mr. Newton. The case, then, is clear, and Bethesda is, alas! thoroughly consistent throughout. Open and deliberate association with evil does not, for her, defile. He who receives and recognizes the false teacher -- damnable heresies though he teach, as Mr. Muller declares, -- is not "partaker of his evil deeds."

I may add that Mr. Wright has been by more than one appealed to with regard

to this letter. He has only to say -- what is however significant enough in connection with what we may see shortly -- that the publication of it was a breach of confidence on the part of the one to whom it was addressed! Think of the principles upon which Bethesda acts being put forth under a virtual pledge of secrecy, as a private communication! I shall not comment further upon it: for every true soul, it needs not.³⁶

Another reported this:

He [James Wright] told me that had he known when he wrote the letter the purpose to which it would be applied, he might have worded it differently. 'But,' said I, 'admitting all that, you were asked Bethesda's ground, and you gave it; I presume you intended what you wrote to be an answer to the question?' Yes, he did. 'Very well, then, you admit that Mr. Newton held and taught fundamental error?' Yes, he did. 'And that he never publicly or privately, as far as you know retracted it?' Yes, he did [admit it]. 'And yet you would not refuse to receive at Bethesda one in fellowship with an assembly that allowed his ministry among them?' I shall never forget his reply: it was, 'I cannot see from Scripture what evil allowed at Corinth has to do with Ephesus.'³⁷

What W. Hoste Said.

. . . we totally reject the collateral theory of defilement³⁸

That is an outright denial that fellowship with leaven leavens a person. It is a brazen denial of, for example, what the Apostle John expressly stated:

If any one come to you and bring not this doctrine, do not receive him into [the] house, and greet him not; for he who greets him partakes in his wicked works (2 John 10, 11).

Moreover, what W. Hoste said is also an implicit denial of, let us call it, 'the collateral theory of fellowship'; i. e., it is an implicit denial of fellowship, as such.

C. F. Hogg's Charge. In 1935, consequent upon the reissuance of the letter by W. Trotter (*The Origin of so-called Open Brethrenism*) C. F. Hogg wrote:

As for the Letter of the Ten, it is clear that the writers of any document are the sole competent interpreters thereof. ^r It is an outrage on equity to attach a meaning to words other than that intended by those who used them. Yet this is just what the writer of this pamphlet [W. Trotter] and his friends have insisted on doing for nearly a century. *Misrepresentation is a species of fraud.*³⁹

So here, according to C. F. Hogg's definition, he has committed a species of fraud. The *Letter of the Ten* does, in fact, state the Open Brethren principle of reception, it was rightly understood by "exclusives," and was ever since the Open Brethren principle. See also Appendix 14. The Open Brethren principal of the Australian Emmaus Bible School wrote:

To sum up -- did association with Newton at Plymouth defile the W oodfalls? "Open Brethren" say, not, for they were personally free of his doctrinal errors.

r. [Did C. F. Hogg really believe this absurd sentence? Why write anything if readers are not competent to understand what was written?]

"Exclusive Brethren" say, yes, for he [sic -- they] was ecclesiastically associated with him (i. e., with him at Plymouth). This is the "Bethesda Question" and its divisive results.⁴⁰

Yes, the "exclusives" agreed that that is what the *Letter of the Ten* meant. While this quotation does not do justice to the actual complicity of the Woodfalls with Newtonism, this (correct) assessment concerning the 1848/1849 issue of "ecclesiastical association" brings into relief the point concerning which of these two Open Brethren is guilty of a species of fraud, C. F. Hogg or Ian McDowell?

 Chapter 9.4

The Result of Sheltering the Leaven

THE LETTER OF THE TEN DENOUNCED BY FAITHFUL MEN

J. G. Bellett said:

There have been standards lifted up. And B ___'s standard puts her on wrong ground. I am sure of it. Principles avowed by public writings, after the most solemn sanction of the whole assembly, are (in my eye) standards. And these writings are not to be canceled by private acts or by any private communications.

They must be canceled by writings of equal dignity with themselves. If the assembled brethren sanctioned them, let the brethren be assembled to annul them, with confession too of the error they were betrayed into. I allude to the "Letter of the Ten." And I say further; that if that letter but seem to admit that doctrines which involve reproach on the Lord Jesus may be carelessly passed by -- if it but seem to admit that communion may be held with places defiled by such doctrines, let me ask you, dear brother, ought it not to be renounced with indignation? Ought not private injuries to be forgotten, that this service may be done in a way worthy of it?⁴¹

JND's comments on the *Letter of the Ten* may be found in *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:201, 202 and those of G. V. Wigram are found in Appendix 10.

THE RESULT OF BETHESDA'S TAKING AN EVIL POSITION

As a consequence of Bethesda acquiescing in the *Letter of the Ten*, 30 or 40 left Bethesda according to JND.⁴² W. Trotter said 50 or 60 left.⁴³ J. S. Oliphant says 50 left.⁴⁴ These numbers probably differ because, it appears, some left after the four Newtonian sympathizers were received and some after the *Letter of the Ten* was read, and some may have withdrawn subsequently to that. Interestingly, H. H. Rowdon does not mention this separation nor does F. R. Coad.

In July 1848, B. W. Newton published *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*, where evil was once again affirmed.

In midsummer, the reduced congregation at Ebrington Street, Plymouth, moved to Compton Street, Plymouth.

About this time JND visited G. Muller and H. Craik at Bristol and warned them concerning their course, to no avail as may be seen by what follows.

THE BETHESDA CIRCULAR ISSUED BY JND

After the visit to G. Muller and H. Craik, JND issued his *Bethesda Circular*⁴⁵

on Aug. 26, 1848. It said:

Beloved Brethren,

I feel bound to present to you the case of Bethesda. It involves to my mind the whole question of association with brethren, and for this very simple reason, that if there is incapacity to keep out that which has been recognized as the work and power of Satan, and to guard the beloved sheep of Christ against it -- if brethren are incapable of this service to Christ, then they ought not to be in any way owned as the body to whom such service is confided: their gatherings would be really a trap laid to ensnare the sheep. But I will not suppose this, my heart would not; nor will I suppose that the influence or reputation of individuals will induce them to do in one case what they would not do in another. I press therefore the position of Bethesda on brethren. It is at this moment acting in the fullest and most decided way as the supporter of Mr. Newton, and the evil associated with him, and in the way in which the enemy of souls most desires it should be done. The object of Mr. Newton and his friends is not now openly to propagate his doctrine in the offensive form in which it has roused the resistance of every godly conscience that cared for the glory and person of the blessed Lord, but to palliate and extenuate the evil of the doctrine, and get a footing as Christians for those who hold it, so as to be able to spread it and put sincere souls off their guard. In this way precisely Bethesda is helping them in the most effectual way they can: I shall now state how They have received the members of Ebrington Street with a positive refusal to investigate the Plymouth errors. And at this moment the most active agents of Mr. Newton are assiduously occupied amongst the members of Bethesda, in denying that Mr. Newton holds errors, and explaining and palliating his doctrines, and removing any apprehension of them from the minds of saints, and successfully occupied in it. Mr. Muller has declared openly that Mr. James Harris was doing a work of darkness, the steps he took in exposing Mr. Newton's error, though he had not given himself the trouble to enquire, from those acquainted with them, the circumstances under which it took place.⁴⁶ Mr. Muller stated to the saints that Mr. Newton had retracted publicly before God and the world, with the fullest confession, the error he had held; which every one acquainted with the facts knows to be as contrary to those facts as any statement can possibly be. And I must add that Mr. Muller, in justifying Mr. Newton in this way, without informing himself by either studying the tracts or reading the answer to, or enquiring of those who were dissatisfied with, Mr. Newton's retraction, was evidently acting with the utmost prejudice, and misleading the saints by it. It is remarkable to shew the practical working of it that as Mr. Muller was stating this in the assembly, a member of it present said to one sitting by them, That is not so, for Mr. Newton was diligently persuading me of the truth of his doctrine, as I was sitting by his side at tea the other evening.

A paper was read, signed by Messrs. Craik and Muller, and eight others, to the body at Bethesda, in which they diligently extenuate and palliate Mr. Newton's doctrine, though refusing investigation of it, and blame as far as they can those who have opposed it. I do not chage Mr. Muller with himself holding Mr. Newton's errors. He was pressed to say in public what he had said in private of Mr. Newton's tracts, and at first refused. Afterwards he declared that he had said there were very bad errors, and that he did not know to what they would lead. Upon what grounds persons holding them are admitted and the errors refused to be investigated, if such be his judgment, I must leave every one to determine for themselves. I only ask, Is it faithfulness to Christ's sheep? Further

while it is true that Mr. Craik may be by no means prepared to assert that Mr. Newton's doctrines are all according to the truth of God, and that I have no reason to say that he is not sound in the faith, yet it is certain that he is so far favorably disposed to Mr. Newton's views, and in some points a partaker of them, as to render it impossible that he could guard with any energy against them. The result is, that members of Ebrington Street, active and unceasing agents of Mr. Newton, holding and justifying his views, are received at Bethesda; and the system which so many of us have known as denying the glory of the Lord Jesus (and that, when fully stated, in the most offensive way) and corrupting the moral rectitude of every one that fell under its power -- that this system, though not professed, is fully admitted and at work at Bethesda. This has taken place in spite of its driving out a considerable number of undeniably godly brethren, whose urgent remonstrance was slighted; in spite of the known confessions of the brethren once involved and teachers of Mr. Newton's doctrine, and now through the Lord's mercy delivered from it: in spite of the strong and urgent statements of Mr. Chapman, of Barnstaple, who above all enjoyed the confidence of the brethren at Bethesda: and in spite of all that has passed in the way of discovery of moral dishonesty connected with it. I had nothing whatever to say to the original movement of the brethren who objected at Bristol, and was long wholly ignorant of it,^s but having stated to Mr. Muller that I should gladly go to Bethesda, I was, on learning the facts, obliged to write and say I could not. This led to a correspondence, and at last to my seeing the brethren, Muller and Craik, so that all this has been, as far as I am concerned, fully before them. There has a great deal taken place and passed very painful and unsatisfactory; but I go on the broad ground of faithfulness to the whole church of God, and each individual sheep beloved of Christ, that (as far as we are concerned) they may be guarded against what so many of us know to be horribly subversive of His glory, and all moral rectitude in His saints. Now, beloved brethren, I see in scripture that one effect of faith is (whatever difficulties it may produce, or however it may seem to obstruct the removal of them, thereby forcing us to wait on God) to make us respect what God respects; I do not therefore desire in the smallest degree to diminish the respect and value which any may feel personally for the brethren Craik and Muller, on the ground of that in which they have honored God by faith. Let this be maintained as I desire to maintain it, and have maintained in my intercourse with them; but I do call upon brethren by their faithfulness to Christ, and love to the souls of those dear to Him in faithfulness, to set a barrier against this evil. Woe be to them if they love the brethren Muller and Craik or their own ease more than the souls of saints dear to Christ! And I plainly urge upon them that to receive anyone from Bethesda (unless in any exceptional case of ignorance of what has passed) is opening the door now to the infection of the abominable evil from which at so much painful cost we have been delivered. It has been formally and deliberately admitted at Bethesda under the plea of not investigating it (itself a principle which refused to watch against roots of bitterness), and really palliated. And if this be admitted by receiving persons from Bethesda, those doing so are morally identified with the evil, for the body so acting is corporately responsible for the evil they admit. If brethren think they can admit those who subvert the person and glory of Christ, and principles which have led to so much untruth and dishonesty, it is well they should say so, that those who cannot may

s. [This indicates that when JND visited G. Muller on April 20, 1848, JND did not know that the Woodfalls had been received.]

know what to do. I only lay the matter before the consciences of brethren, giving it upon them by their fidelity to Christ. And I am clear in my conscience towards them. For my own part I should neither go to Bethesda in its present state, nor while in that state go where persons from it were knowingly admitted. I do not wish to reason on it here, but lay it before brethren, and press it on their fidelity to Christ and their care of His beloved saints.

Ever Yours in His grace, J. N. D.

P. S. While I go upon and press the plain broad ground of the bounden duty of guarding the sheep of Christ from the secret bringing in of that which horribly denies His glory and corrupts and demoralizes His saints, I ask if it is not a monstrous thing that the brethren at Bethesda, on the ground of refusing to investigate, should force hundreds of brethren and numerous gatherings of them, to receive those from whom they have separated after the most painful and trying enquiry, as holding doctrines subversive of Christ, and guilty of conduct unrepented of, and which Christians could not associate with? And they have gone farther than not investigating it -- they have allowed the most elaborate eulogies of Mr. Newton before the assembly, and refused permission to touch upon the doctrine or shew its evil.⁴⁷

THE RESPONSE OF THE BRETHERN AT BATH

W. B. Neatby called the *Bethesda Circular* "a solemn trifling with facts."⁴⁸ He wrote:

By making this exorbitant requirement Darby put a severe strain even upon his own wonderful influence. In the middle of September some men who were afterwards numbered with his followers were still in a contumacious frame. The brethren of Bath requested that a meeting might be held at Bristol to enquire into the separation of Alexander, Stancombe and others from Bethesda. This was duly held, Bethesda being represented by Muller, Craik, [Anthony] Norris Groves (who happened to be in England at the time) and several others; the seceders by Alexander, Stancombe and two others; and the Bath meeting by Captain Wellesley . . . , by J. G. Bellett, who had come to Bath for a time for the benefit of an invalid son, by Code, and by several more. The result was that the Bath Brethren determined, in palpable disregard of the circular, to receive "for the present" from both parties in Bristol.⁴⁹

Lord Congleton, a Bethesda supporter, wrote,

September 15, 1848, a meeting, *at the request of the Bath brethren*, was held at Bristol, between Mr. Muller and his friends, Mr. Stancombe and his friends, and the Bath brethren. There were present at that meeting -- Messrs. Muller, Craik, Snell, Norris Groves, Feltham, Stanley, Meredith, Victor, C. Browne, Withy, Hurley; of the seceders -- Messrs. Stancombe, Naish, Alexander Jewry; and of the Bath brethren -- Messrs. Isaac Beckett, James Beckett, Williams, Wellesley, O'Brien, Elwin, Loader, Robertson, Bellett, Code, White, Dillon, Norris. The object of the meeting was to hear the grounds of the separation of Mr. Stancombe and his friends from Bethesda; and especially to consider the paper signed by the ten elder brethren of Bethesda. The result of this meeting was that the Bath brethren agreed, on the following day, *that, for the present, both parties at Bristol should be received at Bath.*

Then commenced (Sunday, September 17, 1848), Mr. George Wigram's attacks upon Bethesda, which -- partly in letters, and partly in printed papers -- have been

kept up till May 6, 1849, the last date I can lay my hand upon.⁵⁰

H. BEWLEY'S VISIT

I have not been able to determine on what date H. Bewley visited Bethesda. L. Pilson reported the following concerning H. Bewley's findings.

Mr. H. Bewley, to satisfy himself as to the state of Bethesda, and probably thinking he might have sufficient influence with Messrs. Muller and Craik, went to Bristol to induce them to consider the consequences of their doings. When he returned, he read an address to the Brethren in Brunswick Street, in which he relates the result of his visit in the following words: -- "At my late visit to Bethesda, the pastors and laboring brethren would not yield to me in the slightest on any one point in which I expostulated with them. I came away thoroughly disheartened. I believe them to be under the beguiling and blinding power of Satan. I believe Bethesda to be an unclean place before the Lord, and that, therefore, if I have fellowship with any of Bethesda, or with any who countenance and support, or intelligently have fellowship with Bethesda, I partake of their guilt and sin; I thereby become an associator with them in dishonoring our Blessed Lord, and that I cannot consent to do."

He gives reasons for arriving at the above conclusion, namely: --

- "1st. They took a neutral place where neutrality is guilt.
- "2nd. They refused to judge blasphemous tracts which they should have condemned with indignation.
- "3rd. They drove out a number of those whose consciences could not sanction them in such evil.
- "4th. They vindicate their sinful refusal by a most unworthy document, the congregation committing themselves to it in the dark.
- "5th. They admitted and retained persons in communion holding Mr. Newton's opinions.
- "6th. They put forth an impure principle as a rule of Church action.
- "7th. They are identified with Mr. Craik's published opinions, which are not only grossly irreverent and shocking to every spiritual mind, but so fundamentally unsound, that many consider this the worst feature of the whole case."⁵¹

Later, H. Bewley went with Bethesda and wrote a paper under the name Philadelphos, *The Basis of Peace*, where he sought to play down differences.⁵²

THE LACK OF RESPONSE AT BETHESDA

Commenting on JND's *Bethesda Circular* (Aug. 26, 1848) and the issuance of BWN's paper (July 1848)⁵³, E. K. Groves (a son of A. N. Groves) wrote:

These considerations led Mr. Muller and Mr. Craik, with the leading Brethren in Bristol, to bring the subject before the Church, which six months before they judged it desirable to refrain from doing. Seven special Church meetings were held, commencing Nov. 27th, and ending Dec. 11th, 1848.⁵⁴

The fact is that Bethesda made no response for many months. We ask, what took them until Nov. 27, 1848? Let us see.

G. V. WIGRAM AT BRISTOL

Lord Congleton wrote,

After this, in September or October, the seceding brethren spread another table, and thus the division was consummated.⁵⁵

The hostile attitude of Open Brethren towards the faithfulness of those who dealt with evil, both at Plymouth and Bethesda, is given by E. K. Groves when he commented upon G. V. Wigram's coming to Bristol:

Mr. Wigram then came to Bristol, and sought to do what Mr . Darby had so successfully done in Plymouth -- to divide the assembly.⁵⁶

Some 50 saints had already withdrawn from Bethesda before G. V . Wigram came to Bristol. We see from all these allegations the systematic palliation of evil and the character of the calumnies put forth against those who resisted Bethesda's evil course.

And truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. And Jehovah saw [it], and it was evil in his sight that there was no judgment (Isa. 59:15).

It appears that in Oct. 1848, G. V. Wigram printed *An Appeal to Saints That Remain Still in Bethesda and Salem, As to Certain Bad Doctrine*. It noted the fact that in Oct. 1848 JND had issued a response to BWN's July paper (*A Letter on Subjects Connected With the Lord's Humanity*), with his *Remarks on "A Letter on Subjects Connected With the Lord's Humanity."*

F. R. Coad remarked:

In October 1848 Wigram took up the invitation in the Letter of the Ten to examine Craik's *Pastoral Letters* of 1835, and charged Craik with "blasphemous and heretical" statements in them. The objects of Wigram's attack were certain perfectly orthodox statements concerning the true humanity of Christ, and his denunciation of Craik was elaborated by various pieces of hearsay. Wigram, in his blind loyalty to Darby, was now prepared to leap with both feet into Docetism. Not only Craik, but Bellett also, was momentarily under attack. Even Darby had had enough, and declined to enter into the matters. (8) He is reported as saying later "that Mr. Wigram sent him his tracts, and that he put them at the back of the fire." (9)

(8). *Letters*, Vol. III, p. 262 (letter of 25th July 1851).

(9). Neatby, *op. cit.*, p. 171.⁵⁷

F. R. Coad's misrepresentation of JND is but a comment on his own inability to understand JND, who on the page cited in note (8) wrote:

I have not entered into the discussions on Craik's doctrines . . . I do condemn many things I have heard said, but I have not examined into the details of the teaching objected to, having been out of the country. Most of the papers I have never read, nor have I an intention, unless for the need of some soul; that is the ground I go upon, each individual soul to whom my service applies, and I wait till the Lord brings things before me. I have seen and heard what I doubt not is very bad, and fear it is much worse.

So much for his misrepresentation that JND "had had enough." Moreover, as to JND putting G. V. Wigram's papers at the back of the fire, that is just "hearsay."⁵⁸ What is fact is that G. V. Wigram charged H. Craik thus:

I do not accuse himself of being a blasphemer or a heretic; I hope better things.
But I do challenge *his statements* as blasphemous and heretical.⁵⁹

And F. R. Coad pronounced that GVW "was now prepared to leap with both feet into Docetism" (see Appendix 5). His affirming B. W. Newton's orthodoxy raises a question of whether he is infected with some Newtonism as was Henry Craik. What might be said concerning H. Craik's derogatory remarks concerning our Lord's humanity, and its leaning to Newtonism is found in Appendix 12. That will sufficiently respond to F. R. Coad's hiding what H. Craik said.

Chapter 9.5

Bethesda's Belated and Unacceptable Reaction

But in these days the unity of the body, and separation from evil, are vital points of testimony for Christians. One is the original and abiding principle of the Church's existence; the other, faithfulness to its nature, and characterizing that faithfulness in a special manner in the last days. To me it is that (both) or nothing (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:509).

THE OCT. 31, 1848 MEETING AT BETHESDA

After some fifty godly souls left Bethesda and had begun breaking bread elsewhere in Bristol, in separation from the evil wilfully tolerated at Bethesda, leaders at Bethesda began some inquiry into B. W. Newton's doctrines. W. Trotter wrote:

A meeting was held in Bethesda, Oct. 31st, 1848, in which Mr. Muller gave his own individual judgment of Mr. Newton's tracts, stating that they contained a system of insidious error, not here and there, but throughout; and that if the doctrines taught in them were followed out to their legitimate consequences, they would destroy the foundations of the gospel, and overthrow the Christian faith. The legitimate consequences of these doctrines he stated to be "to make the Lord need a savior as well as others." Still, while recording so strong an individual judgment as this, Mr. Muller said that he could not say Mr. N. was a heretic, that he could not refuse to call him brother. And he was most careful in maintaining that what he said was not the judgment of the church, but his own individual judgment, for which he and he alone was responsible. As to the paper of "the ten," and all the steps connected with it, he justified them entirely, and said that were they again in the circumstances they would pursue the same course. And what, I ask, is the natural effect of such a proceeding as this? On the one hand the individual judgment against the evil lulls to sleep consciences that are beginning to awake. People say, surely there can be no danger of unsoundness where such a judgment against evil is recorded as this. While on the other hand the door is left as wide open to the evil as ever; and Satan is quite satisfied if you will only let it in, whatever strong things you may say against it.⁶⁰

They propagated a notion at Bethesda that a heretic cannot be a saved man. Regarding BWN as a saved man, then by definition he could not be a heretic. This is an unholy notion that leads to being leavened, as we see in the case of Bethesda.

H. CRAIK'S AND BETHESDA'S POSITION

The fact is that those at Bethesda did not consider B. W. Newton to be a heretic. Further proof of this fact is provided in H. Craik's letter dated Nov 25, 1849:

In reference to the objection against our paper [*the Letter of the Ten*], grounded on the statement that 'even supposing the author of the tracts were fundamentally

heretical, this would not warrant us in rejecting those who came from under his teaching, until we were satisfied that they had understood and imbibed views essentially unsound.’ I beg to remark that in all ordinary cases, and as a general rule of action, persons coming from a known heretical teacher would not be received amongst us, except on the understanding that they had renounced his errors, and relinquished the body amongst whom the false doctrine was taught and maintained. *During these seventeen years past this has been our mode of acting; neither do I know of a single instance* in which persons previously connected with heretical bodies have applied to us for communion and been received amongst us, without by that very act thereby *relinquishing the connecting with their former associates*. This has been the general understanding amongst us for these seventeen years past. I am satisfied that the other brethren who labor among us accord with the explanation I have just given.⁶¹

He said that this had been the practice since 1832, which means from before their connection with the gathered saints.⁶²

G. MULLER’S LETTER TO J. G. DECK

In connection with the investigation of B. W. Newton’s teachings, at Bethesda, during Nov./Dec. 1848, which has every appearance of being the result of external pressure rather than internal holiness, G. Muller wrote the following letter to J. G. Deck:

Bristol, December 12, 1848.

My Dear Brother,

I thank you for the loan of the three letters which I return. I have never written to you on the subject of Mr. N.’s [Newton] fearful errors, on account of the greatest pressure of work; but as your letter calls for it, I just desire to tell you, dear brother, that not only have my eyes been opened long to the fearful errors contained in those two tracts, but I have stated twice before the assembled Church in June and the beginning of July, this my judgment, as also before the laboring brethren the early part of June.

My hope, however, was that poor Mr. N. might recover himself out of the snare of the devil, as he had confessed the fearful error concerning the federal headship of Adam, and had also withdrawn those two fearfully erroneous tracts for re-consideration. When, however the re-consideration came out, and I found that notwithstanding all the filing and polishing with regard to expressions, this last tract was nothing but a defence to those two former ones, I felt it my duty to change my way of acting, and at full length did I expose, many weeks ago, those fearful errors which touch the very foundations of our holy faith. And since then I have perhaps ten times or more before the assembled Church denounced in the strongest terms these fearful errors, and not only I have done so, but eight or ten leading brethren besides. I only add that Mr N.’s errors have few more decided opposers than myself, and that Mr. N.’s friends are not a little displeased with me.

Ever yours affectionately in our Lord,

G. Muller

To James G. Deck⁶³

It would have been well if this led to repentance for driving out godly saints, whose consciences would not allow them to go on in fellowship with the evil reception of partisans of the heretic, B. W. Newton; and repentance for , and

repudiation of, the *Letter of the Ten* -- which enunciated the principle by which they pursued this course. How different from this letter was G. Muller's subsequent attitude towards BWN and his teaching. That the above letter represents only a momentary effect upon G. Muller is illustrated in Appendix 13.

*B. W. Newton's Doctrines
Publicly Investigated at Bethesda.*

WHY DID BETHESDA FINALLY INVESTIGATE?

In Nov. and Dec. 1848:

After the breach was consummated (!) they held meetings in which Mr . N.'s doctrine was condemned . . .⁶⁴

I. McDowell (with Open Brethren) said that Bethesda was "stung into action."⁶⁵ And F. R. Coad said that faced with JND's *Bethesda Circular*, Bethesda decided on firmer action. But the *Bethesda Circular* was published on Aug. 26, 1848 and B. W. Newton's paper, *A Letter on Subjects Connected With the Lord's Humanity*, was published during July 1848. It was now Nov. 1848. Those who withdrew from the evil course of Bethesda were already breaking bread together in Bristol. The truth is that Bethesda was practicing what it thought was **neutrality** (which is ever indifference to what is due Christ, and so indifference to Himself). Henry Craik was a **neutral**. Here is what he wrote on Nov . 15, 1848:

But I am too weak to write any longer. Exercise of mind, lying awake at night, the difficulty of maintaining a **neutral**¹ position, the evil effect of these controversies upon the spirit, render me the object of your sympathy. I would not be implicated in Mr. Newton's errors, nor have I sympathy with his teaching; ^u but I dare not reject those whom Christ has received. The opposing party will give us no rest, because we will not yield to these demands, and refuse to hold fellowship with those who are unable to denounce Mr. Newton. I must conclude. Pray for us.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

HENRY CRAIK⁶⁶

To T. M.^v

Furthermore, Bethesda did not publicize the results of the Nov./Dec. meetings, as W. Trotter noted:

. . . but the first word of it that has openly seen the light is in a tract which has

t. [Emphasis mine].

u. [But see Appendix 12 on H. Craik.]

v. It would be interesting to know if this is the T. M. whose papers were a repetition of those of his friend, B. W. Newton, as noted by JND, *Collected Writings* 10:257. See also pp. 233-269. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 160, remarked that T. Maunsell remained with Bethesda.

only reached me since I began to write this letter, and which bears date June 16th, 1849. Before examining it, I would solemnly put to the consciences of brethren this question, *When Bethesda knew that her conduct had stumbled so many, and was giving occasion to so much division and controversy, -- if she looked on the decision come to last December as one that ought to satisfy the consciences of godly brethren who complain of her previous course, where was her regard for Christ's glory, the love of the brethren, or the peace of the church, in keeping this decision a secret from December to June?* But such as it is, now that it is out, let it be examined, and the Lord give to saints everywhere to weigh it in His fear.⁶⁷

What was going on? Bethesda evidenced not the slightest concern about those who separated from the evil, which evil Bethesda steadfastly refused to acknowledge. W. Kelly said:

... Bethesda subsequently was so roused by the remonstrance of their friends as to hold seven meetings in which they did publicly judge the errors to be as blasphemous as Brethren had affirmed.⁶⁸

WHAT WERE BETHESDA'S FINDINGS?

Lord Congleton, who ardently supported Bethesda, wrote:

Seven church-meetings were held between November 27th and December 11th, 1848. The tracts were considered and investigated; and this was the CONCLUSION arrived at: -- *That no one defending, maintaining, or upholding Mr. Newton's views or tracts should be received into communion.* This CONCLUSION was given out two or three times at the last church-meeting, by each of the brethren, Groves, Muller, and Craik.

The immediate result of this CONCLUSION was, that two Miss Farmers, two Miss Percivals, and Mr. and Mrs. Aitchison, left communion.

About the end of January, 1849, Capt. Woodfall, having occasion to go to Plymouth, took the opportunity of going to the people connected with Mr. Newton at Compton-street. There he broke bread. On his return to Bristol, this act of his became known, and was felt by many to be just putting Bethesda to the test, as to whether they would act up to the CONCLUSION they had arrived at in their seven church-meetings or not. Captain Woodfall's act was the first trespass against that CONCLUSION. Capt. Woodfall's act became known to Messrs. Muller and Craik on a Thursday, and was condemned unanimously at the meeting of the elder brethren on the following evening, Friday. Saturday it was determined to have a church-meeting. Sunday, notice was given of the church-meeting to be held on the following day (Monday). And when the church was assembled on the Monday (February 12), Capt. W oodfall read out a resignation on behalf of himself and his brother,^w whilst Mr. Craik gave out, at Mrs. Browne's request, that Mrs. Browne also had withdrawn from the meeting. Previously to these matters, Miss Hill had returned to Plymouth. Thus, all those who had been *supposed* by some to hold Mr. Newton's errors, but *who had never been known as holding them by the elder brethren of Bethesda*, ceased to belong

w. This resignation, since printed, among other things, contains this remark: -- "We consider the regulations that have been, and *will* be virtually acted out, do effectively hinder the Christians at Compton street from *even* applying for fellowship at Bethesda."

to the community; ^x whilst, as regards the tracts, they had been publicly investigated, judged, and condemned; and this CONCLUSION had been come to, *that no one defending, maintaining, or upholding Mr. Newton's views or tracts should be received into communion.*

This last matter, the CONCLUSION come to, goes a step further than the principle that Bethesda *at first* considered it right to act on, namely, to receive into communion any from Plymouth, provided they were *individually* sound in the faith, and walking orderly. Matters had progressed since then. Mr. Newton's third tract had come out: his two previous tracts had been *after re-consideration*, sanctioned: his retraction or confession of November , 1847, had become thereby (except in terms) nullified, and worse than nullified. His errors indubitably touch the *foundations* of our faith, whatever their amount; and thereby shake not only the church's *union*, but its very existence. Mr. Newton's active friends and supporters do *now* certainly subject themselves to exclusion. However, if, whilst Bethesda was acting on that principle, it would not be right to refuse to receive from thence, *much less* can it be right to refuse to receive from thence when they are acting on a *principle so much stricter*, and when not one of those *supposed* by some to hold Mr . Newton's errors remains in communion.

However, the question "On whom rests the blame of the divisions in other places connected with this matter?" is now fairly, I trust, before us. Does it rest on Bethesda, for receiving persons into communion, known as holding Mr . Newton's errors, or holding them unknown, through Bethesda's scarelessness and refusal to inquire; or does it rest on Mr. Darby and Mr. Wigram, for bringing *false* charges against Bethesda, and urging brethren to receive none from thence?

The good Lord give every one concerned to form a true judgment on this question, before Him. ⁶⁹

We turn now to what he omitted for his readers regarding *The Bristol Case*.

ADDITIONAL FACTS

So Bethesda is to be excused because it was done unwittingly . This is outrageous. Forty or fifty faithful saints are driven out by the toleration of evil in Bethesda, all entreaties are refused, general division ensues, but Bethesda is pure. This is an outrage! Bethesda cannot righteously be excused. There was a moral state that characterized the leaders and the mass. G. V. Wigram well said:

. . . it is a part of Plymouth delusion. ⁷⁰

Observe the following points:

1. "That no one defending, maintaining or upholding Mr . Newton's views or tracts should be received into communion." This allowed those who remained in fellowship with BWN, who meet this criteria, to be received. ⁷¹ This, then

x. By this, I do not mean to say that had they not ceased to belong to the community, they would have been put out (not even Captain Woodfall would have been treated so), for, none of them were known to hold Mr. Newton's errors, and Captain Woodfall's act was his first positive upholding since the CONCLUSION. If Captain Woodfall had repeated the act, he would have been publicly reprimanded; and if he had done it a third time, he would have been put out of communion.

reaffirms an evil principle put forth in the *Letter of the Ten* that such persons may be received; i. e., such would not be leavened by communion with an evil teacher.

2. "The immediate result of this CONCLUSION was, that two Miss Farmers, two Miss Percivals, and Mr. and Mrs. Aitchison, left communion.

- a) It seems, then, that they were such as defended, and/or maintained, and/or upheld BWN's views or tracts.
- b) We are not told that Mr. Aitchison was one of the ten brethren who had signed the *Letter of the Ten*.
- c) Also, we are not told that Mr. Withy, another of the ten brethren who had signed the *Letter of the Ten*, also left to join BWN's party.⁷² Nor is the following, reported by W. Kelly, noted by Lord Congleton:

But even so they got rid of the Newtonian partisans privately! so that two of the Ten leaders went out, in avowed dissent from that theoretic judgment, and set up a cause of their own and had Mr. N. to help at the Music Hall.^y The movement failed however; the other Newtonians left Bristol; and the two leaders (who had thus joined in open support of an anti-christian teacher on Bethesda's own showing) were allowed to come back on their owning that they should not have left Bethesda, without one reference to the real wickedness of supporting an Antichrist!⁷³

When this [the attempt to establish a Newtonian meeting in Bristol] failed, they sought readmission to Bethesda, and were received on their saying that they ought not to have seceded! That this was *all* sought by Bethesda from themselves I know from letters written at the time in answer to strict inquiry, by Messrs G. M. and J. Meredith severally on one side, and by the seceders or at least R. A. on the others.⁷⁴

L. Pilson wrote that J. M. Code (who, recall, had refused to rise to endorse *The Letter of the Ten*, but stayed with Bethesda) in an address at Brunswick Street:

... told us that some of those who signed that letter [of the ten] held the false doctrine at the time, but satisfied their consciences (if they had any) by the argument that they were only responsible for their own part of the letter.⁷⁵

3. In Feb. 1849, Henry and Capt. W. Woodfall withdrew. Their letter of withdrawal is preserved in G. V. Wigram's *The Present Question*, pp. 57, 58:

That Mrs. Brown, Mr. Aitchison, the Messrs. Woodfall and many others, have since left Bethesda. Brethren may judge upon what grounds they have left by the Messrs. Woodfall's paper

Statement of G. and H. W. [Henry Woodfall], at the Church meeting at Bethesda, on Monday, the 12th February, 1849.

We feel, dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, that the time has at length arrived,

y. [This attempt was to set up a Newtonian meeting in Bristol itself! *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:335.]

9.5: Bethesda's Belated and Unacceptable Reaction 135

when we are called upon to withdraw from communion at Bethesda; and we think we can do it with a clear conscience towards God -- for the sake of peace, and for the purpose of preventing bitterness, arising from the endless system of agitation kept up on the meeting from persons within yourselves as well as outside.

This step of ours has been FINALLY determined on from a conversation with one of your pastors, who seems to think this would relieve them from some of their difficulties.

In taking this step we do not at all waive our claim, as brethren in Christ, to a seat at the Lord's Table here.

We will now shortly state our reasons for this solemn step: --

1st. Although we are not connected with any peculiar views of tracts of Mr Newton, yet we consider him fundamentally sound, and therefore we cannot conscientiously unchristianise him, or deny him the right-hand of fellowship. Neither, as regards the Christians at Compton-street, ² dare we refuse to hold fellowship with them so long as we consider them entirely free from fundamental error; as sound in the faith; as walking in the truth; and as those whom Christ has received.

Here let us ask, if you would not think it unrighteousness, if one of your body should refuse to have any intercourse of fellowship with you, because the gatherings at Bath or London had, *without sufficient reason*, cast you out as unfit for communion, or as objects of suspicion?

2ndly. - We consider the regulations that have been, and will be virtually acted out, do effectually hinder the Christians at Compton-street from even applying for fellowship at Bethesda, as many of them will not subject themselves to a test they consider to be unscriptural; and we must *solemnly* protest against making Mr. Newton's tracts in any way a test of communion.

3rdly. - We understand that such is the present state of feeling among some at Bethesda, that our remaining any longer in communion would not conduce to peace, and, therefore, for the sake of the peace of the church, and for the purpose of maintaining real Christian love, and preventing any further heart-burnings, and being also desirous to respect the conscientious convictions of others (although deeming them mistaken), and feeling that we cannot renounce our liberty, as Christian men, to meet with, and *fully* recognize those we believe to be sound in the faith: --

THEREFORE, do we think it right, under present circumstances, to withdraw from the Meeting at Bethesda, and in so doing, we desire to maintain the exercise of love and affection to those who may differ from us in judgment, and not to withdraw from showing them all the courtesies and intercourse of social life.

In CONCLUSION, we may state, that we would not *willingly* have withdrawn from communion, as we think all these divisions are most unhappy, and dishonoring to the Lord; that we have, in a certain sense, been *forced* out by the prejudices of those whose consciences, as we judge, have not been regulated by, or been in subjection to, the W ritten Word; and we would solemnly and affectionately warn such to consider their ways in this *matter*, whether they have

z. [The location of BWN's meeting in Plymouth.]

been in concordance with that charity which "thinketh no evil."

(Signed in MS). Henry Woodfall George Woodfall.

Then Capt. Woodfall broke bread at B. W. Newton's meeting at Compton St., Plymouth. In these several months (Dec. 1848 - Feb. 1849), the Bethesda leaders were not able to find out that he was a partisan of BWN? And they never put him out, or declared him a leavened man? It is a mockery to talk of keeping the evil from coming in while it is already **tolerated** within. Lord Congleton did not tell us all the relevant matters regarding this "resignation." J. S. Oliphant wrote:

The result of this judgment is stated to be, that by the 12th of February , 1849, "Mr. N.'s friends" had sent in their resignations. That this step was the result of the judgment is most questionable; at least it had no effect on some of them till two months after it had been passed; and the Messrs. W . stated, "This step of ours has been finally determined on from a conversation with one of your pastors, who seems to think it would relieve them of some of their difficulties." Still they said *they could not deny Mr. N. the right hand of fellowship*; and the true character of the persons received by Bethesda in June, 1848, is plainly declared by themselves. *The friends of a false teacher who taught blasphemous doctrines about Christ, and who could not deny him the right hand of fellowship, are for seven months allowed to remain in an assembly of the sheep of Christ's flock.* Now an arrangement for convenience sake is made with them, and they are permitted to withdraw by the same open door at which they came in, and which is not closed after their egress; for they say, "*We do not at all waive our claim to a seat at the Lord's stable here.*" Now, "If we confess our sins God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" and this resolution passed at Bethesda, and its attendant circumstances, by which it is alleged Bethesda has cleared itself from evil, must surely be weighed by the unerring test of God's blessed truth. But alas! though the friends of a heretic go out for a season to return again when they please, the evil goes not with them. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."⁷⁶

W. Trotter commented upon this heinous arrangement:

Only think of an amicable arrangement between one of the pastors of Bethesda and two of Mr. Newton's friends who are in communion there, the issue of which is the withdrawal of the latter, *to relieve the former from some of their difficulties*, these voluntary seceders maintaining meanwhile their right to communion whenever they may think proper to return! And this is set forth as a proof that Bethesda has cleared herself of the evil, and as enough to satisfy the consciences of brethren that there is nothing now requiring separation from Bethesda.⁷⁷

There are supporters of Bethesda who admit that some received there did, in fact, hold B. W. Newton's evil teachings. But, interestingly, they do not tell us when this became known to Bethesda saints and leaders. We look in vain to find out when this became known.

And where is there confession of their evil course? W. H. Dorman wrote:

But every step in this matter has only served to shew the mistaken judgments that have been come to, and the wrong course that has been pursued, by those who took upon themselves the responsibility of guiding the consciences of the six or seven hundred saints amongst whom they were laboring. The position assumed, at first, towards those who pressed the examination of the doctrines was, that it

was a quarrel of the party leaders; that they at Bristol had nothing to do with Plymouth errors: that, as to the doctrines, it was difficult to draw the line of distinction, and to discover the latent error; that the spirit of those who had opposed them was more mischievous than the errors themselves: that it could not be proved there were any among them, in communion, who held these doctrines. Every one of these conclusions has since been successively falsified; and connected with this, there has been the disclosure of the same system of chicanery and want of straight-forward truthfulness, that many of us have known (up to a certain point) so distinctly characterized the ways of Ebrington-street.^{aa}

It may be argued by brethren that the fact of Mr. Newton's party having quitted Bethesda, shows that they are in a state of progress: and I am willing they should have the advantage of such a conclusion. But I assert that even this effect is not to be traced to the vigilance against the evil within, but to the clamor without. It is viewed as a thing rather to be *submitted to* for the sake of peace, than to be *urged* as necessary to the honor of Christ, and called for by the care of his saints. And it is to this state of things that Brethren are called to give their confidence, by receiving persons coming thence to fellowship! This must be allowed to say, that the more manifest the evil has become, the worse does it make the whole case; and the more jealous ought the saints to be, till something has been done to give them confidence. I have not heard of a word of confession of the wrongness of attempting to cover up the evil, nor of anything having been done to satisfy the consciences of those brethren who were driven from fellowship by the stern refusal to examine the doctrines, and to listen to their remonstrance; nor has the *Church of God* received one proof that the evil and untruthful system of which I have spoken has been removed. This evil, in all its enormity, might have had its shelter in Bethesda still, but for the vigilance of others -- I would rather say, through the mercy of God thus acting; and might by this time have been spread through all the gatherings of the saints. And it is this which to me, marks the blinding power of Satan, that many brethren who profess to hate the doctrines in question, have done their utmost to defend the corporate position of Bethesda throughout, by their condemnation of all that has been done against it; while the grand object of many now is to have it sanctioned as having cleared itself.⁷⁸

At the Feb. 12, 1849 meeting, "Mr. Craik gave out, at Mrs. Browne's request, that Mrs. Browne also had withdrawn from the meeting." Mrs. Browne was received in April 1848 when the Woodfalls were received. What did Mrs. Browne withdraw from? Well, listen to this from G. V. Wigram:

Mrs. Browne was "*not received*" at this time, though she was breaking bread. That is, Bethesda has a technical term "*not received*," like the domestic denial of politeness, "*not at home*." She was breaking bread, but something or other had not been done; or it did not suit them to admit she "*was received*." I beg it may be noticed that I do NOT say "she had been received," for fault has once been found with me for so saying. I only say she *was breaking bread*.⁷⁹

HOW DO BETHESDA'S SUPPORTERS ANSWER THIS?

Recall that E. K. Groves, a son of A. N. Groves, both ardent defenders of Bethesda, palliated in this way:

aa. [The original meeting location at Plymouth.]

" . . . 'Bethesda', who judged and condemned the error , but received unawares those who maintained it -- . . . ⁸⁰

Bethesda did not judge the evil, as the next section will show . Moreover , Bethesda had more than sufficient warning. The truth is that Bethesda adhered to unholy principles and acted on them. Lord Congleton wrote:

From these facts, it is manifest that *persons known as holding Mr. Newton's errors have never been received at Bethesda*. FOUR persons known as friends of Mr. Newton, and as disallowing that he holds the doctrines laid to his charge have been received; *but never have any persons, known as holding Mr. Newton's errors, been received into communion.* ⁸¹

W. Hoste said:

. . . no one with the slightest sympathy with Mr . N.'s doctrine had ever been knowingly admitted there. ⁸²

These supporters answer that Bethesda *did not know* these persons held BWN's doctrine. Well, if Bethesda later admitted to having such persons in fellowship (allegedly) unawares, **when did Bethesda find it out?** When, and where, did Bethesda acknowledge it? Who were the persons who held the doctrine? Did they include the two signers of the *Letter of the Ten* (R. Aitchison and J. Withy) who left Bethesda and tried to help set up a Newtonian meeting at the Music Hall in Bristol and then came back to Bethesda? Is all this unprincipled conduct to be excused by saying Bethesda never knowingly received persons who held BWN's evil teaching?

Listen to this extenuation:

. . . we must give them credit for having acted prayerfully, conscientiously, and according to the best of their judgment; and be it remembered, *the course they adopted was owned and blessed by the Lor d to the attainment of the object in view*, for all who held or sympathized with erroneous views either withdrew or were reclaimed . . . ⁸³

We turn now to briefly touch on the practical outworking of such principles and conduct.

DID BETHESDA (EVER) JUDGE THE EVIL?

There are those who think Bethesda did judge the evil. But H. Craik, in 1857 denied this. G. Rymer wrote:

In 1857 I wrote Mr. Craik, begging him to use his influence, that the principles of the "Letter of the Ten" might be withdrawn. This he laid before the laboring brethren, and the answer returned was, in his own words, as follows: -- "Inasmuch as the matter is in its own nature so obscure, and the sectarian bias with which it has been treated so manifest, the reason given in the 'Letter of the Ten' for not committing the church at Bethesda to a formal decision on the matter seem to me only stronger with the lapse of years."

So far from withdrawing the letter , Mr. C. says, " *the reasons given in it (mark) for not committing the church at Bethesda to a formal decision on the matter seem to me only stronger with the lapse of years.*" Therefore, the church at Bethesda has *never been committed to a formal decision on this matter* , because of the reasons given in the "Letter of the Ten." Alas! brethren, the letter

has not been withdrawn; the evil has not been judged; *"the church at Bethesda has never been committed to a formal decision on this matter of evil doctrine,"* Mr. Craik being witness.

But further, Mr. Craik says in the same letter, that the doctrine is not bad enough to be separated from. I first quote a passage from my letter to him, and then give his reply, *verbatim*. "One who brings not the doctrine of Christ you reject; but, are not those who receive the heretic partakers of his evil deeds, and to be treated the same as himself?" (2 John 10,11). "Until Mr. Newton retracts his evil doctrines, all who receive him are partakers with him, and to be treated the same as himself." To this Mr. Craik replies: "Supposing we were all satisfied that Mr. N. was one who had renounced the faith of Christ, your remarks would be just: *such persons, and all who follow them, ought to be avoided and set aside from the fellowship of the Church of God.*" But *"I am not aware of any amongst us who would regard him in the light of a heretic, in the sense you use that term."* Surely this is plain enough. They have not judged it, because none in Bethesda think it heresy bad enough, that "such persons," (those who hold it,) "and all who follow them, should be avoided, and set aside from the fellowship of the Church of God." Mr. Craik allows the force of the passage in 2 John, but denies that the doctrine is so bad as to come under it. Bethesda *cannot, nay, does not, set aside from her fellowship Mr. N. and his friends, though they hold the doctrines.*

What are we, then, to say and think of those who have upheld Bethesda all along, and tell inquirers that "The Letter of the Ten is withdrawn," "The evil doctrine has been judged," etc.? Those who are neither for nor against it, tell us, "It is most evil doctrine," "Most unsound doctrine," "Worse than Socinianism, because more subtle," and yet condemn those who have separated from it, and justify those who declare it is not so bad; making statements which deceive an inquirer. Alas! this, to me, is the worst feature of the case, and what tended most to confirm me in being entirely separate from those taking such a position.⁸⁴

THE PRACTICAL OUTWORKING

JND wrote:

The Church should be the pillar and ground of the truth. No argument, no pamphlet of any of them was ever directed to any other end than that evil should be *allowed* in the church. We should allow of evil. This went so far in England that one gathering published a signed paper, that if fornication was allowed in the meeting we ought still to own it, and a multitude were published to insist that no meeting could be leavened by any evil in it, but only those individuals who personally imbibed the evil.

In the meeting at E., on loose principles, Mr. N. himself was invited, and annihilationism and the non-immortality of the soul openly preached, and the walls placarded about it by persons belonging to that meeting, so that some not with us left it. 1 Corinthians 5:7 says, "Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye *may* be a new lump." They ceased to be a new lump at all if they did not; and therefore in the Second Epistle it says, "Ye have proved *yourselves* clear in this matter." If they had sanctioned it, they were all involved in it though they had not done it. Just as if a person brought false doctrine, he who received him into his house and bid him God's speed, partook of his evil deeds. If I can own a gathering according to God a meeting which refuses to break with evil doctrine, how can the church be the pillar and ground of the truth? I know well they make

all sorts of excuses, and speak of A infecting B, and B C and etc. This adds the evil of denying the unity of the body^{ab} and making independent churches, which they have all driven at. We are all one, and if I accept a gathering which receives blasphemers, I identify myself with the gathering in principle. If you receive a person *because* he is in communion at Toronto, you accept the communion of Toronto, and are one with them;^{ac} if you reject all owning of another gathering, you are independents; you put your seal on the body as such, not merely on the person who comes.

The secret of all is the world, and avoiding the holy discipline of the church of God, and to this end denying the unity of the body and making independent churches. As I said, in every case it is pleading for the allowance of evil in the church of God -- that false doctrine is no matter . Thus, in America, all the neutrals have gone freely in communion with those who deny the immortality of soul; whereas scripture says, applying to the very times we have to deal with, "If a man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, fit for the master's use." I never knew the case it did not bring in worldliness or insincerity; perhaps it has been often the effect of worldliness as much as its cause. Having seen so much of all this matter, though I have never published anything on it, I could not help feeling for you and writing these few lines.⁸⁵

America has largely confirmed me in the principle. Here the neutrals and those connected with B. prop up and are in connection with the worst form of heretical infidelity -- the denial of the immortality of the soul -- some, with an open denial that truth can be known so as to be acted on as such, and it withers everywhere uprightness and christian integrity. We have had to fight the battle of it at New York, etc., and the Lord has blessed and sustained us, and wrought clear blessing by it. In Boston and N. Y it was directly connected with what are called neutrals; in Milwaukee simply the evil in itself. Here we have it merely casually through emigrants, which occasionally brings it up as to individuals. Even so they have never heartily broken with the world.

But in these days the unity of the body, and separation from evil, are vital points of testimony for Christians. One is the original and abiding principle of the Church's existence; the other, faithfulness to its nature, and characterizing that faithfulness in a special manner in the last days. To me it is that (both) or nothing. One is the special purpose of God as to us connected with Christ, the other His nature. The notion that one can be wittingly associated with evil, and be undefiled, is an unholy notion -- a denial of the nature of holiness. And in the world the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. The character of Christ with Philadelphia is, He that is holy, He that is true; the keeping His word and the word of His patience, what is commended in the saints; an open door and only a little strength, but special association with Christ the holy One, and the truth in the midst of a degenerate people. And things are going on so rapidly in these last days that Christians will be cast on their own ground, and we shall need the word to be our authority, and it is a divine one.⁸⁶

See also *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:301 and 33:23.

ab. [It does this *in effect*, whatever profession to the contrary.]

ac. [We are always one with all saints by the Spirit. JND is speaking of practical oneness -- practicing it, which cannot righteously be done with those who tolerate leaven. Nor is it loving to them to do so.]

B. W. NEWTON'S PAPERS CIRCULATED AT BETHESDA

Mr. Bewley wrote:

Quoting from notes of a meeting held with the elders at Bethesda in 1850, at which we were present, it was stated by them, "The two heretical tracts have never been circulated at Bethesda, to our knowledge. Two Messrs. -- would not, because they did not approve of them." The parties here referred to were two gentlemen who were personal friends of Mr. N.'s. One of them, being charged with circulating the tracts, replied that he had but one copy, and would not get more, adding, "so difficult were they to be obtained, he would give half a-crown for every copy that we brought to him."

Now, granting that some of Mr. N.'s publications were put into circulation at Bethesda, that is not to be taken as an evidence of guilt. Some of Mr. N.'s tracts were not only unobjectionable, but truly valuable. Many of them had been published in the "Christian Witness."⁸⁷

The more the supporters of Bethesda said, the more untruthfulness came to light. And notice that, even "granting that some of Mr. N.'s publications were put in circulation at Bethesda," why, that would be his unobjectionable papers!

Writing about BWN's efforts to circulate his views from Plymouth, G. Rymer said:

Such efforts were made at Bethesda, when some brethren there remonstrated and called for judgment of the doctrine.⁸⁸

G. Alexander, a brother who stood for Christ in Bethesda and withdrew, testified that "Mr. W." circulated one of BWN's tracts at Bethesda. He cited from BWN's "retraction" (which reaffirms an evil):

One is the recantation of error; page 3 I find these words:--

In allowing that the Lord Jesus had a body different from that of Adam in Paradise, I was right; I was right also in saying that inherent corruption is not the originating cause of mortality, *but the one sin of Adam*. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. *I was right also in stating, that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a MORTAL body was one.*'

That paper is dated in November last [1847]. The last paper published by MrN., which Mr. W. *is now circulating* here (I have known two copies given away by him, and one is now before me)⁸⁹

G. V. Wigram followed the letter with this information:

Mr. A. [Alexander] went next morning, when Mr. H. W. [Henry Woodfall] said he should not teach, because he did not understand the doctrines, but would not promise not to circulate the tracts.⁹⁰

Let me repeat what L. Pilson cited from J. M. Code, the brother at Bethesda who objected to the proceedings going on (but in the end stayed with Bethesda), who said the following at an address at Brunswick Street:

Mr. Code told us that, " *at the first* ," persons were allowed to remain in communion at Bethesda who held Mr. Newton's blasphemous opinions, and others were let in against all warnings. The Woodfalls and Mrs. Brown were recognized as belonging to Mr. N.'s meeting. He brought the case of a lady who

not only held, but was circulating tracts containing the false doctrines before Messrs. Muller and Craik, (the leading teachers at Bethesda) at their Friday meeting in the vestry-room, where church matters were considered.⁹¹

JND asserted that:

It is proved true that these three disseminated Mr. N.'s tracts in the B. assembly.⁹²

BETHESDA'S POSITION

W. H. Dorman wrote:

But more than this, in answer to the statement of "D. W." in his "Commentary," that "it was not only Mr. Muller's repudiation of the doctrines, but the whole church of Bethesda deliberately repudiated them, and those who upheld them." I ask then, if it were so, did Mr. Aitchison and Mr. Withy, two of the laboring brethren who signed the letter of the ten repudiate these doctrines and those who upheld them? Did they help in these Church meetings to repudiate the doctrines of those who upheld them, when they themselves avowed them and have since joined Mr. Newton's party? The simple truth is, at these Church meetings, i.e. at the last of them, "*it was given out*" as "D. W." says, "that none who upheld or defended Mr. Newton's views or tracts, would be received to communion." The *body* did not express a judgment on the point, as in the adoption of the letter of the ten; but, on the contrary, they were told in the meeting that they were not to do so. So that whoever looks at these things in their moral aspect, will perceive a reason for all this tortuous proceeding. Bethesda is now not only in the condition of the Corinthian Church when they were "puffed up and [had] not rather mourned," but, like the ephah in the land of Shinar, has settled down on *its own base*: -- and that base is, I repeat it, latitudinarian indifference to the dishonor of Christ. The adoption and the maintenance of the letter of the ten leave no alternative.⁹³

A CLASSIC PALLIATION AND REVERSAL

And now we shall look at a characteristic reversal of the blame that the guilty indulge in. Consider it in the light of the withdrawal of 40, if not 60, saints from Bethesda and all the warnings received, etc., etc. E. K. Groves wrote:

On the other side I was met by statements that certain persons, whose names could be given, and known to uphold Mr. Newton's heresy -- as it was termed -- *had been received* into fellowship at Bethesda. I asked, "Is there any evidence to show that either Mr. Muller or Mr. Craik, or their helpers, knew that such was the case?" *No, there was not.* "Then," said I to my informant, "to whom does guilt of indifference to the Lord's honor rightly belong? To 'Bethesda,' who judged and condemned the error, but received unawares those who maintained it -- or to you, who being fully informed of that person or persons heretical views, withheld that information from the Church who received them?" And here I may give you a word of counsel in dealing with Exclusives whom you may by chance overhear denouncing us. Do not let your anger kindle, or suffer yourself to be drawn into a discussion, or you may find, as dear S. Bickley says, it makes you ill. Just take out pencil and paper (or ask for it), and put down the information received: ask for the authority upon which it is given, and state your intention of making strict inquiries, and if that does not make the accuser's mouth shut like a limpet, I never was more mistaken.⁹⁴

The want of integrity (characteristic of his book) is not only obvious, but seems to be characteristic in those who support evil principles of association and fellowship, both then and now. Let us hear H. P. Barker's absurd misrepresentation:

Many of those in fellowship [at Plymouth] had no knowledge of what was going on, and were quite unaware that they were regarded as the accomplices of a heterodox teacher. Some of these removed from Plymouth to Bristol. It was not a case of coming and going, but of leaving one town for another for good. Their reception was therefore (as explained by a brother at Bethesda) more in the nature of a *rescue*.⁹⁵

He then continues on to palliate the case of the Woodfalls, which need not detain us. His whole paper has this character. He proclaims Bethesda as "ultraorthodox"⁹⁶ and says that:

... Exclusivism commenced in 1848 as an unscriptural^{ad} system founded on misrepresentation.⁹⁷

I suggest to the reader that the history that has been laid before him shows that the exact inverse is true.

Chapter 9.6

Bethesda Adamant

A MEETING REQUESTED

In a paper, *The Tottenham Case*, with an introduction by A. N. Groves, we learn that W. H. Dorman would no longer express fellowship with the congregation at Tottenham because of their reception of A. N. Groves. A. N. Groves was a supporter of Bethesda and her principles. This paper is an attempt to make W. H. Dorman appear to be a false accuser, who refused to substantiate alleged "charges"; in other words, to put him in the position of being a slanderer. In a letter of W. H. Dorman., dated April 27, 1849, he asked for a meeting at Bristol, "where all the parties might be present." In another letter, to A. N. Groves, dated May 14, 1849, he wrote:

Dear Sir,

In reply to an *open letter* from you, addressed to myself, and directed by you to be copied by Mr. R. Howard before being forwarded, I beg to say --

I have from the beginning of the Plymouth Controversy, urged the necessity of a full and open investigation of everything connected with it; and, therefore,

ad. See Appendix 14.

I shall not, by the Lord's help, shrink from it now

I wish however to state *most distinctly* -- as I have done to Mr. Howard, publicly and privately -- that the grounds on which I objected to your being received to fellowship at Tottenham, are entirely of a public nature connected with Bethesda, and not in any way personal.

Whenever a meeting can be obtained in which the chief persons that have acted in this question on the one side and on the other, are present, and every saint who has a conscience exercised about these things is at liberty to be there, I hold myself bound to answer, without hesitation or disguise, any question that may be put to me. Till then I reserve any further answer to your communication, beyond the correction of your misapprehension of my meaning in the use of the word "challenged," which was employed only in the way of "objected to." Before such a meeting as I have named -- and, in your own words, I may say, -- "the speedier, the fuller, the more public the better" -- when Christ's honor has been cleared, we shall both, I trust, be in a fitter position to clear up any personal ground of offence: -- and I beg to say that those who have spoken of the matters referred to, in the extract from my letter, are equally prepared to answer on the same conditions.

This was not what J. E. Howard, A. N. Groves and the meeting at Tottenham were looking for.

It was in June 1849 that W. Trotter said that a tract bearing the date June 16, 1849 brought to light that meetings had been held in Bethesda in Nov. /Dec. 1848. ⁹⁸ It was at that time that one more effort was made to further the judgment of any evil. W. H. Dorman transcribed a letter dated June 16, 1849; it went from brothers in London for the congregation at Bethesda, requesting a general meeting of those whose consciences were under exercise. Here is the letter and G. Muller's reply

June, 16th, 1849.

To Saints who meet in Bethesda and Salem, Bristol,

In consequence of the late republication of J. N. Darby's letter of last autumn ^{ae} (by W. H. Dorman), and of the letter of the ten co-laboring brethren in Bethesda, with extracts subjoined from G. Alexander's letters etc. (by G. V. Wigram), our souls have been exercised before the Lord in humiliation and prayer. This has led to the conviction that without compromising the holiness becoming the house of God, we could have no further interchange of communion with saints of Bethesda under existing circumstances. Under this sad conviction, as we most anxiously desire to stand in fellowship with all saints, we earnestly desire to remove the apparent hindrances. We therefore, as separate individuals, do earnestly entreat and beseech, that the only thing which seems to us a means to that end (viz., a meeting open to all parties concerned, who plead conscience as the reason for being present), may be accorded by you either in Bristol or elsewhere.

Let any evil which has to be corrected in any , be shown there. If it be in brethren meeting in York-street, Bristol, in G. Alexander , J. N. Darby , G. V. Wigram, or W. H. Dorman, we desire in no sense to screen them, any more

ae. [This refers to JND's *Bethesda Circular*, Aug. 26, 1848, republished by W. H. Dorman.]

than to condemn any among yourselves. Let the Lord's honor and the unity and holiness of the church only be thought of.

Our hope is, that if such a meeting were held, our Lord Jesus Christ would, for His name's sake, so over-rule by His Spirit, that some results in common humiliation and blessing from His hand would follow; misunderstandings might be corrected, evil judged, while brotherly fellowship were still preserved, to His glory, and the comfort of all our hearts.

This step is also urged more especially on *us* by -- first certain public acts of Tottenham, viz; its publication of the Memorandum, and reception from Bethesda; and secondly a secession of brethren from Orchard-street, on grounds connected therewith.

[Signed by those named in note ⁹⁹]

The answer is requested to be sent (for us) to M. N. 1, Angel-terrace, St. Peter-street, Islington, London

For the Congregation of Bethesda, etc. to the care of G. Muller, J. H. Hale, C. Brown.

Mr. Muller's Reply

Bristol, July, 18th, 1849.

In reply to a communication addressed to the care of Mr . Hale, Mr . Charles Brown and myself, requesting a meeting of brethren, to consider certain charges that have been made against Bethesda, I have to state, on the part of myself and fellow-laborers, that we are ready to afford full explanation of the course that has been adopted at Bethesda, to any godly enquirers who have not committed themselves as partisans of Mr. Darby and Mr. Wigram, but that we do not feel warranted in consenting to meet with those *who have first judged and condemned us*, and now profess to be desirous of making enquiry. We think it well plainly to state, that were such brethren even to profess themselves satisfied with *us*, we could not, without hypocrisy, accord to them the right hand of brotherly fellowship. If they agree with the course followed by Mr. Wigram and others, then there can be no fellowship between us and them; if they disapprove of that course, we feel that they are bound *first to call* to account those who have been manifestly guilty of following a course tending to division, and of grossly slandering their brethren. Should, however, any godly persons, *who have not committed themselves to the upholding of such individuals*, desire explanation of the course we have pursued, we are not only most ready to answer these enquiries (either by *verbal* intercourse in private, or by means of a meeting called for the purpose), but it would also give us real joy to satisfy the minds of such.

(Signed) George Muller.

W. H. Dorman commented:

I may remark on this letter, that the brethren at "York Street" had not railed or falsely accused -- if others had -- as may be seen by Mr . Alexander's letters in "The Present Question;" and, moreover, they were compelled in conscience to separate two months before Mr . Wigram went to Bristol. But the position of these forty or fifty brethren is constantly kept out of sight. Surely something is due to their consciences; even if others have forfeited the right.¹⁰⁰

Consider now that Bethesda is here *excluding*.

Here is W. Trotter's brief comments on G. Muller's answer:

I pray brethren to ponder this letter. The glory of Christ may be assailed, and the foundations of the faith, as well as the moral integrity of the saints, be sapped and undermined; Bethesda stands quietly by, and assumes a neutral place. George Muller, Henry Craik, and others, are in their own estimation roughly and badly used; *but there can be no neutrality as to that* . Brethren propose to them a general meeting, as much to investigate their charges against J. N. Darby, G. V. Wigram, and others, as to investigate the charges these brethren made against Bethesda. They wish to screen none, to condemn none, but to hear all in each other's presence, and in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ; but no -- Mr Muller and his co-laborers will consent to nothing of the kind. They would admit to the Lord's Table the friends and partisans of those who had slandered *the blessed Lord*; but they will not meet *for enquiry even* with those who approve of the course pursued by brethren supposed to have slandered them. Surely this may safely be left for the judgment of the saints.¹⁰¹

W. Rickard quoted the following¹⁰² from Henry Bewley:

At my last visit to Bethesda, the pastors and laboring brethren would not yield to me in the slightest on any point in which I expostulated with them. I came away thoroughly disheartened. I believe them to be under the beguiling and blinding power of Satan. I believe Bethesda to be an unclean place before the Lord., and that, therefore, if I have fellowship with any of Bethesda, or any who countenance and support, or intelligently have fellowship with Bethesda, I partake of their guilt and sin; I thereby become an associator with them in dishonoring our Blessed Lord, and that I cannot consent to do. Let me briefly recapitulate THE FACTS respecting the body meeting at Bethesda.

- (1) They took a neutral place where neutrality is guilt.
- (2) They refused to judge blasphemous tracts which they should have condemned with indignation.
- (3) They drove out a number of those whose consciences could not sanction them in such evil.
- (4) They vindicated their sinful refusal by a most unworthy document, the congregation committing themselves to it in the dark.
- (5) They admitted and retained persons in communion holding Mr . Newton's opinions.
- (6) They put forth an impure principle as a rule of church action.
- (7) They are identified with Mr. Craik's published opinions, which are not only grossly irreverent and shocking to every spiritual mind, but so fundamentally unsound, that many consider this the worst feature of the whole case.

Division Spreads

OTHERS SIDE WITH BETHESDA

F. R. Coad gave a summary of those who went with Bethesda:

Chapman and more under his influence in North Devon remained with Muller and Craik: so did Groves, who, being in England at the time, himself suffered from personal attacks by Darby's party. These adherents were to have been expected. Lord Congleton broke with Darby: as did Rhind, Harris, Soltau and the Dyers. Many of the ex-Quaker element broke with Darby including its two most influential men, Wakefield and Kendal and John Eliot Howard of Tottenham. In London, Orchard Street, Hackney and Tottenham were lost to Darby, and the Tottenham church put out a concise statement of its position, which is still exhibited in Brook Street chapel. . . . Even more significantly, Code and Hargrove, Darby's old associates from Westport, and Maunsell (then still in Limerick) remained in fellowship with Bethesda. So did Jukes at Hull, in so far as he retained his links with Brethren. The powerful church at Hereford remained aloof from the controversy for a time, until a division in 1850 led to a secession under Hall, the seceders then adopting Darby's position.¹⁰³

A. C. Ord wrote the following in a conversational style between two Christians, A and B. We begin with his quotation of various supporters of Bethesda, meant to illustrate the principles on which they acted in supporting Bethesda.

"The Tottenham Statement, adopted by Brethren at Tottenham, the 4th of March, 1849," contains four resolutions, of which the third and fourth are as follows: -

III. We welcome to the table, *on individual grounds*, each saint, not because he or she is a member of this or that gathering, or denomination of Christians, nor because they are followers of any particular leader; but on such testimony as commends itself to us as being sufficient.

IV. We distinctly refuse to be parties to any exclusion of those who we are satisfied are believers, except on grounds personally applying to their individual faith and conduct.

The Scarborough Statement, Article V., runs thus: --

We do not think it right to exclude Christians from communion because they have happened to belong to gatherings in which there may have been persons of unsound opinions; but we think that every Christian ought, in any case requiring examination, to stand or fall by his own personal innocence, or his own personal offence.

The statement of certain Christians meeting for worship in Union Street, Torquay:

III. We cannot *refuse* to receive any person, except on *individual grounds*, that is, on grounds that reflect on that person's *individual* faith or walk.

In the Statement from T orquay, where the whole of these declarations were printed, is added the following reason for publishing them, showing distinctly their object: --

Statements of certain Brethren in other localities (besides Torquay), drawn up with the view of resisting the pressure of a certain sectarian movement, whereby whole communities, sound in doctrine, are corporately cut off, and persons presenting themselves are refused, not because of any defect in their own individual faith or walk, but because they belong to such communities.

It is plain that these statements are intended to avow the determination to admit persons to communion from bodies tolerating those holding false doctrine; that the Scripture principle that association with evil at the Lord's table contaminates or defiles, is entirely denied, and that any corporate connection with others in the unity of the body of Christ is disowned. I will now give you specimens of publications which have been mostly sent me by post, the object of which is to shew the principles publicly taught amongst you. They contain the following conclusions: --

"1st. That in the days of the apostles one church was not held responsible for the decisions of another, although fellowship and sympathy were in exercise.

2nd. That no individual in any church was held responsible for evil existing in it, either doctrinal or practical, simply because he was one of the worshippers." -- *A drop of Oil on Troubled Waters*, p. 11. Caswell, Birmingham.

"You teach that partaking of the Lord's Supper at the same place and time with a defiled person defiles. . . . I do not of course speak of cases in which association at the Lord's table or *elsewhere* leads to the actual imbibing of the heresy, because then the heresy, being in the man, defiles him. St. Paul does not tell the Corinthians that they are defiled because a fornicator breaks bread with them. He warns them against the leavening effect of evil communications. They had broken bread with him, but they were yet unleavened; but if they continued to countenance the evil doer, they would themselves be corrupted." ^{af} -- *R. Howard's recent Letter to G. V. W.* p. 10.

From these notices we learn, first, that believers ought *not* to have fellowship with the defiled; and, secondly, that they do *not* become defiled by such fellowship, but only by receiving and holding, or practicing that which defiles. Hence it follows, that under no pretence of defilement are believers to be rejected who have been in contact with false teachers without imbibing their doctrine. . . . It also follows, *a fortiori*, that meetings of believers *cannot be defiled by the allowance of false teaching in them.* -- *The Church of God according to Scripture.* Yapp, Welbeck Street. 1861.

A. What is the meaning of the words repeated in each of the public statements, that they will only receive on "individual grounds," or "grounds that af fect

af. [This last sentence needs to be understood in the light of what is brought out in Appendix 14. The assembly becomes leavened when they tolerate evil.]

persons' *individual* faith and walk," words which I see the writers have put in italics?

B. It is intended to shew that whatever evil such persons may be sanctioning, to whatever extent, they will not hold them in any way responsible for it or defiled by it. We have seen how different is the Lord's sentence upon the church of Pergamos. It also disowns any position in practical recognition of the unity of the body of Christ, and in principle takes the ground of independency, for they do not allow that the action of any other gathering of Christians gives a title to recognition, or involves the duty of exclusion, at their table. The Tottenham circular distinctly affirms this, the others imply it. Mr. Robert Howard declares that the Corinthians were not defiled by the evils amongst them, not even by the crime of incest, which he calls fornication; and that to suffer false doctrine to any extent does not corrupt morally, unless the false doctrine be imbibed; nor, according to his argument, would any toleration of sin to any amount defile, unless the parties themselves became fornicators or drunkards, and this the last extract declares in so many words. In dealing with Scripture, however, these writers are quite at variance with the apostle, who would not go to Corinth because of the state of the Corinthians, and who tells them to purge out the leaven that they "*may be a new lump as they are unleavened,*" that is, in the principles of the new nature which was born of God, to which their practical condition ought to correspond. It is on the same ground that he addresses them as "saints" in chapter 1 though so deeply failing in holiness of conduct. They were to act according to this divine nature and calling, in purging out the leaven which, indeed, as the apostle puts it, *was leavening* the whole lump, that they *might be* a new lump, fit for being presented to God. It is evident the apostle did hold them responsible for the evil till they had so acted, and not only this, but had repented of their former guilty indifference to it, with the most thorough manifestation of deep and godly contrition. "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, *what fear*, yea, *what vehement desire*, yea, *what zeal*, yea, *what revenge!* In all things ye have approved yourselves to be *clear* in this matter." They were not till now, that their decision and repentance had been evidenced, clear in the apostle's eyes. Besides this, far from allowing the evil that remained amongst them, as has been falsely stated, he declares that he "has in readiness to revenge *all* disobedience when their obedience is fulfilled" (2 Cor. 10:6); that is, that when the spirit of obedience had been thoroughly wrought in them, he will insist upon the judgment of *everything* wrong amongst them. He further declares to all, but especially to those that had sinned, that if he comes again, he "will not spare." It is remarkable how totally opposed is the spirit of these writers, in persisting that such disobedience ought to be tolerated, to that of the apostle. And his pronouncing them clear, upon this obedience and rejection of the evil, demolishes at one blow the entire host of sophistical conclusions they indulge in. The Corinthians, *clearing themselves* thus by what they had done, and their thorough change of feeling from their former complicity with the sin, for which they had now been so deeply humbled, is very fully dwelt upon by the apostle. (2 Cor. 7:8-12). No one can read this passage, in which their repentance is declared, and the apostle's confidence again restored to them on account of it, without being shocked at the hardihood with which such unholy arguments are brought forward, traversing the apostle's treatment of the subject from first to last, and that in the face of the effect produced upon the Corinthians by his first epistle, which he also records.¹⁰⁴

Let us consider the case of the influential R. C. Chapman. In a letter dated Sept.

17, 1848, G. V. Wigram spoke of "the mercy of our God" "opening also the eyes of Robert Chapman fully to the evil" ¹⁰⁵ of B. W. Newton's evil teachings. However, he was in effect, a disciple of the looseness of A. N. Groves. W. H. Dorman wrote:

... for example, Robert Chapman holds "it is wrong, under any circumstances to separate from Christians" ¹⁰⁶

And so R. C. Chapman was working looseness and indifference at Bethesda to B. W. Newton's evil teaching though he knew the evil of it. Writing on, apparently, Oct. 30, 1848, G.V. Wigram observed:

I would add, as to R. Chapman, one word. He has lulled many who were awakening (as to the danger of the doctrine) in Bethesda, asleep again. His conduct on Monday was just what might have been expected -- a man of God, when off God's ground, can do nothing but mischief -- it will not turn to his honor. He has strengthened Mr Muller in his course of *self-vindication*; and yet he knows very well that all that was said about fears and warnings, as to my unsoundness about the Humanity of the Lord, is *the very same thing* Mr. Newton and Compton-street spread far and wide of him (aye, and one in Bethesda too said it); and yet he was silent hereon. ¹⁰⁷

And again, G. V. Wigram had warned R. C. Chapman:

You are deluded; Satan brought you here to dishonor God, and mislead his sheep, just as you did at Plymouth ¹⁰⁸

Not only was there the affinity of looseness in that way, but also an affinity in prophetic views:

... Robert C. Chapman upon being told that one was saying that the Lord might come at any moment. He answered: "Well, Brother Hake, I am ready; but it is not in the Bible." ¹⁰⁹

Chapter 9.8

J. N. Darby's Interview With George Muller

In July 1849 JND and G. Muller had a private meeting, no one else being present. W. Kelly called JND meeting with G. Muller "a mistake, however well meant."¹¹⁰ It surely was a mistake. He also wrote:

As much is made of J. N. D.'s visit to G. M. after these meetings [meetings at Bethesda of Nov./Dec. 1848], it may be stated that Mr. D.'s hopefulness was not shared by his brethren, who knew that Bethesda never owned its sin in receiving Mr. N.'s partisans.¹¹¹

In 1864, J. S. Oliphant withdrew from the Bethesda fellowship.¹¹² H. Soltau (who went with Bethesda) wrote to him this:

. . . that Mr. Darby went to Mr. Muller to say that he was satisfied with the decision arrived at by the saints at Bethesda, and that they might consider all differences at an end. That Mr. Muller refused to have the matter made up so easily, as he had questions with Mr. Darby himself that needed to be explained. That on this Mr. Darby went away in great dudgeon, and set Bethesda up again as a mark of attack. I sent the letter to Mr. Darby, and his answer was, "It is a total and absolute falsehood in every part and parcel of it."¹¹³

More came out about this subsequently. G. Muller's account of this meeting with JND, published by H. Groves, is cited by G. H. Lang:

The last occurrence that need to be noticed in connexion with this part of the subject is the interview that took place between Mr. Muller and Mr. Darby in the summer of 1849. We might not have alluded to this, had it not been that untrue statements have been in wide circulation in reference to it, some denying that such a meeting ever took place, others denying the tenor of the conversation that passed between them. The following is Mr. Muller's account of what took place: Mr. Darby called on him at the New Orphan House, No. 1, ten minutes before one o'clock, and Mr. Muller, on entering the room where he was, shook hands with him, and Mr. Darby said to the following effect: "As you have now judged the tracts, the reason why we should not be united no longer exists." To this Mr. Muller replied: "I have only ten minutes now free, having an engagement at one o'clock, and therefore I cannot now enter upon this subject; for you have acted so wickedly in this whole affair, that many things have to be looked into before we could be really united again." On this Mr. Darby rose and left, and thus ended their last interview.¹¹⁴

G. Muller had read H. Groves' manuscript and appears to have approved of this version of the interview.

The letter by JND responding to that is this:

Dear Brother, I send back S.'s letter. It is all of a piece, the same egregious self-

sufficiency which has always misled him. As regards the statement of my interview with Mr. Muller, I had heard it before, and I have only to say; *it is a total and absolute falsehood in every part and parcel of it*. I do not attribute it to Mr. S., but being given as coming from Mr. Muller, and having no reason to think it a pure invention of the relater, Mr. Muller and I having been alone, I can only esteem it, as I do, a deliberate falsehood on the part of Mr. Muller. It is too precise and totally contrary in everything to the truth to be anything else. You are at liberty to repeat my judgment if you wish. I am afraid sometimes that things are a great deal worse than I ever was inclined to think. The less you have to do with personal questions with them the better. Affectionately yours in the Lord. J.N.D.¹¹⁵

He is not denying an interview took place but saying that Mr. Muller's account is a falsehood.

It would have been totally out of character for JND to have been satisfied with the mere judging of the tracts: "As you have now judged the tracts, the reason why we should not be united no longer exists." That is a preposterous statement to put into the mouth of JND. Bethesda needed to judge the *Letter of the Ten* and judge her whole course and state.

On July 26, 1852, JND wrote:

There exists nothing between me and B. but its own state, and the pains I took to bring it before M. and C. in grace¹¹⁶

G. H. Lang seems to have made the most laborious effort to fasten a lie on JND;¹¹⁷ and his assertion that "Between 1882 and 1906 William Kelly tacitly admitted the essential elements of Muller's statement"¹¹⁸ is utterly absurd.

But let us leave it, other than to note that it is highly likely that G. Muller repulsed JND, since JND would look for repentance concerning the wicked course of Bethesda.

*Chapter 9.9**The Meetings at Taunton & Bristol,
and JND's Withdrawal of
the Bethesda Circular***THE MEETINGS**

In July 1852 a meeting was held for prayer and humiliation. JND, looking forward to this meeting, said:

My dear Brother, -- After a meeting for humiliation of some brethren habitually walking in fellowship together, some who were separated from them seemed to have had the desire to have taken part in it, and to have been prepared to do so.

A desire being formed in my own mind for a meeting for humiliation, and having spoken to others of it, I have found it, thank God, to be the common desire of many -- universal, I think I may say, with those who have felt bound, as it is well known, to be decided as to what they judged to be evil, and participated in -- I am led to believe, by many from whom they have been unhappily separated; for unhappy it surely will be felt to be, even if the judgment may have been convinced that it was inevitable. I feel assured that God has wrought this desire for humiliation, and disposed the hearts of one and another to it.

The point on which I should propose to meet with brethren is, that we feel that we have failed in maintaining the glory of God in that which was committed to our trust, though He may not in grace have taken it from us -- a serious and solemn thought.

Each one would in his own conscience take to himself the share in this, for which he would feel himself responsible before God. The subject of our common humiliation would be the result we are all conscious of. I am ready for my own part to take the first and largest share in this. It is not a confession of others' faults I look for, but a common one of us all before God, each taking his part as the Holy Ghost may in sovereign grace shew it to him

The object of the meeting is one only -- humiliation, because we have failed to glorify God. It is to join in this that any one should come, if he comes at all, with the desire that God may grant blessing to us by it.¹¹⁹

He also wrote:

I judge that great dishonor has been done to Christ, and a stumbling-block put in the way of souls finding their way out of surrounding evil. I put myself in the first place of guilt as to this. I meet those who desire to own we have not maintained God's glory in the exceedingly precious things committed to us. I have found some who have not been as decided about a certain evil as they ought to be, desirous of humbled themselves for what we are all concerned in. I take care they shall understand that there is no kind of compromise as to our decision

as to this evil, and I am then willing they should humble themselves with us also. I have sought, not exactly to choose the individual himself, but to take the best moral care I could that those should come who really joined in spirit in the humiliation.¹²⁰

B. is not the subject of the meeting, but *our* having dishonored God: such is the meeting. I understand that with some this sense of humiliation has not the place it has in my mind. Of course, they would not see the character of the meeting as I do; they may be more occupied merely with their own righteous ground as to B.: I do not sympathize with them.¹²¹

The Taunton meeting was followed by one at Bristol. Recall that there was an assembly there of those who withdrew from Bethesda after the *Letter of the Ten* was publicly sanctioned by Bethesda. At the meeting in Bristol (July 1852), JND withdrew the Bethesda Circular and told brethren why:

The meeting [at Taunton] referred, as I said, to our own failing, not to other people's; I am sure it did with me altogether. I feel on clearer ground as to it than ever I did, and relieved from the difficulty of dealing with evil in the condition of failure. We had a meeting afterwards at Bristol (not to mix it up with the Taunton one) where we were free to speak of matters. Then I took a step forward, [which was] delivering to myself, and removing a difficulty in others' way who complain of me. I declared I had entirely withdrawn my original letter as to B.; not that I saw anything wrong in it, only one passage had been complained of, that in which I said I could not break bread, etc. This I had put in as due to brethren, to tell them openly what I felt about it, instead of leaving them in the dark; it was openness and confidence towards them. But, while it took away what was a barrier to several, a grievance to all who object to me, so that they had spoken about it, I felt that it freed me from the perpetual formal question why I did this, and why I had done that, and threw it over on the abiding merits of the case, and I drop out of the question, if there be any desire of approaching; if not, it is no matter. On the merits of the case I cannot have a doubt, and there the matter now stands, as far as I am concerned.¹²²

He was, of course, prepared for the ill-use that would be made of the withdrawal by unspiritual persons:

I am prepared to suppose, unless God, who certainly is at work, prevent, and rise above it all in grace -- however clearly I explained it -- that many will take advantage of it to say I am changed, that I confess I was wrong, and see I was unjustifiable in my judgment as to B.; I am prepared for all this. I have to do with B. as a Christian now, and not to defend what I did then. I feel it a happier ground, though my object was to take what was alleged as a difficulty out of the way. They cannot complain now; the sole question is what are the real merits of the case. It has set my own mind abundantly free; I do not trouble myself the least with consequences drawn from it. It gives a new start, and gets rid of festering questions and details.¹²³

Any conclusion drawn from it I entirely repudiate.¹²⁴

In another letter JND wrote:

I stated at large in the meeting at Bristol that I did not see anything wrong in the circular. I asked one who was there if he had known any principle of great evil working anywhere, would he have done wrong to warn brethren of it?¹²⁵

Withdrawal of a document is not repudiation of its contents! It is clear that the

withdrawal left the Bethesda matter clear of JND personally; as he said, it "left the ground entirely on its own merits, putting me entirely out of the question."

¹²⁶ Also:

That it has long been withdrawn at the request of some who thought it was a hindrance in the path of certain inquirers¹²⁷

JND also wrote (1867) that the conviction he had acted on in the case of Bethesda was the conviction he acted on in the case of F. W. Newman (which took place about 1833/1834 -- see Appendix 2 in volume 1):

Had I thought of people alleging it to be a kind of threat, I might never have put it in my original letter of warning (long since withdrawn -- the only thing I ever wrote on Bethesda) the declaration that I could not go where they were knowingly received. I might have acted on it and not said so. But the foundation and principle of action I have never doubted on it. I had expressed my conviction years before in the case of Newman.¹²⁸

F. R. Coad's assessment of these meetings for prayer and humiliation and JND's withdrawal of the Bethesda Circular is this:

One minor good resulted from the farcical proceedings. Darby wrote as a postscript to a letter of 26th July 1852:

W. (presumably Wigram) writes me word he has withdrawn his printed papers from circulation and thinks of something else.

Freed from the incubus of Darbyite ecclesiology, the churches of the independent Brethren were now open to their own destiny.¹²⁹

Such is the sad spirit of Bethesdaism.

JND'S VIEW OF BETHESDA'S CONDUCT

Recall that G. Muller and JND had an interview during July 1849. In a letter dated Aug. 5, 1849 JND wrote:

I go upon the broad ground that I get for myself -- brethren avowedly clear of all upholding of Bethesda -- without to me any other question. I stated in my circular I should not go where persons were received from Bethesda. Bethesda received those who had been rejected as the *avowed associates* of Mr. Newton, thus forcing us too, if we owned Bethesda, to receive them back again. After what I stated yesterday, I have nothing to add. I can conceive no more miserable effort to serve the doctrine than the document^{ag} still upheld by Bethesda. As to people's consciences, you must allow me to respect my own as well as others'; and, if others are determined to uphold what I believe to be wickedness, not to walk with them; if others judge so too, how can I condemn them? I have since I left Ebrington Street^{ah} asked for the fellowship of none, except they felt disposed to receive me as having taken my position. I think Bethesda's position a very wicked one, and I think upholding it is wickedness, though ignorance about it may not be. The question of doctrine is not the question with Bethesda, but that of their trying to screen those who held it, and thus to force neutrality

ag. [The *Letter of the Ten* -- never repudiated.]

ah. [Recall that JND withdrew from the Ebrington St., Plymouth meeting in late 1845.]

upon others. That they will not do with me. They have taken their position, and I have taken mine; and I shall act as to all so as to make it *as clear as possible*. But I am not now going to take any part in what is going on: I feel sure I have the Lord with me; time will shew. I think your position a false one. I do not pretend to judge how others may have wounded your sensibilities, for I really do not know. I pronounce no judgment whatever on the acts of persons in my absence. It is very probable I might not have agreed in them, as I felt the Lord was acting, and that the truest way was to leave Bethesda and its associates alone, and that they were in the Lord's hands. But I was not the judge of what others did. I desire earnestly that you may be brought in peace and brotherly unity out of a position I believe to be false. I have sorrows, but no difficulty. I can wait upon others, and I do so, but I cannot willingly make my position equivocal. I go on very broad plain ground. I think Bethesda *very bad*. I cannot own it as if it was not. I believe it has been publicly and avowedly unfaithful to Christ; hence that its supporters are upon terrible ground: that suffices to guide *my* conduct. In dealing with others I shall endeavor to do so according to the grace and truth that is in the Lord Jesus. Such a position is very simple and makes the path very plain, if one only knows how to walk in it. There has been division where there have been supporters and justifiers of Bethesda, but where the guilt lies in that case the Lord will judge; I am not aware, unless a very few individuals, that there has been, where there has been faithful firmness.¹⁵⁰

JND did not write papers on Bethesda as he had done concerning Plymouth and B. W. Newton. It appears that he was in Britain during April -- August 1848 and soon after went to Switzerland (Oct. -- Dec. 1848) and France during 1849 (though he was in England during July 1849) as well as Switzerland and France during 1850. Writing from Geneva on Dec. 8, 1848, he said:

I have understood that the effort through Bethesda is strong, but though I have felt some things a little, I have been quite at peace in the path I pursue of leaving this matter to the Lord. I wrote a line to ____, as an individual. When my own judgment is clear, I am generally peaceful, and everything has confirmed it hitherto. If I am called on at any time to take any step. [sic] I shall take it with better face.¹³¹

We may glance at a few more comments:

I have no doubt at all of the evil principles at Bethesda. I judge its position worse than when the letter of the ten was published: hesitation on the subject is only a proof to me of moral blindness, resulting from having some other object than Christ. But I do not see capacity of deliverance, nor do I see sufficiently the need that love has to deliver. I think you will find this feeling on the increase, though I have not meddled in what is passing, nor intend to do so . . . (July 26, 1850).¹³²

As regards Bethesda, I am on quiet but unmoved ground. I have judged, and the conviction is only strengthened by the consideration, that they have deliberately tampered with dishonor -- open, known dishonor done to Christ. Hence, if all were to go back there, I should not. (Jan. 1855)¹³³

See here also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:506,507,509.

But your letter apprises me that you have already taken the ground of neutrality; but neutrality between Christ and evil is worse than anything. "He that is not for me is against me," says Christ. The evil at B. is the most unprincipled admission of blasphemers against Christ, the coldest contempt of Him I ever came across.

All their efforts to excuse and hide it only make the matter worse. All who do not abhor the whole system and all connection with it are entangled and defiled. It is, I am satisfied, a mere net of Satan (though many Christians may be entangled in it). Every question of churches and of unity disappears before the question of B. It is a question of Christ. Faith governed my path as to it, but I have seen its fruits in America, the West Indies, France, Switzerland, and, in a measure, in India. I have seen it the spring and support everywhere of unprincipledness and evil, and all who were under its influence turned from uprightnes and truth. I have found persons unknown to each other and strangers to our conflicts in England, unite in testimony that they could get nothing honest from those who were connected with it, or who did not openly reject it all. Wherever the difficulty has been, persons going on badly, and in the flesh, were induced to fall in with it or follow in the line on which you have entered. (1864)

¹³⁴

I reject Bethesda as wickedness, as I ever did; on the same ground I reject the principle, far more widely spread than that chapel, on which it stands. My experience of that principle in America, in connection with other doctrines, but which those called Neutrals have freely fallen in with and accepted communion with, has confirmed me in the conviction, that acceptance of fellowship with those holding any deadly doctrine is infidelity to Christ, and evil and unfaithful, and a work of the enemy. The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth. That which is not in principle this, is not the Church at all even in its principle -- does not gather with Christ, but scatters.

When the blasphemous doctrine of Mr. Newton (one for whom personally I have nothing but kindly feeling, and whom my heart, if pained, only yearns over) came out, Bethesda deliberately sheltered and accredited it. I broke with Bethesda, and I reject it still. It is all one to me if it be a Baptist Church or anything else, it has been untrue to Christ, and no persuasion, with the help of God, will ever lead me a step nearer to it. (1867).¹³⁵

And finally:

I have no wish to keep up the Bethesda question, not that I judge the evil as less than I thought it, but that from the length of time many there are mere dissenters, and know nothing of the doctrine; so that they are really in conscience innocent, though gone in there as they would into any dissenting place. If this brother had never had anything to do with B. as such, I should have asked him nothing about it, as happens every day. But your account is that his separation was on account of looseness in discipline. What I think I should do would be not to discuss B. but shew him, say J. E. Batten's confession, where he states what they taught, and ask him simply if he held any of these, as they were the things that had made the difficulty. I should not ask anything about B. If he does not hold them I should not make any difficulty. I should gladly have patience with a godly brother who had seriously a difficulty. If it were merely wilful I do not feel that an assembly is bound to satisfy his wilfulness. This principle is recognized in 1 Corinthians distinctly. Otherwise one perverse person might keep evil in the assembly perpetually.

He would allege his conscience being governed by the word of God, and not yours. (1878).¹³⁶

Concerning this letter, F. R. Coad wrote:

The casual reader would be excused for supposing from this reference that

Batten's confession related to the teachings of Bethesda itself. It is possible that by this time Darby himself thought so. The extract has a more telling feature than this, however. The course the old man was advocating was scarcely distinguishable from that for which he had excommunicated Bethesda and its friends thirty years before, and for which he had ruthlessly destroyed churches, friendships and common courtesy of dealing of man with man.¹³⁷

Whatever else F. R. Coad's book is, it is certainly a tale of animus against JND that has rendered him incompetent to have any understanding of JND. The receiver of the letter would have known that J. E. Batten had been a Newtonian who recanted. Certainly F. R. Coad knows it. (Moreover, W. Trotter had circulated the fact in print). See Appendix 2 for the fruits of his way of viewing matters.

JND'S (ALLEGED) LETTER TO HENRY CRAIK

Henry Groves alleged that JND wrote a letter in 1866 to the dying H. Craik in which he wrote:

. . . calling him his "dear brother," and wishing that, "although ecclesiastically separated from him," he might be blessed with every blessing, as the Lord might see he needed in his present circumstances.¹³⁸

He seems to be the source of this oft repeated story. Interestingly, he did not reproduce the letter. This may be just another 'hearsay' story to try to make JND appear inconsistent, which, of course, he could have been. If so, like the meeting with G. Muller, it was unwise.

Chapter 9.10

With the Door Open The Evil Taint Spread

First we shall look at present-day kenoticism among Open Brethren as testified by a prominent teacher among them; then notice some present day trends; and, finally, review some history of evil teachings among them.

Present Day Open Brethren Kenoticism

WHAT IS KENOTICISM?

First we must have an idea of what is meant by kenoticism:

The term kenosis is taken from *kenoo* in Phil. 2:7 (AV: "made himself of no reputation"; RSV: "emptied himself"). . . .

While the kenotic notion has not been without its representatives in the church from the beginning (though the orthodox tradition has been clearly Chalcedonian), it had a special development in the nineteenth century. Its *raison d'être* seems to have been a desire to emphasize the reality of Jesus' humanity and, possibly, to maintain his ability to err. Thomasius, who was the first to state the doctrine scientifically, held a moderate form of kenoticism (an emptying of certain divine attributes only, and that temporarily). Gess, however, represented the Son of God as losing even his eternal self-consciousness in his descent into human flesh, only gradually to regain it in the course of his ministry. According to Ebbard, the Logos reduced himself to the dimensions of the human soul without ceasing to be the eternal Son . . . Contemporary kenoticists tend rather to assume than expound their view.¹³⁹

Wayne House lists the following traditional kenotic theories that Christ emptied Himself of:

- divine consciousness
- eternity form of being
- relative attributes of deity
- integrity of infinite divine existence
- divine activity
- actual exercise of divine prerogatives

Under sub-kenotic theories he lists the following things concerning which Christ is supposed to have emptied Himself:

- use of the divine attributes
- independent exercise of the divine attributes
- insignia of majesty, the prerogatives of deity¹⁴⁰

KENOTICISM CIRCULATING AMONG OPEN BRETHREN

We have seen that Bethesda denied that fellowship with what Scripture calls leaven, leavens a person. (See Appendix 14 for a discussion about this.) This is their declared ecclesiastical ground, or basis. This is really leaving the door open for evil to come in. Let us consider some examples from some Open Brethren. A 1986 article by Peter Cousins said:

Question 342 **INCAPABLE OF SIN?**

Occasionally we hear in prayer or ministry that our Lord was not only sinless, but 'incapable of sin.' As this expression might appear to reflect on his true humanity (his deity is not in question) would you say that it is a term best not used?

Fifty years ago, C. F. Hogg began an answer to a question such as this in the following way:

'Testimony is borne that the Lord did no sin, that in Him was no sin. These are statements of fact. The question whether He could have sinned is purely hypothetical, and is barely removed, if at all, from mere curiosity'. Although I agree with his opinion¹⁴¹

In 1 Cor. 15:12-19 we see the apostle Paul drawing out the implications, effects and results of a teaching. Certainly cries of "speculation," "hypothetical" and "mere curiosity" would not have deterred him from doing so. Such cries are but ploys to avoid facing the implications, effects and results of the teaching that Christ could have sinned. The fact is that the meaning of the doctrine that the Lord could have sinned is that He was **two** persons, one of which could have suffered the penalty for sin (non-atoningly). Thus, implicit in the doctrine that Christ could have sinned, is the denial of the union of the two natures in one person.¹⁴²

In 1931, *The Believer's Magazine* (vol. 32, pp. 43, 44), an Open Brethren periodical edited by W. Hoste, took exception to a paper by C. F. Hogg. This paper, *The Traditions and the Deposit*,¹⁴³ was a reprint from the *Bible League*. It contains a denial of the Lord's omniscience, as W. Hoste noted:

It is futile to protest that no interpretation is offered, but only the exact words of Scripture cited. Yes! and they ARE CITED AT THE EXPENSE of all those verses which teach our Lord's **omniscience**, such as Matt 11:27; John 6:64; 10:15; 16:30; 21:17; which must be either ignored or explained away. In fact the only verse **quoted** in full in the Section "Christ's Knowledge" pp. 3, 4, 5 is Matt. 24:36 (alias Mark 13:32), which is cited to show that He knew the limits of His knowledge! . . . Our Lord's not knowing has nothing to do, we may be sure, with some supposed condition of **Kenosis**, incidental to His incarnation, but depends on the **differences of function proper to the Divine Persons**, as Acts 1:7 shows. If the "Father**only**" knows, then the Holy Spirit who SEARCHETH ALL THINGS, **equally with the Son does not know**.

We come now to a combination of the above two evil teachings concerning Christ. Was part of the stress of the temptation of Christ the (supposed) idea that He did not know if He would fail or not? Peter Cousins in *The Harvester*, an Open Brethren periodical (now called *Aware*) holds both, that the Lord did not know if He would fail or not, and also that He could have sinned. He wrote:

These considerations have led Gerald Hawthorne, writing in *A Bible Commentary for Today*, to make an interesting suggestion. 'Nevertheless, assuming that it was

impossible for Him to sin, because of the nature of His person, yet it is also possible to assume that He did not know that this was the case. Mark 13:32 implies that the Son, in His incarnate role, was not omniscient -- there is at least one thing recorded there which He did not know. If, then, there was one thing He did not know, ignorance of other things was also possible, even this concerning whether or not He could sin . . . One must never suppose that His victory over temptation was 'the mere formal consequence of His divine nature.' Any interpretation of the person of Christ which in any way diminishes the force and genuineness of His temptation cannot be correct.⁷

From what I know of readers of HARVESTER, I have little doubt that they are scriptural in what they believe about the deity of Christ. I have a strong impression that they, along with many other evangelicals, tend not to believe so emphatically in his full humanity. But a scriptural faith will affirm both the deity and the humanity, and will accept the tensions that such a faith entails.¹⁴⁴

So when he attacks the Lord's holy humanity he also supports the notion that Christ was not omniscient. If you do not agree, then you "tend not to believe so emphatically in his full humanity." ¹⁴⁵ I suggest that what is at work, among other things, is a *kenotic* tendency, though it is clear that "tendency" is too weak a word. Of course, not all Open Brethren hold such teaching, but why do they not *exclude* such teachers from circulating among their assemblies? ¹⁴⁶ Why, they cannot do so. Their ecclesiastical views and views on fellowship prohibit true separation from evil unto the Lord, under the guise of love.

I recently received a paper written by the well known, living Open Brethren writer, R. E. Harlow, concerning what is transpiring right now , and I have selected the following from his 30 quotations:

The following statements from "assembly" teachers detract from the glory of the Lord. They can be documented in writings or tape recordings.

"The Lord did not retain omniscience."

"It is inconceivable that the Lord could have anticipated Gethsemene . . . a totally unexpected event . . . unanticipated . . . totally unforeseen."

"Christ never acted out of His deity."

"The New Testament does not teach that He could take on human nature and continue to act as God."

"To say that the child Jesus exercised from His cradle the care of Providence over the entire universe is of course monstrous."

"He gave up His equality with God."

The Son "was inferior . . . subordinate . . . not equal to the Father."

The apostles "ascribe unique deity to the Father alone."¹⁴⁷

Present Day Trends

Following is a report by the editor of a 'conservative' Open Brethren periodical, *Milk & Honey*, Mar. 1993. I also draw attention to the fact that the editor of *Interest*, the character of which may be gleaned from the critique below , has

recently published a 'history' called *Family Matters*, which, among other things, is a non-disguised slamming of J. N. Darby.¹⁴⁸

From A Different Perspective

There is a high probability that by the time you read this article, *INTEREST* magazine will have given a glowing report on the recent Decade of Promise conference. It will no doubt be filled with many reports and pictures, maybe even showing some of the few conservative brethren who attended.

The magazine will probably speak of the 1,600 people who attended the conference, and about the wonderful time that was had by all. However, there will be a number of things they will most likely not report. Among these will be --

Interest Ministries subsidized the expenses of many who attended.

The four-day conference cost over \$1,000,000.

People were literally dancing in the aisles during a concert by Ken Medema. Remarks which belittled "Brethren traditions" were frequently made.

Benny Hinn's book, *The Anointing*, was among the books sold at the conference. (Saying it mildly, Hinn is an extremely charismatic preacher in Orlando, FL.)

The Lord's Supper was "shared" at the end of the "Arkansas banquet."

In one comedy routine it was announced that "Madonna would be signing her new book at the author's autograph table."

Speakers made comments such as;

"Priesthood is a myth in the assemblies."

"If your church is going to stress worship, you need the right musicians."

"It's good to be here for the beginning of the Charismatic Brethren Movement."

"Dispensationalism gives us a double whammy;

we are reading someone else's mail in the Old Testament and we neglect the words of Christ who is supposed to be our center."

"We need 'Power Encounters' (Healing, demonic deliverance, etc.) to demonstrate the Gospel to pagan cultures."

May the Lord give us the strength to stand against a bold, ecumenical, and charismatic movement which is determined to force itself into the assemblies.

Editor

Who is Looking for "Unclean Birds"?

WHERE ARE THEY NESTING?

Responding to the criticism that Bethesda principles open the door for evil to come in, the well-known Open Brother of a past generation, G. H. Lang, vainly boasted:

In answer it may suffice to say that, during sixty years of ceaseless moving amongst Christians practicing open communion, in many countries, I have never once startled any one of the unclean birds named nesting in such a meeting.¹⁴⁹

The Bethesda (Open Brethren) position opened the door, *by principle*, for evil to come in as has been made abundantly clear already . To remind ourselves again, consider the categorical statement, brazenly contradicting the Apostle John (2 John 9-11), by W. Hoste, a well-known teacher and writer among Open Brethren, of G. H. Lang's day:

. . . we totally reject the collateral theory of defilement. ¹⁵⁰

We might well wonder if G. H. Lang could have "startled" any nesting "unclean birds." Is it possible that his spiritual eyesight was badly affected by false principles of fellowship? And if he found one "nesting" his belief was that it would not have leavened the assembly. An "exclusive," if acting *is such*, would hold that the tolerated leaven of such teaching as above, or below, leavens the assembly; and, that persons coming from a leavened assembly are leavened -- thus not to be received until they have judged the teaching, their connection with it, and reject the place(s) where tolerated. "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." But Open Brethren reject this, their doctrine meaning that an assembly is not leavened until all in the assembly do the wickedness personally; or, all imbibe the evil doctrine, as the case may be! See Appendix 14.

CAN YOU FIND ANY?

The quotations above regarding kenoticism refer mostly to today, ^{ai} occurring after G. H. Lang's time here. Are there grounds for his statement during his 60 years experience, or before it? A. C. Ord wrote:

You have heard of Mr. Morris, who denied the eternity of punishment, and spread this false doctrine at Brixham, Exmouth, and elsewhere. This serious error, involving the nature of the sufferings of Christ, the judgment of sin, the character of God, and the integrity of His word in its statements concerning the punishment of the sinner, when it broke out awakened earnest resistance in those who felt the truth of God was undermined by it. Persons holding this doctrine were allowed to break bread at Dartmouth, and when their doing so occasioned trouble at Torquay, brethren there found, that notwithstanding the sorrow and distress it had caused them, not only their request that such persons should be refused a place at the table was disregarded, but that no remonstrance or warning would be addressed to any in this error, for those meeting at Dartmouth would take no action at all in the matter. This meeting, as far as I am aware, has stood on the same ground ever since, and in the same association with you. At a place called Venton, about four miles from Totness, a meeting was formed in connection with Mr. Morris, who used to go there from Plymouth, and after he left it was supplied by preachers of his connection. A leading brother, who lived there, himself informed me that Mr. Morris had preached his false doctrines, as his followers did after him; Mrs. ___ received these doctrines, and sought to make proselytes to them, as two persons assured me whom she tried to convince; this meeting was subsequently taken into communion with you just as it stood, without any repudiation of Mr. Morris or his doctrine, or exclusion of any persons who had imbibed them. Mrs. ___ I have recently seen when staying in Torquay, breaking bread at your meeting there, who owned to me she had not given up this false doctrine, nor in a long conversation could I succeed in inducing her to renounce it. Another man, an American, a Mr P., I also found breaking bread at Torquay, and seeking to make converts to this doctrine: at Edinburgh also there were similar instances of this laxity.

A. That is all very loose, I admit, but I should like to hear something more respecting the reception of Mr. Newton's followers, and I imagine some of those things you speak of are not recent.

B. Whether recent or not they equally shew the principles acted on among you, and I must give you such cases as have come under my notice. Though I am not now in the way of hearing of them frequently, I can tell you the names of several associated with Mr. Newton who were allowed to break bread in Welbeck Street, in London, on the mistaken plea that they were such "nice" Christians. In Torquay also I know of four similar instances occurring at different times, the particulars of which I could give. Some places, doubtless, may be slightly more lax than others¹⁵¹

In 1873, J. G. Deck wrote:

ai. That is, other than the reference to C. F. Hogg, with whom, no doubt, G. H. Lang was personally acquainted.

I had heard from a brother in England, now with the Lord, that B. W. N.'s "doctrine was a myth, and that no one held it or taught it now;" but shortly after coming to Motueka, a brother, T. M., brought me a volume entitled "Fundamental Truth," in which the false doctrines concerning our blessed Lord were maintained. This had been given him by a Mr. G. lately arrived in Wellington. The brethren in Wellington wrote to me on the subject. He had come among them, without letters of commendation, or acquainting them with his connection with Mr. N.'s party. A correspondence took place with him on their part and mine, which led to his exclusion. I desired to give public warning to all the assemblies in New Zealand, and as I had by me a note written by our brother G. Muller on the subject, written after Mr. N.'s retractation, giving his judgment and public testimony against the doctrines of the most decided and solemn kind, I thought the testimony of such a witness would be more unquestioned by many than if it came from persons who were looked upon as Mr. N.'s personal antagonists. I therefore printed and circulated his testimony, subsequently reprinted in the preface to my "Second Letter."¹⁵²

The publications of the writer, who was the leader and originator of this solemn controversy, I myself have met with in Auckland, at the Thames, in Invercargill, Wellington, Dunedin, and I doubt not are to be met with all through these colonies, introduced and scattered by the active zeal of his followers and friends. Publications, advocating the loose unscriptural principles which caused the sorrowful divisions connected with the Bethesda question, and the principles themselves, are rife everywhere.¹⁵³

Charles Stanley (of Rotherham) cited a letter from the son-in-law of G. Muller, and successor to him at Ashley Downs:

Is it true then, that Bethesda really does now receive from those in fellowship where those minister who teach errors? Certainly not, many will say. C. L., a Christian young man in London, being much perplexed as to this question, wrote to Bristol to inquire at the fountain head. He received the following: --

*New Orphan Houses, Ashley Down,
Bristol: 19th Dec. 1883.*

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your enquiry, the ground on which we receive to the Lord's table is soundness in the faith, and consistency of life of the *individual* believer. We should not refuse to receive one whom we had reason to believe was personally sound in the faith and consistent in life *merely* because he, or she, was in fellowship with a body of Christians who would allow Mr. Newton to minister among them; just on the same principle that we should not refuse a person *equally sound* in faith and consistent in life simply because he, or she, came from a body of Christians amongst whom the late Mr. J. N. Darby had ministered, though on account of much more *recent* unsound teachings of the *latter*, we might well feel *à priori* greater hesitation.

I am faithfully yours,

Signed. JAMES WRIGHT.¹⁵⁴

Note once again indifference to leavened associations coupled with hostility to JND. We see here also that when they receive one coming from under such a heretical teacher as BWN, such a one has an alleged "consistency of life"! That

is part of Bethesdaiism (see also Appendix 14). We also see here a pretension not to have had those who actually held Newtonism among them.

J. N. Darby wrote:

The doctrine in question in the United States has not been that of Mr. N. but the denial of the immortality of the soul. There is a meeting at Philadelphia (and there are even two) on the neutral principle, which does not follow the so-called exaggerated discipline and which blames the severity of brethren. Those who hold the denial of the immortality of the soul were admitted to the meeting; afterwards the doctrine was taught there. We broke or rather refused all connection with these meetings. Those who blamed our severity were not willing to keep themselves thus separate¹⁵⁵

America has largely confirmed me in the principle. Here the neutrals and those connected with B. prop up and are in connection with the worst form of heretical infidelity -- the denial of the immortality of the soul -- some, with an open denial that truth can be known so as to be acted on as such, and it withers everywhere uprightly and christian integrity. We have had to fight the battle of it at New York, etc., and the Lord has blessed and sustained us, and wrought clear blessing by it. In Boston and N. Y. it was directly connected with what are called neutrals; in Milwaukee simply the evil in itself. Here we have it merely casually through emigrants, which occasionally brings it up as to individuals. Even so they have never heartily broken with the world.¹⁵⁶

In the meeting at E., on loose principles, Mr. N. himself was invited, and annihilationism and non-immortality of the soul openly preached, and the walls placarded about it by persons belonging to that meeting, so that some not with us left it.¹⁵⁷

B. C. Greenman recorded his personal experience:

My own testing as to this began almost with my earliest Christian experience. The first Open Brother met by me in 1867, was sent out to Canada by Mr. Newton's money, and was his warm sympathizer, and "*partaker of his evil deeds*," if not the "upholder, defender, and maintainer of his doctrines." He told me that I "belonged to the narrowest sect there was," which much exercised me, and I eagerly enquired, why we "did not fellowship such a good man, as Mr. Muller?" as this brother stated. I then learned of the serious attack upon the faith made early in our history by Mr. B. W. Newton in 1846; resisted by Mr. Darby and others, who not only abhorred the evil, but separated from all either holding it or upholding it in any way. On the other hand, Mr. G. Muller and nine others with him took different ground in 1848.

...

The next Open Brother I met had said "He was simply a Christian, and knew nothing of these matters," and was received, yet he knew that our company were not Open Brethren and those he came in with did not know that he *was*. I had heard of some coming in thus, as they said, to defile us, "and being received because they were such nice brethren, and as having no fellowship with evil," when the gathering was soon claimed as "open," though those who received them knew not what they did. Now I was witness of it. When I asked this brother, had he told the brethren that he did not come from any gathering with which they were in fellowship, and so left them free to decide as to receiving him, he said he did not believe in "*strifes and questions*." I believed in honesty, and so I told him and the few with us why we were apart, and showed O. B. principles from one competent to speak for them, who originated their position, G. Muller, in his statement to J. G. Deck, "All who love

the Lord Jesus and are fundamentally sound in the faith we receive, *though they may not be able as we could wish to forsake certain persons or views or systems*. In this way we purpose to persevere, because we consider it God's order." Again, "we have received persons these 16 years who came from persons preaching 'damnable heresies' but we examined them and as we found them sound or not in the foundation truths so they were received or rejected."

"But," said this brother, "we do not fellowship Mr . Muller." "Indeed!," I replied, "how long has this been?" "Oh," he said, "he held meetings in this country in churches, Y. M. C. A.'setc., (in behalf of his orphan homes) and never came near us."

I found it true that many of them were disgusted at Mr . Muller's treatment of them, one of their laborers refusing to recognize him at an Institute where as the Rev. G. Muller, he took a collection for his Orphan Home from all, good, bad, and indifferent. Thus he whodefined *their position at the start*, now ignored them, and I am informed that while preaching in a church opposite their meeting room, sent his love, and to say "his heart was with them," which it is not at all likely they believed. Yet Mr. Muller remained a chief man at *Bethesda* still, which *gave character* to Open Brethren in general, for there had been neither break nor protest whatever as to it, and Scripture is verified in "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." At Bethesda, they said, what have we to do with what happens at Plymouth? and so they *all* said *everywhere*. All this may be deemed little, but it at least shows how much Mr. Muller valued the fellowship he helped to form, and in turn how much this brother's statement that "We do not fellowship him" meant. In good faith, I accepted his statement, but soon learned it meant simply this, that as Mr. Muller would not come *where they were*, and they were not living *where he was*, that they were not in fellowship with each other . . . ¹⁵⁸

A copious account of the evil fruits of Bethesdaism is also given in G. Stewart, *Hindrances to Fellowship* . . . , pp. 7-10. JND wrote:

I believe their practice is very wicked indeed -- heinous contempt of Christ; and so I do not go with them, and that is all about it. I do not reject people because they do not agree about the one body. It is all, as all these documents are, an effort to sanction evil, calling it therefore an infinitesimal degree of alleged complicity. The true ground of gathering is *ade facto* protest against evil, when a man purges himself from it in the midst of church corruption. And that is what they hate. But to carry it on faithfully, and not to be perpetually debating it, is our business. I have never seen one tract on that side whose effect was not to excuse or allow evil -- in most I have seen, and I do not it is true read them -- vexation of having faithfulness firm, their own conscience being bad and galled by it. (1867) ¹⁵⁹

The great guilt attributed by Open Brethren to JND is because he would not join in actions based on such unholiness! This is his great crime in their eyes. He believed that leaven leavens the lump and did not empty such a truth of its force by the Bethesdaite method. With this in mind we can judge the true character of Henry Groves' remark that JND divided the baby:

. . . we find Mr. Darby either excommunicating^{aj} the saints with whom for so many years he had been in fellowship, or perhaps more correctly, excommunicated himself; in either case, rending the body of the Lord,^{ak} and saying in fact, as one of old, who had no mother's heart to yearn over the child, "Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it." Oh, for the bowels of Christ Jesus, the heart of the loving Master, that yearned in the apostle, that would have sacrificed self a thousand times on the altar of the Lord for His body's sake! Where was the love that travailed in birth again¹⁶⁰

How easily self deception smothers holiness with a blanket of (false and unholy) love, a thing characteristically done, virtually universally, whenever the claims of holiness in Christian fellowship are pressed. That modern Open Brethren still have no principle to refuse fellowship with those in fellowship with evil may be seen in many a published paper.¹⁶¹ See also Appendix 14 which compare with Appendix 5.

A Note on Open Brethren "Intercommunion"

In 1932, H. P. Barker publicized¹⁶² a 1906 statement by brethren of Bethesda¹⁶³ which contained a statement about no intercommunion with assemblies having fundamental error in them. Since "intercommunion" was used in a certain way, it is well to be informed concerning the meaning they attached to this word. The sentence in question reads:

2. Intercommunion is not permitted with assemblies where the false doctrine of "annihilation" or other fundamental error is tolerated.^{al}

Did this mean that they would not receive from assemblies where evil was tolerated? In the *Pittsburgh - Dunkirk Circular*, July 1894, Grant brethren refused fellowship with Open Brethren, stating:

But not only does the past remain unjudged; we are compelled to believe that *the principles then declared are still held*. In proof of this we call attention to a circular received during the past winter signed by a number of leaders of long standing among Open Brethren in England. In this paper intercommunion with gatherings "where fundamental evil is tolerated," is distinctly disavowed; on the other hand, Mr. Wright, one of the signers of the circular, in the following letter declares the reverse; [here follows this 1883 letter which I have quoted elsewhere, wherein he states that they would receive from a company where Mr. Newton ministered].

These two statements would be irreconcilable, were they not explained, as by a laboring brother among them in this country, to refer to two kinds of reception:

aj. [J. G. Bellett wrote, "I refuse the language used by brethren from whom we have seceded, that we have "excommunicated them." This is not a just expression . . . , *The Bible Treasury* 16:304.]

ak. [Scripture does not speak of "the body of the Lord" except as His physical body.]

al. [The reader should observe that this admits what was testified above concerning toleration of evil in Open Brethren assemblies.]

where the *assembly is recognized* as clear, a person would be received from or commended to it by letter; where this *is not* the case, he is received simply as an *individual, without* being required to break with the *defiled* [leavened] meeting.

We thus see that while *intercommunion* is in NAME denied it is in FACT allowed, and it is with *facts and principles*, not names, we have to do.¹⁶⁴

Now, why did H. P. Barker hide that? Beware of misleading representations.

Conclusion

In Section 8 we saw how the Enemy sought to set aside the recovered truths regarding the church and the blessed hope and to introduce evil doctrine through B. W. Newton concerning the Person of Christ and how JND was the chief instrument to oppose it. In Section 9 we have seen how the Enemy was again opposed by JND through the impact of the *Bethesda Circular* which resisted evil associations with the doctrine of BWN. In Section 10 we shall see how the Enemy sought to fasten the charge of Newtonism on the instrument used by God (JND) to thwart the Enemy's purpose, Bethesda supporters being chief in this denunciation and clamor against JND, as well as several of JND's supporters.

J. G. Deck, who fled to New Zealand in 1852 from the troubles in England, when recovered from running from his responsibility, wrote this in 1873:

. . . in a work of Satan *neutrality* is impossible; and that if there is an attempt to shun the responsibilities and sorrows of a path of entire decision for Christ, the spiritual senses become deadened, the heart hardened, the conscience torpid, the judgment perverted, and soon even hostility to the witnesses against the evil succeeds indifference to the truth.¹⁶⁵

This analysis is right on the mark. We have seen these things illustrated over and over in this book. Note that he said this regarding his own state of soul while many were being saved through his evangelization which resulted in many congregations being formed. God is sovereign and we are responsible.

There is nothing to be more cordially abhorred than the pretence of love and unity being used to dishonor Him who is the center, life, and sole object and title of it. There is no devil so bad as the devil that clothes himself with charity [love]. It is the spirit of the day -- latitudinarianism. "Charity is the bond of perfectness," but Christ is the test of all this, as of all else, and He makes it so. "The poor ye have always with you, and me ye have not always." Thus we must judge -- I mean our own conduct . . . Local unity, founded on abandonment or indifference to the truth, is a miserable hostility (in sparing oneself) to gathering with Christ, the only true and universal unity . . . I do not know what is meant by unity, if the foundations of all unity that is worth anything are denied.¹⁶⁶

Notes for Section 9

1. A modern example of this is found in Rex. A. Koivisto, *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 222.
2. *The Bible Treasury* 14:270.
3. *Things New and Old* 18:318.
4. No doubt there was great sympathy of principle among H. Craik, G. Muller and A. N. Groves. During 1826-1828 H. Craik had lived in A. N. Grove's house and in 1830 G. Muller married A. N. Grove's sister Mary (G. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, pp. 15, 16).
5. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:220.
6. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:200-203.
7. *Collected Writings* 31:307.
8. *The Present Question*: 1848-1849, p. 11.
9. *The Bristol Case*, p. 1.
10. H. H. Rowdon, *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 265, note 40.
11. Sometimes he is referred to as Captain Woodfall.
12. *Darbyism . . .*, pp. 29,30. This book had the sanction of G. Muller and H. Craik who read the first draft (W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 158, note).
13. *The Bristol Case* p. 2 (June 30, 1849).
14. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship* p. 12.
15. *The Present Question*, pp. 50-51.
16. *The Present Question*, p. 51.
17. *The Present Question*, p. 52.
18. *The Present Question* p. 15n.
19. *Vindication of Separation*, pp. 38-40.
20. *An Appeal to Saints that Remain Still in Bethesda and Salem, as to Certain Bad Doctrine* p. 6.
21. *The Origin of (So-Called) Open Brethrenism*, pp. 31,32.
22. *The Present Question*, pp. 55.
23. *The Bristol Case*, p. 4.
24. *The Bristol Case*, p. 4, note.
25. *The Origin of (So-Called) Open-Brethrenism*, pp. 29, 30.
26. *The Bible Treasury* 14:279. In *The Bible Treasury*, New Series, 5:368, W. Kelly wrote:

But not a few were grieved that the meeting was kept from its clear duty to put away the persons come into their midst, who not only held those evil doctrines, but diligently circulated the incriminated tracts. Yet this paramount duty was evaded by the request made privately that they should withdraw for peace' sake. To this the Newtonians acceded, only adding their title to return when they thought well or to that effect; which I never heard to be denied then.
- See also his *The Brethren and Their Traducers*, p. 27; as well as his *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism*, p. 14; and his *God's Principle of Unity*, p. 22.
27. *A Review of Certain Evils and Questions* p. 42.
28. *Another Appeal*, p. 5.
29. *Bethesda In 1857*, pp. 18-20.
30. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship*, pp. 19-21.

31. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship* p. 23.

32. Quoted in, *The Exclusive Brethren*, p. 13, (an attempt to discredit them).

33. *What is the Present Position of so-called "Open Brethren" ?*, p. 11. The fact that in a letter dated Sept. 18, 1866, G. Muller wrote:

It is to be regarded as *having passed away* with the occasion which gave rise to it.
That paper was never intended for publication . . . (G. *The Exclusive Brethren: Their Origin and Discipline*, p. 14 [1867]).

Neither the principle set forth in the *Letter of the Ten*, nor its results, have passed away. We saw in his subsequent letter to J. G. Deck that the principle characterized G. Muller and Bethesda, as it has all Open Brethren.

34. This is a reference to the sufferings of Christ controversy, which will be discussed in Section 10 (volume 3 in this series).

35. *An Allegory: Things Supposed to Illustrate Things that Are*, p. 4.

36. *What is the Present Position of So-Called "Open Brethren" ?* p. 12.

37. *Bethesda: Are its Principles and Practices those of Truth and Holiness?* pp. 20, 21). Cited in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 2:373n.

38. *Rejudging the Question*.

39. *The Witness* 65:38 (1935).

40. *A Brief History of the "Brethren,"* p. 30 (1968).

41. *The Bible Treasury* 15:26.

42. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:201.

43. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 39. So C. H. Mackintosh, *Fifteenth Letter to a Friend*," and A. Miller *The Brethren* . . . , p. 87.

44. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:217.

45. Concerning this circular, in 1867 JND wrote:

As regards truth of position, I have never hesitated a moment. I or others may have been unwise and misled in particular acts. Had I thought of people alleging it to be a kind of threat, I might never have put in in my original letter of warning (long since withdrawn -- the only thing I ever wrote [for publication] on Bethesda) the declaration that I could not go where they [B. W. Newton's partisans] were knowingly received. I might have acted on it and not said so. But the foundation and principle of action I have never doubted on it. I had expressed my conviction years before in the case of [F. W.] Newman (*Letters* 1:509).

Christians ought to know that withdrawal of a paper does not mean repudiation of it. Moreover, observe that F. W. Newman's case was from 1833. JND never changed his original principles.

46. The palliators of evil seem at no loss to ever explain things away. If a statement cannot be denied, then go at the context or attack the person. For example:

It represented Mr. Muller as having openly said, that Mr. H. [J. L. Harris' initial exposure of B. W. Newton] was 'doing the work of darkness,' in exposing Mr. N.'s errors. This was a mistake. Mr. M. never said so. No one exposed the errors in question more fully and more boldly than Mr. M. himself on a subsequent occasion. The matter which gave rise to the false report, had there been only a little care in first making inquiry, could have been easily explained. Mr. Muller supposed that Mr. H. in animadverting on certain notes which had been taken of Mr. N.'s lectures, was treating them as if they had been revised and approved by Mr. N. himself, and were authorized expositions of his views, while in reality they might be most incorrect and unfaithful, and that thus Mr. N. might be held responsible for what he would disavow and repudiate. To this supposed way of acting, Mr. M., influenced by a proper sense of righteousness, applied this strong expression (*What are the Facts?*, p. 16).

47. *Collected Writings* 15:164-167.

48. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 161.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
50. *The Bristol Case . . .*, p. 5.
51. *Vindication of Separation* , pp. 41,42.
52. W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren* , p. 150 note.
53. *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity*, a paper which essentially supported his previous papers on this subject.
54. *Bethesda Family Matters*, p. 152.
55. *The Bristol Case . . .*, p. 5.
56. *Bethesda Family Matters*, p. 153.
57. *A History of the Brethren Movement* , pp. 159, 160.
58. Observe that F. R. Coad was just defending Henry Craik by saying of G. V. Wigram, "his denunciation of H. Craik was elaborated by various pieces of hearsay." But see Appendix 12 about H. Craik. Yes, W. B. Neatby said someone told him that JND had said at a meeting in Dublin in 1852 that he had put G. V. Wigram's tracts in the fire. Sounds good, anyway, for the palliator's cause. Listen to W. B. Neatby:

At a meeting in Dublin in 1852, as I learn from one who was present, he was questioned about his action in regard to the discipline against Bethesda and its adherents. "When some reference was made," my informant writes, "to the charges against Mr. Craik, he said, as I distinctly remember, that he knew nothing about it -- that Mr. Wigram sent him his tracts, and that he put them at the back of the fire." This implies that he had some inkling of their contents, even if we are to understand that he did not read them. But it was clearly impossible for Darby to wash his hands of the whole business in that way. Wigram's charges against Craik became, as every Exclusive (at any rate in my time) knew perfectly well, a very important weapon in the armory of Darbyism; yet Darby, if he had chosen, could have put an end to them at any time, for good and all. The fact was that Wigram and his like -- men that never flinched from doing their chief's work, however tedious and disgusting it might be -- were indispensable to Darby, as such men are to every party leader; and he simply could not afford to disown them. Probably too he thought that they were warring in their blundering way against a real evil, and had better not be discouraged. However that may be, Wigram's caricatures took a firm hold of the popular imagination . . .

I wonder how W. B. Neatby could lower himself to utter such nonsense. But, then, it is the hallmark of calumniators.

59. *An Appeal . . .*, pp. 5,6.
60. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism* , p. 36.
61. *The Exclusive Brethren: Their Origin and Discipline* , p. 13.
62. Also, recall that Bethesda was not connected with those gathered together to the Lord's name when F. W. Newman was refused and all refused connection with him -- but A. N. Groves, G. Muller and H. Craik were dilatory in F. W. Newman's case.
63. *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, of New Zealand . . .*, p. 7.
64. W. Kelly, *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism* , p. 13.
65. *A Brief History of the Brethren* , p. 28.
66. Entire letter cited in G. V. Wigram, *An Answer of G. V. Wigram to "Mr. H. Craik's Letter, Dated 15 November, 1848,"* p. 7.
67. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism* , p. 37.
68. *The Bible Treasury* 14:270.
69. *The Bristol Case*, pp. 6,7.
70. *An Appeal to Saints that Still Remain in Bethesda and Salem* , p. 7, note.
71. See W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism* , pp. 40, 41, for more on this point. See also F. W. Grant, *A Statement for Examination . . .*, pp. 8, 9.
72. W. H. Dorman, *A Review of Certain Evils . . .*, pp. 41, 42.

73. *The Bible Treasury* 14:270. See also W. Kelly, *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism*, pp. 14, 15.
74. *The Bible Treasury, New Series* 5:335.
75. *Vindication of Separation*, p. 40.
76. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship*, pp. 16, 17. See also W. Kelly, *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism*, pp. 14, 15.
77. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 43. See his further comments on complicity of some within Bethesda and the partisans of B. W. Newton.
78. *A Review of Certain Evils and Questions*, pp. 11, 12. See also W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 42; J. S. Oliphant's, *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship*, pp. 14-17.
79. *The Present Question*, p. 15, note 3.
80. *Conversations on Bethesda Family Matters*, p. 179.
81. *The Bristol Case*, p. 3. This statement was endorsed by H. Groves (another son of A. N. Groves) in *Darbyism, Its Rise, Progress and Development*, p. 29. See also E. H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church*, p. 384; H. P. Barker, *Why I Abandoned Exclusivism*, p. 11. A. Stenhouse, *The Sin of Sectarianism*, p. 94.
82. The reference has escaped me.
83. *The Exclusive Brethren: Their Origin and Discipline*, p. 16.
84. *Another Appeal* . . . , pp. 5, 6.
85. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:506,507.
86. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:509. See also 3:366.
87. Philadelphos [Mr. Bewley], *The Basis of Peace* . . . , p. 20. A more labored attempt to show that B. W. Newton's tracts were not circulated at Bethesda is found in *What Are The Facts* . . . , pp. 38,39.
88. *Another Appeal* . . . , p. 2.
89. Cited by G. V. Wigram, *The Present Question*, p. 50.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
91. *Vindication of Separation*, p. 38.
92. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:201.
93. *A Review of Certain Evils* . . . , p. 42.
94. *Bethesda Family Matters*, p. 179.
95. *Why I Abandoned Exclusivism*, London: Pickering and Inglis, p. 6, sec. ed. (1932).
96. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
98. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 37.
99. E. Granville
M. J. Starling
Ben. J. Slim
Porter Hammond
W. Chapman
Henry Gough
Frederick Leffler
C. J. Hampton
P. Suckling
Francis Lean, Park-street, Kennington
Edward Cronin
W. Langford, Brixton
Thomas Glenny, Barking
John Jewel Penstone, Chelsea

The following brethren also affix their names to copies of the above.

Thomas Marsh, Stafford
 James Marson, "
 Charles Walker, "
 William Bayley, "
 Fred. Jackson, Brixton
 Sept. Tomkins, "
 S. Hodson, Clapham
 Robert Merrifield
 G. Herbert, Camberwell
 W. C. Newman

Edward Cronin)
 Henry Gough) Vouchers for the signature of these brethren.

100. *A Review of Certain Evils* . . . , pp. 42-45.
101. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethrenism*, p. 49.
102. *Bethesda in 1892*, p. 6.
103. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 160.
104. Philalethes [A. C. Ord] *Is There not a Cause?*, pp. 19-22.
105. See W. H. Dorman, *A Review of Certain Evils* . . . , p. 5.
106. *A Review of Certain Evils* . . . , p. 35.
107. *An Appeal to Saints that Remain Still in Bethesda and Salem* . . . , p. 15.
108. *An Answer of G. V. Wigram to "Mr. H. Craik's Letter, Dated 15th November 1848,"* p. 8.
109. G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 293.
110. *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:368.
111. *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism* .
112. *Bethesda Fellowship*, 1907, p. 4.
113. *The Bethesda Fellowship*, 1865, p. 34.
114. Cited in *Anthony Norris Groves*, pp. 333, 334.
115. Cited in J. S. Oliphant, *Bethesda Fellowship, 1907*.
116. *Letters of J.N. Darby* 1:215.
117. *Anthony Norris Groves*, pp. 333-342.
118. *Ibid.*, p. 340.
119. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:210, 211.
120. F. R. Coad wrote that JND "himself selected the persons to whom the invitations were sent," *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 166. Cp. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:225.
121. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:214. Read pages 212-214.
122. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:215.
123. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:216. I cite two examples of Bethesdaite reactions:

The issuing of this Circular was an era in the history of the Brethren. It went out clothed with the authority of a great name, and at once it convulsed the whole body of the Brethren, and divided them into two parties.

The Circular itself has since been withdrawn at the instance of friends, and this is so far an admission that it was not of the Lord. But, as far as I know, the erroneous statements contained in it have never been withdrawn. By its circulation thousands have been misled, schism has been propagated, divisions have been multiplied, and infinite dishonor brought on the name of Christ.

Surely if the statements contained in that document were true, it never should have been withdrawn. But if not true, then a large number of God's dear children have been thereby falsified throughout the globe (*What Are the Facts?*, pp. 16, 17).

F. R. Coad, who shows over and over his incapacity to understand J. N. Darby, wrote:

What precisely had Darby intended? If it had meant anything at all, his statement at Bristol had surely indicated a genuine effort to retrace his tragic steps -- perhaps even to effect a belated fulfillment of his words to Muller at that last sad meeting between them (if Muller's version of that incident is accepted). But, as he tried to explain it to his followers, he made it seem nothing but a rather despicable controversial stratagem (*A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 166).

124. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:217.
125. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:278. See also 3:307.
126. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:280.
127. L. Pilson, *Vindication of Separation*, p. 46.
128. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:509.
129. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 167.
130. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:162,163.
131. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:143.
132. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:181.
133. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:240.
133. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:216.
134. *Collected Writings* 7:144, 145.
136. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:474, 475.
137. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 164.
138. H. Groves, *Darbyism . . .*, p. 51.
139. *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, article "Kenosis," Grand Rapids: Baker, 1960.
140. *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, pp. 29, 30, (1992).
141. Peter Cousins, *The Harvester*, Sept. or Oct. 1986, p. 18.
142. See my *Could Christ Sin?*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, 1993.
143. London: Pickering and Inglis, a major Open Brethren publisher.
144. Peter Cousins, *The Harvester*, Sept. or Oct. 1986, p. 18.
145. Perhaps the reader will bear with me for thinking that unsoundness, or weakness, on the subject of the Lord's humanity on the part of some Open Brethren is what has led them to speak of a docetic tendency on the part of exclusives. I suggest that the charge indicates this.
146. Of course, my question is rhetorical. Open Brethren do not hold even the Scriptural church principles, or the Scriptural principles of the holiness of Christian fellowship that bear on this matter. The false course was put in place by Bethesda.
147. *Weeds, Leaven, and the Brethren Movement*, Kansas City: Believer's Bible Lessons, 1992.
148. The reader will find much corrective help in *Precious Truths Revived and Recovered Through J. N. Darby*, obtainable from the publisher.
149. *The Local Assembly*, fifth ed., p. 26.
150. *Rejudging the Question*, p. 4.
151. Philalethes [A. C. Ord], *Is There Not A Cause?* pp. 10, 11.
152. *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, of New Zealand. . .*, p. 12.
153. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
154. *An Allegory: Things Supposed to Illustrate Things That Are*, p. 4, available from the publisher.
155. The reference has escaped me.
156. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:509.

157. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:506.
158. Cited in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:382-384.
159. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:393.
160. Cited by H. A. Ironside, *The History of the Brethren*, p. 44.
161. W. McDonald, *Christ Loved the Church*, pp. 27,37-40.
The Corporate Christian Testimony of Believers in the Assemblies of North America, pp. 15, 33. (Comments by W. Detweiler and R. E. Harlow)
 J. F. Spink, *Doctrine of Christian Fellowship*.
 A. P. Gibbs, *An Introduction to a Study of Church Truth* p. 33.
 A. G. Clarke, *New Testament Church Principles*, pp.49-54.
 J. M. Davies, *The Lord and the Churches*, pp.90-98.
 W. E. Vine, *The Church and the Churches*.
 J. B. Watson, ed., *The Church, A Symposium*.
The Witness, 1924, p. 284.
162. *Why I Abandoned Exclusivism*, p. 7.
163. *A Statement of the Position of Bethesda, 1906*. This paper was "Signed on behalf of the Church at Bethesda, BRISTOL, 17th December 1906." It was signed by 11 brethren.
164. Quoted from N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:364.
165. *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, of New Zealand* . . . , p. 14.
166. *The Girdle of Truth* 2:444, 1857.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

A Statement and Acknowledgment Respecting Certain Doctrinal Errors

[Nov. 26, 1847]

[The reader will find in Chapter 8.5 by whom, and how, the following acknowledgment that was signed by B. W. Newton was really written. Appendix 4 gives an analysis of it by L. Pilson. Chapter 8.4 and Appendix 7 show the real meaninglessness of it.]

In the year 1835, it will be recollected by many that various false doctrines which had been introduced by Mr. Irving and others, were becoming widely disseminated amongst Christians.

Those who were concerned in the controversy with Irvingism, will remember that that doctrine attributed to Christ a sinful humanity, and set aside the union of the two natures -- Divine and human -- in His one Person. The following quotation from a Paper of mine, published in 1835, written in confutation, will explain the nature of their doctrines: "If Christ had been 'troubled by every evil disposition which inhereth in the fallen manhood,' [as Ed. Irving wrote] and if He could have said, like the believer, 'not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh,' how was not Christ personally a sinner? There are only two ways in which this question can be answered by those who maintain these doctrines. They must either deny that the evil propensity *isn't itself* sin; or, consider the human nature of the Lord as something distinct from Himself *personally*. The last is very plainly the doctrine maintained in the "Treatise on the Human Nature" [by Ed. Irving]. I suppose a hundred quotations might be made therefrom, in which the name Christ is given not to Jesus, as being God and man in one person, but to the Word, acting in and surrounded by the flesh as by a garment. The whole purport of the book appears to be this, to represent the Incarnation as the Imprisonment, so to speak, of the Eternal Word, in sinful flesh, against which He had continually to struggle, just as the Holy Spirit in us is *separate* from, and struggles against our evil nature. The flesh of our Lord, to use Mr. Irving's illustration, stood to Him in the same relation as a pit to the person who is in it, or as a garment to the person whom it covers, and thus the true doctrine of the incarnation is denied." ("Doctrines of the Church in Newman Street, considered," in the *Christian Witness*, 1st edition, vol. 2, p. 118).

In order to meet the statements of Irvingism, it was argued; that the true doctrine of the Incarnation is -- that Christ is God and man in one Person; that all His actions were not those of God *simply*, nor of man *simply*; but of God and man united in one Person never to be divided; and that if holiness pertained to the Eternal Word, holiness equally pertained to that nature which He had taken into everlasting union with Himself.

To this it was objected, that we, in a sense, deified the humanity of Jesus, and virtually denied that He was really man. Many passages were quoted by the defenders of Mr. Irving's doctrine, to prove that Jesus was not only man, but man in weakness, that He had a mortal body unlike to that which Adam first had in Paradise; and they added that the cause of His body being mortal was that sin (as they said) inhered in it.

Many minds were deceived by these statements. They had been so accustomed to

regard the body of the Lord Jesus, as resembling that which Adam had before he sinned in Paradise; that when they began to think of the Lord Jesus, as "in the likeness of sinful flesh," they were so interested by what they felt to be a new and important branch of doctrine, and it seemed to open to their minds so much of the Scripture which they had not before considered, that many were carried away into great excess both of thought and statement -- and were disposed to palliate, if not to receive, the evil conclusion above referred to, viz., that the cause of His body being mortal, was that sin inhered in it.

In order to meet this, it was felt to be a solemn duty to endeavour to own, as far as possible, the truth that might be mingled with the error, and to seek to disentangle it from its evil connections. It was on this account that I wrote a preface, and made some additions to the paper above referred to; and in an attempt to meet as far as possible the minds of others, I have gone too far, and myself transgressed by overstepping the bound of truth.

In allowing that the Lord Jesus had a body different from that of Adam in Paradise, I was right. I was right also in saying that inherent corruption is not the originating cause of mortality, but the one sin of Adam -- "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin:" I was right also in stating that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a mortal body was one.

It was this that first introduced Rom. 5 into the controversy, as showing that death of the body resulted from that which one man had done; and if due care had been taken to discriminate between the mode in which the consequences of Adam's transgression reached mankind through federal headship, and the manner in which the Lord Jesus took certain of those consequences upon Himself, but not through federal headship, the error which I now have to confess, would have been avoided.

If I had watched this, I should have carefully avoided the referring that part of the fifth of Romans to the Lord Jesus, and I should have stated that His connection with these consequences, was in virtue of His having been made of a woman, and thus having brought Himself into association with a race on whom these penalties were resting. In other words, that when the Eternal Word became flesh, He thereby voluntarily placed Himself in association with those on whom certain penalties, such as loss of Paradise -- hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and pain, had come, as consequences of the fall; and that in virtue of such association He partook of those consequences -- even all the consequences in which He could share unconnected with personal sin.

I have invariably used the truth of His being the Son and the fact of His Divine conception, as the reason of His necessary immunity from all taint, even though born of a woman, and also as the reason of His freedom from all penalties that would, if they attached, imply personal sin, and of His personal title (whensoever He might, according to the will of the Father, please to assert it), to immunity from all penalties of any kind whatsoever; but I ought never to have connected Him with Adam as a federal Head; He, being what He essentially was, was free from this, though partaking of all the common properties and infirmities of man's nature, sin only excepted.

My error in this resulted in my holding that the Lord Jesus, while perfectly free from all, even the slightest taint of sin, either original or actual, yet was under Adam, as a federal head, and thus was exposed by his position to the imputation of Adam's guilt, as is taught respecting mankind in the 5th of Romans. I saw it to be distinctly revealed that the Lord was subject to hunger, thirst, weariness, sorrow, etc., which things we know are consequences of the fall; and I erred in attributing His participation in these afflictions to a *federal* relationship to Adam.

Recent circumstances having necessitated a careful review of the whole subject, I

have been led, as I have above stated, to see that I was distinctly in error in holding that the Lord Jesus came by birth under any imputation of guilt or the consequences of such imputation. I see that results altogether contrary to Christian doctrine are involved in, and may fairly be deduced from this error, which I now desire explicitly to renounce; and I desire to acknowledge my error in having thus held and taught on this subject; and I hereby withdraw all statements of mine, whether in print or in any other form, in which *this error or any of its fruits* may be found.

The doctrine in question was, I believe, first stated by me in a part of the tract above referred to against Irvingism, entitled "Doctrines of the Church in Newman Street, Considered," published in 1835: Which Tract was inserted in a second edition of the Christian Witness in 1837 and 1838. I request that this may be considered as a withdrawal of the erroneous parts of the above-mentioned Paper, and I also desire that any statements of mine, whether in notes of Lectures taken by others, or in any communications of my own, in which this doctrine occurs, may now be considered as withdrawn -- that they may not be regarded as containing my sentiments, and that they may no longer be circulated.

With regard to the Two Tracts recently published by myself on "The Suffering of Christ," I also request that they may be withdrawn for reconsideration.^a

In acknowledging the before-mentioned error, I wish explicitly to state that I do not ascribe any of Christ's living experiences to the imputation of Adam's guilt, nor ought I to have made any statements or used any words which did so ascribe *any* of His sufferings to anything imputed to Him; nor yet that He had by keeping the law or by anything imputed to Him; nor yet that He had by keeping the law or by anything else to deliver Himself from such imputation or its consequences. Every such deduction must necessarily fall with the wrong doctrine on which it is based.

I do not now enter into a statement of the limitations by which this doctrine was guarded in my own mind and in my teaching: I had supposed that the limitations which I employed, were sufficient to prevent the deductions which have been recently drawn, and that, in many cases, legitimately: deductions, which I abhor as thoroughly as those can by whom they have been drawn; I trust that I can appeal to any of my writings in which the person and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus are spoken of, as well as to persons who have known me as a Christian or a teacher, for proof that deductions which go to involve the fitness of the Lord for His blessed work of atonement, could never have been contemplated by me; and that they are entirely opposed to, and contrasted with, the whole current of my teaching and aim and thoughts.

I wish to state distinctly, that I hold the perfectness of Christ's person and the completeness of His one sacrifice, to be truths so solemnly unquestionable, that every doctrine or opinion must be subordinated to, and guided by these leading and foundation truths; and every statement of mine on the relations of Christ whether in my recent tracts which I have now withdrawn, or in any other place, I wish to subject entirely to these primary truths: I desire that every statement with respect to such subordinate truth should be strictly guarded with the limitations which the afore-mentioned foundation truths supply.

It is not my desire to extend the present remarks. I would merely state that I do distinctly hold, that there never was anything in the personal, relative, or dispensational positions of Christ, which could have prevented His being at any one moment of His life,

a. [This evades the necessary **repudiation** of these teachings; RAH].

the perfect and unblemished sacrifice, and that not one suffering, whencesoever originating, ever came upon Him, except because of and for the sake of *others*.

I would not wish it to be supposed that what I have now said, is intended to extenuate the error which I have confessed. I desire to acknowledge it fully, and to acknowledge it as sin; it is my desire thus to confess it before God and His Church; and I desire that this may be considered as an expression of my deep and unfeigned grief and sorrow especially by those who may have been grieved or injured by the false statement, or by any consequences thence resulting. I trust that the Lord will not only pardon, but will graciously counteract any evil effects which may have arisen to any therefrom.

B. W. Newton.

Appendix 2:

A. N. Groves

In volume 1, Appendix 3, we saw that A. N. Groves was not the "founder of the brethren." The false claim is based on a statement in *Memoir of the Late Anthony Norris Groves*, (p. 39) by his widow, Harriet Groves, that seems to be utilized as the basis for the claim that he is the "founder of the movement":

Miss Paget remembers the occasion on which one of the party, Mr. Bellett, a dear friend of Mr. Groves, said to her, "Groves has just been telling me, that it appeared to him from Scripture, that believers, meeting together as disciples of Christ, were free to break bread together, as their Lord had admonished them; and that, in as far as the practice of the apostles could be a guide, every Lord's day should be set apart for thus remembering the Lord's death, and obeying His parting command." This suggestion of Mr Groves was immediately carried out by himself and his friends in Dublin.

Judging by what we have seen concerning the beginnings, this last sentence, a comment by his second wife, ^b who married him later, is erroneous. ^c This erroneous statement seems to be the authority for regarding him as the "founder of the movement" and it appears to be believed by many. ¹ W. W. Conard (Open Brethren) has recently repeated the embellished story:

This they did immediately in Bellett's home.²

Concerning the suggestion to J. G. Bellett (which A. N. Groves did not immediately act on with some friends -- who rather acted on JND's proposal), W. Kelly said that what this meant was "only claiming license to act freely, but not so as to reject the false at all."³ This is seen in the following, concerning A. N. Groves:

The views that he, to his death, so *strongly* held, both of the entire unity of the family of God and their liberty to unite together in worship, were, he often said, first opened to him, while searching the scriptures in Dublin. After one of their happy prayer-meetings, already mentioned, it was asked by one of the party, "Are there no principles in the word of God, which would unite all believers in worship, whatever might be their various views or attainments in the divine life?" Mr. Groves replied, "Yes, there are: **we are evidently called to know nothing among our fellow-Christians, but this one fact -- Do they belong to Christ? Has Christ received them? then may we receive them, to the glory of God.**"

b. His first wife died, in Baghdad, during his first missionary journey, on May 14, 1831. He remarried on April 25, 1835 (G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 9).

c. W. Kelly speaks of:

". . . the absurdity of Mr. A. N. Groves being a 'founder'! (a very pardonable idea in the attached members of his own family, and especially in such as never go beyond their crude thoughts) . . ." *The Bible Treasury* 14:284, note.

[emphasis mine] To what happy results would these simple truths lead, among God's people. Even where they did not overthrow any mere human systems, they would help forward fellowship and intercourse among all Christians.⁴

What is emphasized must necessarily lead to indifference to evil. It omits separation from, and exclusion of, those in fellowship with evil. It includes rejection of what some Christians call "secondary separation." Reception involves more than the fact that a person is a Christian. Here at the start we see an erroneous notion of A. N. Groves to which he steadily adhered. This notion indicates one of the streams of thought that the Lord brought to a test in the 1846-1849 troubles at Plymouth and Bethesda.

There existed, then, divergent views of fellowship. The views of JND included that a Christian must be a "consistent Christian,"⁵ walking in holiness. For example, if a Christian came from a place expressing a spiritual unity, and a teacher of fundamentally evil doctrine were tolerated there, such a Christian was not to be received any more than the teacher himself. (You will recall that JND took a firm stand in the case of F. W. Newman, in 1833, and that the various meetings also refused F. W. Newman.)

A. N. GROVES' PRINCIPLES OF FELLOWSHIP

The "Prophetic Letter." In the Bethesda controversy (1848/1849) A. N. Groves was an ardent defender of Bethesda and its principle of fellowship, namely that association with leaven does not in itself leaven a person or a congregation.⁶

In 1836 he wrote a letter to JND which has been much publicized by followers of the Bethesda principle and it has been called a "prophetic letter" because it is alleged to show where JND's principles were leading and going astray. That letter rather shows where A. N. Groves' principles were leading. I shall cite only that part which an admirer of A. N. Groves deemed sufficient to illustrate his principles:

We were free, within the limits of the truth, to share with them in *part*, though we could not in *all*, their services. In fact, as we received them for the life, we would not *reject* them for their systems, or refuse to recognize any *part* of their systems, because we disallowed much. . . . Was not the principle we laid down as to separation from all existing bodies at the outset, this: that we felt ourselves bound to separate from all individuals and systems, *so far* as they required us to do what our consciences would not allow, or restrained us from doing what our consciences required, and no further? And were we not as free to join and act with any individual, or body of individuals, as they were free *not* to require us to do what our consciences did *not* allow, or prevent our doing what they did? and in this freedom did we not feel brethren should *not* force liberty on those who were bound, nor withhold freedom from those who were free?

Did we not feel constrained to follow the apostolic rule of *not judging other men's consciences*, as to liberty, by our own; remembering it is written, "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth; seeing that God hath received" both the one and the other? Now it is one of these two grounds; their preventing me from, or demanding from me, other than the Lord demands, that divides me in a *measure* from every system; as *my own proper* duty to God, rather than as witnessing against THEIR

evils. As any system is in its provision narrower or wider than the truth, I either stop short, or go beyond its provisions, but I would INFINITELY RATHER BEAR with *all their evils*, than SEPARATE FROM THEIR GOOD. These were the *then* principles of our separation and intercommunion.⁷

W. B. Neatby gives a more extensive quotation, but does not give the last two sentences of this citation. Interestingly, neither did H. A. Ironside. Were they ashamed of it? Rex A. Koivisto certainly endorsed it.⁸

"These were prophetic utterances," said J. Kennedy.⁹

A. N. Groves' words, "I would infinitely rather bear with all their evils, than separate from their good," says F. R. Coad, summarizes his position, using "evil" in "relation to theological opinions^d and ecclesiastical practices." Since he says that this "letter is one of the most perceptive documents of the movement,"¹⁰ it appears that he sanctions such notions. Indeed, J. C. F. Stunt, in a sympathetic review of F. R. Coad's book, stated:

Mr. Coad's account begins with Groves and his generous quest for a truly Biblical unity, and in many ways it is his noble vision which permeates the whole book. The failure of mere separatism was recognized very early by Groves and Mr . . . Coad's criticism is clearly similar¹¹

W. B. Neatby's opinion was that "this letter is marked by no ordinary combination of faithfulness, delicacy, and large heartedness."¹²

G. H. Lang says that "Groves' statement to Darby in the 1836 letter is distinct and was never questioned."¹³

The letter shows that in 1836 JND and A. N. Groves held opposed thoughts; but A. N. Groves claims his are the original ones. He wrote, ". . . but I thought I knew *yours*, at least your original ones." He did not know them. JND's thoughts were formed, in part, by the fact of the fall and the ruin of the church,^e truths rejected by A. N. Groves.

Concerning A. N. Groves, W. Kelly remarked,

The late Mr. Groves went along with Bethesda warmly. This was to be expected from one whose principle it was, if principle it can be called, to bear with all the evils of Christians rather than separate from their good (p. 38). *Neither* of these things, it is evident, ought to be done by the believer, nor ever was accepted by "Brethren". -- It should be known also, that M.G., though often breaking bread with "Brethren", because of their receiving all Christians, notoriously *never* agreed with their principles; as I am informed by those who took that position from the very first, and adhere to it unswervingly still. The effect of his own peculiar theory of universal association was practically to leave him universally "unattached". And it is this absence of a fixed, holy divine principle in matters ecclesiastical, which is the chief point of sympathy between him and you.¹⁴

A. N. Groves's "prophetic letter" was criticized by R. Beacon in *The Bible*

d. [Do not be deceived by this expression. Bethesda showed what it really means, as does Chapter 9.10.]

e. See vol. 1:18, 26n14, 31, 65, 67, 73, 82, 100n3, 112.

Treasury 16:366-368, and by W. Kelly in *The Bible Treasury* 13:361-363. W. Kelly therein wrote,

Mr. Groves seems no bad witness, however, of his mistake as to Brethren; for *he* was welcome, though *first and last* he materially differed from them. He never recognized the assembly, the body of Christ, as you know Brethren do, though in no way forcing it on or from a single member of Christ, who is received simply and solely in His name. He never understood the baptism of the Holy Spirit as distinct from the new birth, nor saw that while *this* is common to all believers from Abel (or Adam) downwards, *that* is special to God's dealing in sovereign grace since redemption and Christ's going on high (St. John 14, 16, Acts 1, 2, 1 Cor. 12, &c.) Mr. Groves used to cite (as you may see in his Memoir) Matthew 13:30, in a way which destroys ecclesiastical purity and annuls discipline, just as Papists did against Protestants, but rejected by Chillingworth, &c. before us. So far from being a "chief originator" therefore, he was always especially opposed to those who affirm that, while grace is the power, separation from evil is the necessary and spiritual principle of unity according to God. He was a unit, but never understood unity.

Mr. Groves was a devoted man, of a practical turn of mind, confused and incapable of analysis, and so he thought that separation from evil, which is another way of expressing holiness, was made by us *the power and aim* of unity, instead of being (as it must be) *its principle*, if God had to do with it. Attractive grace in Christ, the one object and center, is the power in the energy of the Spirit. Yet, though differing as to this from us, and finding out that there was a difference which he never discerned truly, either where or how it lay, he went along with Brethren who never thought of troubling him, till he went off himself with his brother-in-law in the unhappy Plymouth-Bethesda rupture.

But, apart from himself, what can be less intelligent than these statements of Mr. Groves'? *Not* life, as he says, *nor* light, as he erroneously imputed to us, is the bond, but *the one Spirit*, who has baptized us, whatever we might have been before, into one body. This is not a slight distinction, but fundamental. And therefore, while striving (I trust) as much as Mr. Groves to maintain brotherly love, and fully believing in God's gracious action by His servants in all orthodox denominations, I still humbly but firmly maintain that the very principle of different denominations is dead opposed to the "one body and one Spirit" of scripture; and scripture cannot be broken. The sanction of distinct communions is irreconcilable with God's word. That is the point of Mr. Groves' difference from Brethren, who stand decidedly for *the rule the Lord constitutes* with which the Spirit's order (though I prefer calling it His action) ought to coincide; which I feel assured is the simple truth on this subject, as revealed in the word, the only safeguard against all delusions.

I do not differ from the late Mr. Groves in abhorrence of narrow-minded arrogance and bigoted assumption, which are altogether at variance with the only becoming ways of the Christian, the lowliness and meekness and long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, in which we are called to walk together, as individually. Nor do I deny the grave occasion we (Brethren I mean) have given by our grievous failures in times of controversial struggle. But this is due, not to a mistaken principle, but to our state of unjudged carnality and to worldly love of party success, and to other humiliating evils inadequately watched against, which have too often tarnished the testimony of Christ in our midst. But Mr. Groves is wholly mistaken if he supposes that his laxity as to Christendom even admits of anything like the same horror of schism, of heresy, or any such sin

against Christ and the church, as those brethren must feel who seize the body of Christ according to the written word as he never did.

This review shows the doctrine of A. N. Groves with respect to catholic fellowship and his influence respecting this upon H. Craik and G. Muller of Bethesda Chapel, Bristol. And this helps explain the so-called *Letter of the Ten*, a statement of principles upon which Bethesda acted with respect to those received from fellowship with B. W. Newton after his blasphemies concerning Christ's person came to light. Another wrote,

And now another testimony of Mr. Craik, and from Henry Groves' book once more (p. 46), which is in line with the principles of the Memoir: "Should it turn out that Mr. Newton's errors are only those of a rash speculative intellectualist, who is yet sound at heart and seeking to honor Christ, it will be no cause of regret that I have refused to have fellowship with those who have been seeking to crush rather than to recover him; if, on the other hand, it should appear that, after all his long course of service he is really an enemy to the cross of Christ, it will be no cause of regret that I have been rather too slow to believe so terrible a charge!" Now the charge was not as to Newton's state of soul, but his positive teaching. Yet a course of conduct is adopted, and the evil is allowed to spread, and division is accomplished, and why? Just because -- and in full accord, note, with what A. N. Groves taught of "catholic fellowship" -- the leaders of Bethesda have charitable hopes as to Mr. Newton's state of soul. A strange catholicity this . . .¹⁵

This matter of considering the heart instead of the conduct is a strong echo of A. N. Groves' words in a letter "On the Principles of Union and Communion in the Church of Christ" wherein he wrote,

Should it be asked what are to be done with errors? are they not a bar to communion? No; unless they bar Christ from the temple of the erring brother's heart. While we hope Christ lingers, let us linger. . . .¹⁶

A. N. Groves' 1836 letter to JND was prophetic, prophetic of how he and Bethesda would tolerate the evils of Christians. Look at the above quotation again; and observe that it means that unless you are prepared to say that a person who held evil doctrine, or supported a teacher of evil doctrine, or broke bread with a teacher of evil doctrine, was not a Christian at all, "let us linger" with such.

A. N. Groves rejected the idea of the fall/ruin of the church, which was held by JND already in 1827. Open Brethren do not accept this teaching either with perhaps a few inconsistent exceptions.

Separation from Evil unto the Lord. There is something that A. N. Groves wrote, in 1834, which helps us to understand his thoughts.

. . . Yet as to our liberty in Christ to worship with any congregation under heaven where He manifests himself to bless and to save, can there be in any Christian mind a doubt? If my Lord should say to me, in any congregation of the almost unnumbered sections of the Church, "What dost thou here?" I would reply . . . "Seeing Thou wert here to save and sanctify, I felt it safe to be with Thee." If He again said, as perhaps He may among most of us, "Didst thou not see abominations here, an admixture of that which was unscriptural, and the absence of that which was scriptural, and in some points error, at least in your judgment?" my answer would be, "Yea, Lord, but I dared not call that place unholy where

Thou wert present to bless, nor by refusing communion in worship reject those as unholy whom Thou hadst by Thy saving power evidently sanctified and set apart for Thine own." Our reason for rejecting the congregations of apostate bodies is, that Christ doth not manifest Himself among them in their public character, though He may save some individuals as brands plucked from the burning. To these churches we cry, standing on the outside, "Come out of her, my people, come out of her." Among the others we stand, as the Son of Man, or rather with Him, *in the midst* of the seven golden candlesticks (Revelation 1:13), telling them to remember their first love, first purity, and first work in all holy doctrine and discipline, lest the Lord take away their candlesticks; but we would rather linger, in hope that the impending judgment may be stayed, or some yet repent, than say, like Edom, in the day of Judah's sorrows, "Down with her, down with her, even to the ground." (See also Obadiah 10-14).

To the question, Are we not countenancing error by this plan? our answer is, that if we must appear to countenance error, or discountenance brotherly love, and the visible union of the Church of God, we prefer the former, hoping that our lives and our tongues may be allowed by the Lord so intelligibly to speak that at last our righteousness shall be allowed to appear; but if not, still we may feel we have chosen the better part, since we tarried only for our Lord's departure; and as the candlestick retired, and its light vanished, we pronounce our sad farewell; but so long as Christ dwells in an individual, or walks in the midst of a congregation, blessing the ministrations to the conversion and edification of souls, we dare not denounce and formally withdraw from either, for fear of the awful sin of schism, of sin against Christ and His mystical body.¹⁷

The occasion of writing this was JND's dealing with F. W. Newman and his Arianism (discussed in volume 1, Appendix 2). A. N. Groves' attitude toward evil was shown in a letter of his, dated April 5, 1834:

Dear ----'s letter, which left on my mind the impression of a Jehu-like zeal which neither pitied nor spared, led me to write the brief letter which will, I hope, accompany this: some wished to have copies of it, and therefore I had it printed. Surely it does become us, surrounded and eaten up with errors as we are, to touch those of our brother gently. I have to a certain extent found the Lord leading me in the way you so much desire, that is, to all Christians; and this, I think, without sacrificing the truth to any, though, of course, bearing in a measure with their infirmities.¹⁸

These attitudes, then, underlie his 1836 "prophetic letter" to JND. And such indifference to what is due to Christ came to a public issue in 1848 when Bethesda, in the *Letter of the Ten*, endorsed by the congregation, took a public stand on denying that association with evil defiles.

Henry Groves, a son of A. N. Groves, approvingly citing someone concerning Lord Congleton (formerly J. Parnell), who strenuously resisted JND in the Plymouth matter, wrote:

... he held firmly that, in order to justify excommunication, evil doctrine must be so held as to constitute the party either directly or indirectly a propagator of it.¹⁹

Evil doctrine is leaven (Gal. 5:9). Lord Congleton, as we can see, did not approve of excommunication for simply holding evil doctrine. Thus, 'private leaven' is tolerable. But the Judge does not approve of 'holding' such things

(Rev. 2:14).

Now let us hear A. N. Groves' admirer, F. R. Coad:

In the Plymouth teachers on the one hand and in Groves on the other, we have then two sharply contrasted positions. The Plymouth leaders gave a simple and easily-grasped call to separate from other churches: but their teaching suffered from two serious weaknesses. The first was that while it built upon a generalized and extreme image of existing church organizations, it overlooked the individual facts. It was easy for those early Plymouth leaders to show that existing church structures were not compatible with the Church depicted in the New Testament. It was easy also for them to lay their finger upon anomalies and corruptions within the historic churches. From that it was but a short step to the call to separate from apostasy, a word of frightening implications which they developed to the full. But, in the letter from which we have quoted, Groves laid his finger upon the weakness of this position. It ignored the fact that God *did* still work within those structures, and that men and women were still brought within them to a personal experience of God and to acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ. So Groves's definition of apostasy was a very different one. For Groves, apostasy existed only when Christ Himself had withdrawn: "the apostate churches, where no souls are converted under the public ministrations," where "Christ doth not manifest Himself among them in their public character."

The Plymouth conception was dogmatic and, ironically, attached determining importance to the very organizational structures which its exponents rejected. Groves also had rejected those structures -- but his conception was pragmatic, and emphasized the immediate spiritual realities of the congregation. Moreover, Groves's definition was capable of a salutary turn: it could be applied as rigorously to each of their own congregations as to any of those of the historic bodies.

This brings us to the second weakness of the Plymouth conception. It was essentially outward-looking, and could only lead to growing estrangement and hostility. Like all generalizations, it created a bogey in people's minds, which made them incapable of giving due weight to particular facts. To exhort Christians to separate from evil was excellent, until they took the outrageous step of attaching the word to matters of sincere conviction. To encourage men to believe that this separation could be achieved by a change in their church associations was to overlook the fact that not one of us can separate, ultimately, from the real roots of evil, for evil is within us.²⁰

Here we find the "Plymouth conception" condemned. Consider that condemnation in connection with the following from a history by another of the Open Brethren, D. J. Beattie. (Keep in mind that A. N. Groves left England for a missionary journey on June 12, 1829.)

While Groves was pursuing his labors in other lands, the feeble light that had been kindled ere he left these shores²¹ had not been permitted to die out. . . . The friends he had left behind in Ireland were steadily moving along lines propounded by Groves. . . .²²

Suffice it to say that the principles of Christians called Open Brethren are those originally taught and maintained by the early brethren in Plymouth; from which Darby and consequently his followers departed, if not previously, certainly in 1848.²³

Of those who composed the original meeting in December 1827, F. Hutchinson had died before 1848. The other three, J. G. Bellett, J. N. Darby and E. Cronin, rejected Bethesda in 1848 (which acted on A. N. Groves' type principles), the latter person not permitting A. N. Groves to enter his house in view of his complicity with the evil of Bethesda and the papers that he wrote. They hardly had moved "along lines propounded by A. N. Groves"!

And here is another oft repeated myth, that JND changed his principles.²⁴ In contradiction to the thrust of F. R. Coad's remarks about "the early brethren at Plymouth," JND is even put in opposition to them. The truth is that A. N. Groves, who broke bread some time after the beginning, had principles that differed from JND from the start, as well as differing from "the early brethren at Plymouth." Eventually A. N. Groves' ideas found a congenial home at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, and came to an issue in 1848.

Do A. N. Groves' Principles of Fellowship Honor Christ? The following quotation has a direct bearing upon F. R. Coad's principles:

Briefly, about forty years ago or more a blasphemous doctrine was taught [by B. W. Newton] concerning the person of Christ -- that He was born as an outcast from God, *i. e.* born like others under darkness and curse, and at a distance from God, but that by holiness as well as by baptism! He had to win and did win His way into the favor of God, (though elsewhere it was taught to be only through His own death on the cross!). To attribute to Christ such a relationship before God is rightly styled blasphemy of the worst sort. At that time brethren generally condemned the doctrine, but some would not repudiate connection with those gatherings where this evil doctrine was unjudged, on the misleading plea of receiving saints spite of their being in a sect. They would receive individuals that kept up intercommunion with those who taught or held the blasphemy. Notably Bethesda insisted on receiving a christian, no matter what his association might be, provided he himself professed personally not to accept the heterodoxy. Thus, such an one could return whence he came, and again come back forgetting the truth that *one* leprous stone defiles the house, and that the leprosy if not removed entails the destruction of the whole house. The glory of Christ's Person was thus openly made secondary to what was called brotherly love, in defiance of all we held from the beginning, excepting Mr. G., who of course ranged himself among such. Those with whom Mr D. met abhorred this neutral ground, and refused fellowship with all who in the slightest way stood knowingly connected with it. Is it not striking that the letter is made to cover that monstrous high treason against Christ? It is really "prophetic" of the O. B. party

All G.'s talk about life and accepting the good he sees in others, and not witnessing against evil, is nothing less than a plea for sin. It was bad enough to make light of ecclesiastical error in the establishment or dissent; it is far worse to justify those who, after dissociating themselves from human system, would form another and far more evil union, where Christ may be dishonored, and His glory annulled in order to keep up a human idea of brotherhood with bigger numbers, and with more or less sanction of the denominations, or "churches" as G. regards them. For he never knew what God's church is.

Many expressions of desire for christian fellowship unshackled by peculiar doctrine, which seem to flow out from a heart enlarged by love to all saints, are found here at the expense of Christ's honor, and the glory of His Person. For the writer's party in the hour of trial failed to give Christ His true place (as indeed is the evil principle of this letter), and would receive in joint-fellowship those who do and those who do not regard it as of paramount importance. Now without it, as a fundamental confession, Christianity is nothing but a delusion. The immense truth -- the divine glory and the sinless humanity of Christ's Person -- is the *sine qua non*

of God's glory in redemption. To this truth of Christ's Person the admirers of this letter have proved indifferent.²⁵

A. N. GROVES, G. MULLER AND H. CRAIK

A. N. Groves' principles of fellowship found a congenial home at Bethesda Chapel. The two principal men at Bethesda Chapel were Henry Craik and George Muller (celebrated for the famous orphanages at Ashley Down). What was their connection with A. N. Groves? Henry Groves, a son of A. N. Groves, wrote,

... It is interesting to trace the early connection between these men of God, who were subsequently to be united in the flesh, as well as in the Lord, and who were to stand together as helpers in the conflict of 1848, of which we are about to write. Of Mr. Craik it may be well just to observe that he had been between the years 1826 and 1828 in Exeter, under the roof of Mr. Groves, at the time when the mind of the latter was exercised about entering the ministry of the "Church of England", and which he was obliged to give up as the Lord had revealed to him the real character of Christian ministry, and the true grounds of Christian fellowship. These truths Mr. Groves, feeling deeply the importance of, sought to impress on the minds of those over whom he had influence; so that, as Mr. Craik said to the writer, "it was not at St. Andrew's, it was not at Plymouth, it was at Exeter that the Lord taught me those lessons of dependence on Himself and of catholic fellowship, which I have sought to carry out." On these points Mr. Muller and Mr. Craik were fully in harmony, and which, through upwards of thirty-six years, till the lamented death of the latter, they labored together to maintain.²⁶

Another Open Brethren writer, G. H. Lang, told us about G. Muller:

On October 7th next year, 1830, Mr. Muller married Mary Groves, A. N. Groves' sister, and in 1835 we find him accompanying Groves on a tour in Germany.

It therefore seems clear that the river of George Muller's faith took its rise from the spring of A. N. Groves' faith; and if the latter had done nothing more than inspire and give direction to the faith of George Muller this alone would have been a memorable service to the cause and church of God. But he did, or rather God did through him, very much more. For He made him a rare saint and a brave and inspiring pioneer in matters spiritual, whose teaching and example have affected, directly and indirectly, the whole church of God for a hundred years, and the spread of the gospel over vast areas of the earth. In simple fact he was one of the most influential men of the nineteenth century.²⁷

H. H. Rowdon tells how "Muller and Craik . . . followed one of the two traditions formed in the development of the Brethren movement."²⁸ The attitude of these two brethren (traced to A. N. Groves) he calls "the authentic 'Open' Brethren position which is still capable of providing a valid evangelical ecumenical perspective."²⁹

Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, where G. Muller and H. Craik were principal leaders, was the place where A. N. Groves felt most at home. His *Memoir* says,

It was on the 20th of March, 1848, that Mr. Groves landed in England, and joined his wife in Bristol, where he had ever experienced more sympathy and fellowship than elsewhere . . . He died in his brother-in-law's [G. Muller's] house.³⁰

He was there and helped support his principles enshrined in the conduct of Bethesda in 1848/1849. His conduct explains what he meant by infinitely rather bearing their evils.

Appendix 3:

Confession of J. E. Batten With Comments on B. W. Newton's Acknowledgment

[The following is part of the confession of J. E. Batten (who went with the "exclusives" in the Bethesda division) regarding his complicity with B. W. Newton's evil teachings.]

I feel also that it is due to the Lord, and to you, and to all saints, that there should be an open and distinct avowal of what these things are, which have led me to separate from you. I might also add, not as a reason for *doing* this, but for doing it *now*, that many among you ask for it, as being in more or less trouble of soul; conscious that something very grievous has occurred, but not knowing *what* or *why*

In attempting to explain these doctrines to you, I would pray the Lord to make me feel, whilst writing, as one ought to feel who has approved, and circulated and defended the statements which I am about to lay before you. I have in these respects, as you have heard me recently confess in your midst, been guilty; and as you have likewise heard me say, I feel humbled and ashamed at having been found as one of your guides, not to say teachers, so unfaithful to God and to you. May the Lord, in His mercy, pardon it in me and in others, through the precious blood of Christ! And I ask you, my brethren and sisters, to forgive me; and I exhort you carefully to root out from your souls any effects when detected, as I believe them to be most pernicious and deadly to yourselves, most grievous to the Holy Ghost, and dishonoring to the blessed person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

These doctrines, or this system of teaching, may be stated as comprising --

1. -- That the Lord Jesus at His birth, and because born of a woman, partook of certain consequences of the fall, *mortality* being one, and because of this association, by nature, He became an heir of death -- born under death -- as a penalty.

2. -- That the Lord Jesus at His birth stood in such relation to Adam as a federal head -- that guilt was imputed to Him -- and that He was exposed to certain consequences of such imputation, as stated in Romans 5.

3. -- That the Lord Jesus was also born as a Jew under the broken law, and was regarded by God as standing in that relation to Him; and that God pressed upon His soul the terrors of Sinai, as due to one in that relation.

4. -- That the Lord Jesus took the place of distance from God, which such a person, so born and so related, must take and that He had to find His way back to God, by some path in which God might at last own Him and meet Him.

5. -- That so fearful was the distance -- and so real were these relationships by birth -- and so actual were their attendant penalties of death, wrath, and the curse, that until His deliverance, God is said to have rebuked Him -- to have chastened Him -- and that in anger and hot displeasure.

6. -- That because of these dealings from God, and Christ's sufferings under them, the

language of Lamentations 3 and Psalms 6, 38, and 88, &c., has been stated to be the utterance of the Lord Jesus while under this heavy pressure from God's hand.

7. -- That the Lord Jesus extricated Himself from these inflictions by keeping the law; and that at John's baptism the consequent difference in Christ's feelings and experiences was so great as to have been illustrated by a comparison of the difference between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion -- or between law and grace.

8. -- That besides all these relations which Christ took by birth, and their attendant penalties and inflictions, and His sufferings under the heavy hand of God, it has been further stated that He had the experience of an unconverted, though elect Jew . . . [JND cited these 8 points in a letter written in 1853 and referred to it as a "carefully matured system"; *Collected Writings* 15:188, 189, RAH].

Some however may not think this doctrinal statement enough, but may ask to be shown the harm of it -- the evil effects of it, as touching the person and work of the Lord Jesus, and the consequent damage to their own souls by receiving it . . .

I would say then in answer --

1. -- That if Christ took at birth, and by birth, certain consequences of Adam's sin, such as mortality; and that if He stood by birth in the relation to God, of Israel under the broken law; and that if He took correspondingly the place of distance from God, and had the experiences of an unconverted man; there was surely need enough that He would work His way back to God, and find some point where God could meet Him.

2. -- That if the accompanying inflictions, rebukes, and chastisements from God, due to a person in that position, were really allowed to fall upon Christ, and were moreover pressed upon His soul according to God's power and holiness -- there was surely need enough that He should seek to extricate Himself and find the door of deliverance.

This summary of Christ's standing before God at birth, and the awful experiences and sufferings of His soul and body under God's inflictions on this account, I solemnly present to you as containing Christ's *disqualifications* for becoming *our* surety -- *our* sacrifice -- *our* Savior! For He had to extricate *Himself*! He had to be delivered *Himself* out of this horrible distance, and from these fearful judgments. However free from taint His person might be, and is declared to have been, yet because of these relations, which it has been said He took at birth, it was even a question, as to fact, whether He could deliver Himself and be owned of God. This was, however, settled, as regards His own acceptance by His keeping the law and by His obedience *unto death*; but then alas! all this was due from Him to God; due to the law as having been born under its curse -- due for Himself and for His own extrication; all that He could render to the *last moment of His life* -- all that He could offer up *in death*, was needed by Him for Himself! -- and for His own deliverance!

His resurrection from the grave is indeed a proof that He could and did find a path out of the distance to a point where God could own and deliver Him -- "not suffering His Holy One to see corruption." So that after having borne all the penalties resting on Him -- borne all that was due even to the power and holiness of God, as from one under the broken law -- after having thus vindicated God, even to the laying Himself down in the silence of the grave, He would, and did leave it with His God, to estimate the value of all that He had done and of Him who did it. His ascension into the heavens is the most triumphant and conclusive assurance of God's vindication of Christ; but then what becomes of the blessed doctrines of grace? What becomes of the glorious gospel of God's salvation? What becomes of us individually? *We have lost Christ*.

How can you ever say, when you look upon the cross "He bore *our* sins in His own

body on the tree" -- He was "slain *for us*" -- "by His stripes *we are* healed!" How can you ever more gather round His Table and read the Scriptures we have been wont to read: "This is My body broken *for you*" -- "This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is *shed for you!*" The basis of communion is gone! The foundations of your faith are gone! All the revealed purposes of God in relation to Christ and His bride in glory and in the presence of the Father are gone! I do not say this is intentionally done -- far otherwise -- but is it not virtually so, and of necessity? Christ delivered Himself, it is true through His obedience -- through blood -- through His death; and He extricated Himself from all the consequences in which He was involved by *His own* birth, and *His own* position, and *His own* relations, by what He proved Himself to be in life and in death; but what becomes of us? -- what becomes of that precious verse, "God hath made Christ to be *unto us* wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption?" Surely I may ask is not this enough to arouse and alarm all who may have said what harm is there in these doctrines? and what the evil effects likely to be produced on souls who hear or receive them?

There may still be some who may ask, Why bring all this to light again, when so much has been retracted and confessed as sin? My brethren, I reply that I have no desire to allude to, much less to examine the printed paper of "Statement and Acknowledgment" circulated among you; instead therefore of doing this, I would earnestly press upon you the need before God, and the need to your own souls, of a very careful examination of the doctrines which have been propounded. To be occupied in this way would, I believe, be found profitable to all, as enabling us to discern the evil of the system, as a whole, which we have owned and defended to the last; till God has forced upon many consciences the fact, that rottenness has been and is, at the very root, though some may be ignorant still of the causes and depth of the corruption. This exercise of soul would bring the whole thing home to individual consciences, for examination and self-judgment. In such a state, confession and humiliation would be the only relief; and that too in the very measure in which the work deepened, because of daily growing perception of personal and collective failure. May the Holy Spirit guide to this! and be the power of it!

To be busied with retractions, acknowledgments, statements, etc., is occupation of a totally different character; and when hastily undertaken, leads all more or less, and has led some, to defence of remaining error, and self defence for doing so. Few know better than myself what are the evil effects of such a course of action -- especially when carried on in energy -- not only to the soul that does it, but the sad consequences too, as regards those operated upon. How many consciences have been quieted by such methods in months and years past! How much light has been turned into darkness! How many who might have been delivered, are still held fast by these means! How have the strivings of God's Spirit in individual saints been checked! and checked too, under pretext of truth -- precious truth -- peculiar truth -- held by us! and for which we were suffering so much! so that we have encouraged ourselves and them to look on each other as martyrs *for the truth!* And after all, what has been found at the bottom? And shall this be covered up too? Will you allow yourselves to be cautioned, not to throw it away? Will you allow any to encourage you to hold it fast? and under the old pretext of *truth!* -- may the Lord forbid! My brethren, these things may well humble *me!*

Appendix 4:

L. Pilson's Analysis of B. W. Newton's Acknowledgment

After this false doctrine was discovered and exposed, Mr. Newton published a tract, dated 26th November, 1847, entitled, "A Statement and Acknowledgment respecting certain Doctrinal Errors," in which he admits having held one part of the doctrine stated by Mr. Soltau, and which he apparently acknowledges as error, but in reality repeats it in a more aggravated form. . . .

The only confession of error in the whole tract is what he states in page 5, in attributing the consequences of Adam's fall to the Blessed Lord, because of His federal relationship to Adam; but in page 4 he ascribes all these consequences, and even worse, (certain penalties due to the fall) to His "having been made of a woman," and this he holds to be *right*. He thus merely shifts his ground from Adam to the woman, and what is the difference? How could anyone be connected with Adam as a federal head, except by being born of a woman? Mr. N. saw this himself, and therefore he substitutes the phrase, "came by birth," for "under Adam as a federal head," connecting the one idea by the words, "as I have above stated," thus making the two sentences convey the same error. What is the difference between saying that he is "*right*" in holding that Christ "having been made of a woman" came under the penalties which were resting on a fallen race, and saying that he was *wrong* "in holding that the Lord Jesus came *by birth* under any imputation of guilt, or the consequences of such imputation?" What are penalties, but consequences of guilt?

Mr. N. must have counted largely on the credulity and stolidity of his readers, when he thought this tract would have been received by them as a confession and withdrawal of his erroneous doctrine. He does indeed acknowledge what he taught about federal relationship "*as error*," but acknowledges it only to present the *false doctrine* in a shape more suitable to his purpose. He does not even allude to the second part of this awful doctrine which he promulgated, and which puts the Lord Jesus Christ under the guilt and condemnation of a broken law, and (which Mr. Soltau states) is "more subtle than the first."

Yet this is the tract to which some of Mr. Newton's defenders refer in a recent publication, called "The Exclusive Brethren," to prove his recantation and withdrawal of this doctrine, and in which they grossly misrepresent them. I do not know whether the writers of this work are capable of judging Mr. N.'s doctrines, or detecting his deception; but this I know, that in the most dishonest manner they have omitted to quote in their extract from this tract (given in page 20 of their pamphlet) the doctrine which he states to be "*right*," and which he expresses *to his satisfaction* in page 4. They also omit his statement in page 5, wherein he says that his error consisted in attributing certain consequences of the fall to the Lord Jesus, because of his "*federal* relationship to Adam." Lest there should be the slightest clue to the error he acknowledges, they leave out his words, "as I have above stated," from their citation, and only give the part in which he owns his error "in holding that the Lord Jesus came by birth" -- that is, federal relationship (as explained by him) &c.; thus artfully leaving the impression on their readers that Mr. Newton had fully renounced the whole of his erroneous doctrine. If they had given what he says in page 4, it would have so palpably contradicted what they do give from page 5, that they craftily discarded it, and all reference to it, thus completely concealing the *extent* of his confession. (Vindication of Separation, pp. 33-37).

Appendix 5:

F. R. Coad's Charge Concerning Docetic Tendencies of "Exclusives"

The Charge of Docetism

Speaking in his characteristic, undocumented, reckless way about those who opposed him, B. W. Newton (BWN) wrote:

". . . [J. G.] Bellet [sic]. He wrote . . . quite in the Docetae heresy; saying that there was one sense in which it might be said that Christ did not die."³¹

In a paper published several times, BWN absurdly wrote:

Since the present controversy has been raised, some among them have revived the ancient heresy of the Docetae, and doubted whether the body of Christ was a material body of flesh like ours -- others have said, that He had a kind of paradisiacal or superhuman humanity -- others, allowing the humanity of his body, have denied that His soul was strictly human.³²

BWN did not, of course, document these assertions; that would have made their untrue character even more manifest.

F. R. Coad (Open Brethren) is another who alleges this docetic tendency:

Reaction against Newton's errors, when combined with the intense emphasis upon the 'spiritual' and the 'heavenly' which characterized Darby's theology, and with his 'impulsive' doctrine of the Holy Spirit's activities, has *invariably* caused Darbyite thinking to be shy of the full implications of the Incarnation, and has *forced* it into Gnostic and Docetic trends. Its later exponents have not always been successful in avoiding error as a result.³³

The last sentence quoted refers to the followers of F. E. Raven (an Apollinarian; he caused a division in 1890), whom we reject as wicked. Now, notice the emphasized words and the characterization of JND's views. These are wild and irresponsible, Newton-like charges. Is it from BWN that F.R. Coad so learned to speak?³⁴ Cp. Appendix 6. Let us continue:

. . . the dangerous docetic tendencies in the Darbyite system.³⁵

[G. V.] Wigram, in his blind loyalty to Darby, was now prepared to leap with both feet into Docetism.³⁶

Another of the Open Brethren, the well-known scholar, F. F. Bruce (who denies inerrancy of Scripture and questions the eternal, conscious punishment of the wicked), said:

". . . verging at times on Docetism, has been endemic in certain phases of the Brethren movement."³⁷

Are these persons doctrinally fit to make such judgments, or is this an indicator of doctrinal unsoundness on *their* part? F. F. Bruce indicated that at no time was

BWN unorthodox:

Newton, indeed, may still be looked upon as a heresiarch (for aught I know to the contrary) by some representatives of the Darbyite tradition; it is an amazing testimony to the perverse capacity of the ecclesiastical mind that such a charge should stick to a teacher whose whole career proclaims his absolutely uncompromising orthodoxy.³⁸

F. R. Coad wrote of that aspect concerning BWN's doctrine that touched on the Person of Christ:

The teaching hardly touched orthodox doctrine concerning Christ's Person.³⁹

Concerning one of the two principle leaders at Bethesda, H. H. Rowdon, a modern supporter of Bethesda, admitted this:

There are some grounds for thinking that Craik, in particular, was not wholly unsympathetic to Newton's emphasis on the humanity of Christ.⁴⁰

In connection with this appendix (5), the reader should review the section titled "Was H. Craik Sympathetic Toward's B.W. Newton's Doctrine?" in Appendix 12; and review the testimony of J. G. Deck and others concerning the Newtonism they found among Open Brethren as noted in chapter 9.10.

C. H. Mackintosh and "the Heavenly Humanity"

There remains a matter to briefly discuss with regard to the charge of docetism and that is that C. H. Mackintosh used the expression "heavenly Humanity" in the first edition of his *Notes on Leviticus* (1860). Concerning this, F. R. Coad wrote:

. . . and certain isolated sentences in those books [sic] which referred to "the heavenly humanity" of Christ (and thus verged on heresy), brought him much hostile notice from the more prejudiced opponents of Brethren . . . He later withdrew the expressions, on Darby's insistence.⁴¹

On the page on which this matter is noted, F. R. Coad did not use the word docetism. However, the page is indexed under the word docetism. Why?

The *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* 13:294, 295 (1861) accused CHM of "reviving the old Valentinian heresy." See also 14:289 (1862); 22:397 (1870). This is the same journal that accused brethren of Socinianism (14:59 (1862)). James Carson, *Heresies of the Plymouth Brethren*, London: Houlston, p. 221ff (1870), as well as others used it to maximum advantage. CHM apologized for the expression, not intending the doctrine deducible from it. Before coming to it, I note that in a letter dated Aug. 31, 1862, S. P. Tregelles wrote to BWN:

Miss Egerton has sent me Mr. Mackintosh's confession of the Error of his doctrines such as it is.⁴²

Not only is the plural word "doctrines" prejudicial, notice his "such as it is." We come now to CHM's second apology, published in the 1862 edition of *Notes on Leviticus* a month before SPT's letter was written to BWN:

I feel it due to God, to His Church, and to my own conscience, to acknowledge

that I made a wrong statement, in the first edition of my "Notes on Leviticus," page 35, in the following passage: "The Second Man was, *as to His Manhood*, 'the Lord from heaven.'" This mistake, together with the serious inference deducible from it, was pointed out to me by a dear and venerable servant of Christ, who requested me to reconsider the passage, and correct it, in the second edition.

I did *correct* the mistake, and added a note, not to guard error, but to guard truth. But this, I feel, was not enough. I ought to have *confessed* the mistake, and should have done so, in the preface to the second edition, had I been sufficiently self-emptied and careless of my reputation as a writer.

I do reverently believe that our blessed Lord Jesus Christ was "made of the seed of David, according to the flesh" -- that He was truly of the substance of the virgin -- "flesh and blood:" as really a man as I am, in every respect, sin excepted. The reader will find this grand foundation-truth of Christianity laid down in various passages of the first edition. (See pages 36, 37.) I never meant to teach any other doctrine, and if any expression ever dropped from my lips, or from my pen, which might seem to touch the precious, holy, and essential mystery of the incarnation, I would utterly repudiate it.

C. H. MACKINTOSH.

*47, Mountjoy Street, Dublin
July, 1862*

JND defended CHM, while disapproving of the wrong expressions:

I distinctly affirm that the charge against Mr. Mackintosh was an unfounded calumny. The very doctrine he was charged with was distinctly denied and rejected as false and worthless in the immediate part of his book taken as the ground of the calumny.⁴³

For JND's discussion of this matter, see the *Collected Writings*, etc.⁴⁴

Now, why would F. R. Coad index this matter concerning CHM under "Docetism"? This attitude seems to be a reflection of BWN's ardent supporter S. P. Tregelles, who just would not have it to be so that CHM was not holding any docetism:

The orthodox word "mortal" has become a kind of keynote. Let it be observed, that no one professing to be a *teacher* can be accepted as sound in connection with our Lord's spotless and vicarious life of obedience, who does not, without hesitation or equivocation, avow his acceptance of this term, as used habitually by sound Christians. He who *rejects* it, cannot *really* hold the incarnation of our Lord, that He took the same flesh and blood as His brethren: he must hold some part at least of the false doctrine of the "heavenly humanity."⁴⁵

So if you do not believe the evil teaching of B. W. Newton and S. P. Tregelles, it follows that you believe in a form of "heavenly humanity" and you are docetic. Where does F. R. Coad fit in all this?

Appendix 6:

Use of the Word "Mortal"

S. P. Tregelles said:

In hymns, the Brethren soon found themselves using the very language which they were condemning as "heresy." Alterations were introduced in consequence. When Watts said, "Arrayed in *mortal* flesh" in one hymn, and "Entered the grave in *mortal* flesh" in another, the word "human" was substituted; and so on in other cases. The hymn-books of the Brethren, *since* 1847, might show, even to themselves, that they had adopted a new and unsound doctrine.

A hymn written by one of the Brethren, Mr J. G. Deck, beginning --

Lord Jesus, are we one with thee?"

contained the following verse:

"Such was thy grace, that for our sake
Thou didst from heaven come down,
Our *mortal* flesh and blood partake,
In all our misery one."

But this was now changed by the author, after it had been so used for years as to have become a public document.

The alterations of hymns by compilers of Hymn Books is a reprehensible liberty; those who do this rarely understand the hymn they spoil; but it is far worse when orthodox hymns are altered, for the sake of introducing some unsound doctrine, or for the avoidance of a true confession.

The orthodox word "mortal" has become a kind of keynote. Let it be observed, that no one professing to be a *teacher* can be accepted as sound in connection with our Lord's spotless and vicarious life of obedience, who does not, without hesitation or equivocation, avow his acceptance of this term, as used habitually by sound Christians. He who *rejects* it, cannot *really* hold the incarnation of our Lord, that He took the same flesh and blood as His brethren: he must hold some part at least of the false doctrine of the "heavenly humanity" ⁴⁶

The issue is not the use of the word. The issue is **what that word means doctrinally to BWN and his supporter**. It is absurd to say that "He who *rejects* it, cannot *really* hold the incarnation of the Lord . . .," if by "mortal" he means 'capable of dying.' Who ever doubted that? So it is clear that by the use of the word "mortal" these two meant that Christ had in his flesh a *necessity of dying*, no matter what their explanation was of how that came about. And so S. P. Tregelles' dictum is that if you do not believe *that*, you believe in a "heavenly humanity." In the above quoted paper by BWN, he warned his opponent about the danger of docetism. We can see the connection between this warning and the comment that if their doctrine is rejected, you must hold to a "heavenly humanity," hence you are docetic. This matter is discussed in Appendix 5 as well as the use of the ill-advised expression "heavenly humanity" in the first edition of *Notes on Leviticus* (1860), by C. H. Mackintosh. He acknowledged the error of the use of the expression, but he did not hold the teaching which such words imply (see Appendix 5). Adversaries were quick to leap on this mistake and among those who sought advantage from this were S. P. Tregelles

and BWN.⁴⁷ Christ's humanity came from Mary but was in a holy state (Luke 1:35) which Adam's in innocency was not. Adam's was innocent, that is, ignorant of good and evil. Our Lord's humanity was holy -- intrinsically rejected evil and cleaved to good, separated entirely unto God, free of all taint, and impeccable.

JND did not, at the time, say much about the word "mortal" but did reject it.⁴⁸ W. Trotter has written helpful words. Part of BWN's system, in putting Christ at a circumstantial distance from God, was that there were certain consequences of the fall that He suffered (He was ever sinless) including mortality. This would mean that Adam innocent was immortal. W. Trotter wrote:

There is but one passage more I would notice in this part. It occurs in Mr. N.'s recantation of his error, as to placing Christ under the federal headship of Adam. "Many passages were quoted," he says, by the Irvingites, "to prove that Jesus was not only man, but man in weakness; that he had a mortal body unlike to that which Adam first had in Paradise; and they added that the cause of his body being mortal, was that sin (as they said) inhered in it."

Now before proceeding to the words on which I am wishful to comment, let us understand the meaning of the words we use. Mr. N. says here, that the Irvingites affirmed that Christ had a mortal body, unlike to that which Adam first had in Paradise. Adam had a body I suppose, in Paradise; nor am I aware that any one has imagined that he brought any other body out of Paradise, than that which was originally formed out of the dust of the earth, and placed in Paradise. His body was not immortal before he fell, if by immortal be meant, incapable of death. It did actually die. So that in the sense of its being capable of death, -- of its being possible that it should die, -- Adam's body was mortal before he fell. In what other sense was it mortal afterwards? In what sense are our bodies mortal? Clearly in this sense, that they are under the necessity of dying. Sentence of death was pronounced on Adam's body when he had sinned, and it was that sentence, under which we are all born, that placed his and our bodies not in a capacity of dying merely, (that was the state of his before) but under the necessity of dying. There can but be these two senses of the word mortal. In the one sense, that of capacity of dying, both Christ's body, and Adam's innocence, were mortal. Both did die, thus proving that they could. But Adam's body was under no necessity of dying before he fell. Nor was Christ's. Else, how could he say "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No one (see the Greek) taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." But now mark Mr. N.'s words. "In allowing that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a mortal body was one."

Now if there be one thing more plainly revealed in scripture than another it is that "the wages of sin is death." "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, *for that all have sinned.*" Exposure to death, the being under the necessity of dying, mortality *in that sense*, there cannot be, apart from sin either inherent or imputed. To say that there could, would be to impute to God the injustice of placing the party concerned under a sentence which had not been deserved. Besides, who is it that is spoken of as having had "the power of death?" "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy Him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage." Now what does our Lord say? "The prince of this world cometh, and *hath nothing in me.*" Could he have said this, had Satan, who had the power of death been able to find in him *mortality* in the sense of being under the necessity of dying, as we are. It avails nothing to say that his personal glory as the Son, and the appointment and power of God his Father,

infallibly preserved his life till he was made sin and thus died as a sacrifice. The prince of this world cometh, and hath *nothing* in me. In *me*. It is not he hath nothing in my Divinity -- nothing in my character -- nothing in my soul. If Satan could have found in the *body* of our Lord what Mr. N. asserts was there, our Lord could not have said "findeth nothing in *me*." Nay, Satan, in that case, would have found all that he could desire. He would have found in the body of our Lord a necessity of dying, which would have effectually hindered his voluntarily laying down a life on which Satan had no claim, over which death had no power -- it being "impossible that he should be holden of it"; thus setting aside all the power of the enemy, destroying him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivering from their bondage, them who through fear of death had been all their life time subject thereunto.⁴⁹

Of course, BWN, who never repudiated his system, continued to teach Christ's mortality in the sense of a **necessity** of dying. Indeed, there is a hand written paper by BWN in the Cross collection (not published), dated 1850. The title is: *Remarks on Mr. Trotter's Pamphlet*, and the fly leaf says, "Reply to a Tract by Mr. Trotter Entitled What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines as to the Human Nature and Relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ?" The fly leaf has A. J. Toulmin's address on it. On p. 14 the author cites from three of his tracts, which he called "*Remarks*," "*Observations*," and "*Letter on Humanity*." In the first sentence he said of W. Trotter:

The writer of this Tract does not believe that the Divine and Human nature of our Lord were DISTINCT.

On p. 4 we read:

What we mean by a mortal body, is a body which (unless the laws of its constitution are miraculously reversed) is capable of retaining its vital union to the soul when subjected to certain circumstances, such for example, as being smitten by the sword, or being deprived of such nutriment as is naturally necessary to its support. Such a body the Son of God was pleased voluntarily to assume, (for He was made like unto His brethren in all things, sin excepted) and He was subject to the laws of that mortal body except as far as the Father or Himself might be pleased to reverse or alter, or modify their operation.

B. W. Newton later wrote of unfallen Adam, "he was not mortal."⁵⁰ Thus, he placed the Lord Jesus lower than unfallen Adam, which put the Lord Jesus in the condition of body where sin had put man:

"If the Son who was in the form of God, had taken humanity in this its paradisiacal condition, it would even then have been unspeakable humiliation to Him whom the heaven of heavens could not contain. But He was pleased to stoop lower even than this."⁵¹

Those called "exclusives" were appalled⁵² to find him saying, for one example:

And even as His humanity had all sinless infirmities, so also was it *mortal*. This is taught by the Apostle, when He says that Christ was "*in all things* made like unto His brethren," sin excepted; for there is nothing sinful in the fact of being so constituted physically, as for the vital conjunction of soul and body to cease under certain circumstances such as the withholding of nutrition and the like. Indeed, unless this had been the law of Christ's humanity physically, He could not have died at all, except by a special miracle⁵³

W. Trotter had previously answered this. See Chapter 9.4. As a matter of fact

the Lord Jesus died as an act of His own will (John 10:18) -- dismissing His spirit.

BWN, in 1850, wrote, regarding a Mr. C. [Code ?] who had written *Remarks on Mr. Newton's doctrines*. . . . In his rejoinder, BWN wrote:

One of the many incomplete quotations, which, taken apart from its context, may well startle the reader, is the following: "*Christ had in His nature not only a possibility and aptitude, but also a necessity of dying.*" These words looked at by themselves, may of course be taken in a sense that would involve deadly heresy; and so, Mr C -- wishes them to be understood. He makes the quotation, too, as if the words were mine, whereas he knows that they are not mine -- yet not a hint is given as to whence they come. They come from a writer of whom the Church of England justly boasts as the most careful and most accurate of all her theological writers. They come from Bishop Pearson on the Creed.

Bishop Pearson believed, what all orthodox Christians believe, that the Eternal Son of God, when He voluntarily became flesh, did receive of the substance of His Mother, a human and mortal body, exactly like ours -- sin only excepted He did not believe that Christ either would or could have died except as the sacrifice -- for He was "the Lamb foreordained." He did not believe that there rested on Christ, *as on men naturally*, any necessity to die, even after He had taken a mortal body. There was no necessity connected with His holy humanity, that was not a self-chosen necessity; not only voluntarily incurred, but also voluntarily continued. The physical condition of the body He was pleased to assume, was of course subject to given laws, which, so long as they continued unreversed, were necessary in their operation. But then it was competent to Him, whensoever He might please, to change that physical necessity, or to arrest the operation of any law connected with His physical condition here. He was not, like other men, under the imputation of Adam's sin, for He had voluntarily assumed a mortal body; consequently, the physical necessity of mortality to which He had subjected Himself, did not render it necessary that He should die, because an act of His will might, at any moment, have arrested, or changed, that physical necessity, which could only continue a necessity so long as He was pleased that it should continue. It was dependent on His own will. This is the substance of what Bishop Pearson teaches⁵⁴

Bishop Pearson had written:

For Christ, who took upon him all our Infirmities, Sin only excepted, had in his Nature not only a Possibility and Aptitude, but also a necessity of dying; and as to any extrinsic violence, able, according to the common course of Nature, to destroy and extinguish in the Body such an Aptitude as is indispensably required to continue an Union with the Soul, he had no natural Preservative; nor was it in the Power of his Soul, to continue its Vital Conjunction unto his Body bereft of a Vital Disposition.⁵⁵

The fact is that Bishop Pearson and BWN meant by mortal that in Christ's humanity there indeed was "a necessity of dying" and all of BWN's 'weasel words' do not alter the fact. He may say that "there was no necessity connected with His holy humanity, that was not a self chosen necessity" Then Christ's "necessity of dying" was a self chosen necessity, for all that, and He had a necessity of dying according to BWN. And this is the meaning of his use of the word mortal, i. e., that there was within Christ a necessity of dying. The wages of sin is death and Christ had no necessity of dying. J. G. Bellett,

regarded as docetic by B. W. Newton,⁵⁶ wrote:

Shall we treat this mystery of the subjection, the voluntary subjection of the Son of God, with a careless mind? Shall we draw aside the veil irreverently? And yet, if these instances to which I have referred, and others kindred with them, be cited to prove the *mortal* condition of the flesh and blood which the Lord took, we do draw aside the veil with an irreverent and unskillful hand. Yes, and with more than that. We do Him double wrong. We depreciate His person through acts which manifest His boundless grace and love to us, and His devoted subjection to God.

And yet it is now said, that nature or violence or accident would have prevailed over the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus, to cause death as with us. But does not such a thought, I ask, connect the Lord Jesus Christ with sin? It may be said that it is not meant to do so. That may be. But is it not really so? Does it not link the Lord with sin, inasmuch as in the inspired history of flesh and blood -- and we are to be wise only according to what is there written -- death attaches to it *only* through sin? If flesh and blood in His person were liable to die, or by its own nature and condition capable of dying (save by His gracious surrender of Himself), is it not therefore connected with sin? And if so, is Christ before the soul? This suggestion treats Him as one *exposed* to death. It takes such knowledge of Him as leaves Him liable to die in a way which *He could never have taken up* in the fulfilling of His form as a servant. *And beyond what He took up in that character He was liable to nothing.*

There is, indeed, something in this suggestion to make one fear that "the gates of hell" are again attempting the "Rock" of the Church, the person of the Son of God.⁵⁷

W. Hoste, while falsely accusing "exclusives" of misrepresentation, said that misrepresentation is a species of fraud. Well, listen to F. F. Bruce:

Newton, for example, had spoken of our Lord's body as 'mortal,' in the perfectly proper sense of its being 'capable of dying.'⁵⁸

Appendix 7:

A. C. Ord's Examination of B. W. Newton on the Person of Christ

The following is from the pen of Philalethes (A. C. Ord), *Is There Not a Cause?* pp. 32-36.

APPENDIX -- *A Summary of Mr. B. W. Newton's Doctrines on the person of Christ, with Extracts from his Writings.*

Mr. Newton, whilst denying that there was sin in the human nature of Christ, put our blessed Lord under the *consequences* of the sin of others, in two ways: first, as to His soul -- in its relationship with God; and, secondly, as to His body -- in making Him subject to death. Both these he stated to be the result of His being a man and an Israelite, or born of a woman, that is, that the condition of His birth entailed these things as a consequence of *association*. This principle is the opposite of *substitution*, or His taking sin upon Himself in grace for us, as He did upon the cross. He was thus, according to Mr Newton, associated with the inconceivably fearful distance of man from God, and dealt with by God accordingly; and had the experiences which we ought to have had in our unconverted state, through rightly apprehending the wretchedness of this distance from God -- the sense of wrath and judicial visitation. He formed "a part of that which was exposed to the judgments of God's heavy hand," and was "obnoxious to all the penalties due to man as man, and Israel as Israel," and "to the sentence of death which had fallen on man because of Adam's transgression." It is no wonder that some have said that Mr. Newton's Christ must want a Savior for Himself! Indeed, Mr. Newton made John the Baptist Christ's deliverer, who brought relief and the sound of grace to His ears, though it is not apparent how he could deliver Him from such partnership in the ruin of man, when once involved in it, or how He could otherwise escape from it, as Mr. Newton, of course, says He did.

Mr. Newton is said to have renounced these doctrines, but this is not the case, for his "Acknowledgment" [see App. 1] only admits that he was mistaken in placing our Lord under Adam as a federal head, but that is all. He says in it, "I should have stated that the connection of the Lord Jesus with the consequences of Adam's transgression was in virtue of His having been 'made of a woman,' and thus having brought Himself into association with a race on whom those penalties were resting."

He adds, "I was right in stating that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a mortal body was one." So that the two main branches of false doctrine are adhered to in the only

concession he has ever made; and this latter point has formed the subject of a series of tracts published *since* his "Acknowledgment," elaborately attempting to prove not only that our blessed Lord was able to die, but mortal and corruptible, as we are; and as man (in the form He adopts), under the same "necessity of dying."

For our own part, we have reason to know from private sources that Mr . Newton entirely denies "that he ever taught anything that could be called heresy," and that not long since he propounded the same sentiments which are contained in his tracts in his own chapel; but public attention having been called to them, and great scandal having been occasioned to the minds of many Christians, especially by the first part of this false doctrine, that has been for the most part dropped out of sight. Nor could we believe that if Mr. Newton had been convinced of the deep dishonor and injury which he has done to the person of the Son of God by promulgating these views, that he could be so inconceivably base as not to make the only reparation in his power , however insufficient, viz., a full, frank, and heart-broken confession.

EXTRACTS ^f from Mr. Newton's writings touching the Soul of our Lord, and its relation to God.

"Sinai marked the relation of *God to Israel* when Jesus came, and the worship of the golden calf [. . .] may be taken as marking *their relationship [relation] to God*. . . The Lord Jesus was caused to appreciate to the full the relation in which Israel (and *Himself because of Israel*) was standing before God." (Observations, p. 29.)

"The thing more than any else distinctive of these sufferings of Jesus of which I speak, that God pressed the "terrors of that mountain with the fire and darkness and tempest" "upon the apprehension of His soul, according to His own power and holiness, and caused Him to feel *as a part* of that which was exposed to the judgments of His heavy hand." (Remarks, p. 14.)

"He was made to feel that *His association* with those thus standing in the *fearfulness of their distance* from God was *a real thing*, and that it was so regarded by God." (Observations, p. 36.)

"The exercises of soul which His elect, *in their unconverted state*, ought to have, and which they would have, if it were possible for them to know and feel everything rightly according to God, *such exercises*, yet without sin, Jesus had." (Observations, p. 26.)

"Jesus as man was associated with *this place of distance in which man in the flesh was*, and He had, through obedience, to find His way to that point where

f. [All the extracts that A. C. Ord gave I have verified in my copies of BWN's papers, except for those from *A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity* and also *Brief Statements*. The italics in A. C. Ord's quotations from BWN are mainly his emphasis. I have added a few things into these quotations in brackets [] indicating a correction for the quotation. I have preferred to quote A. C. Ord, rather than quoting from my copies of BWN's papers in order to show that BWN's evil teachings were exposed before such writers as W. B. Neatby and F. Roy Coad wrote their histories. This is besides the exposures by such writers as JND, W. Trotter, L. Pilson, etc. Note also that Chapter 8.4 contains additional quotations from BWN from writings printed subsequent to His *Acknowledgment* (for which, see App. 1)]

God could meet Him."

"He stood in a place dispensationally lower than that into which He has now brought us His Church." (Remarks, p. 31.)

"If, then, the soul of Jesus realized -- *experimentally* realized, and that too under the hand of God, and to a degree we little think of -- the fearful condition of Israel [and as we have seen Himself because of Israel]. . . How joyful *to His soul* the sense of the introduction of new things and new everlasting blessings" (in baptism.) (p. 22.)

"The difference between Sinai the mountain of blackness, and Zion the place [mountain] of light and grace and blessing, the place of the Church of the firstborn, might be used to illustrate the difference between the two dispensational positions *held by the Lord Jesus* in the midst of Israel previous to His baptism and that which He dispensationally and ministerially took when anointed by the Holy Ghost." (Remarks, p. 23.)

"And if it be asked, 'Was, then, the Lord Jesus subjected during His life to all the inflictions that were due to man as man, and to Israel as Israel,' I answer, No. . . His faith, His prayer, His obedience, all contributed to preserve Him from many things to which *He was by His relative position exposed*, and by which He was threatened." (Remarks, p. 8.)

"Since He was not, until the cross, punished substitutionally, why was it that He was *chastened* at all? How could it be but because He was made *experimentally* to prove the reality of that condition into which others, but more especially Israel, had sunk themselves by their disobedience to God's holy law, a condition out of which He was able to *extricate* Himself and from which He proved that He could extricate Himself by His own perfect obedience." (Remarks, p. 12.)

"There are only three ways in which suffering from God can reach any of His servants here. . . either because of personal transgression -- or substitutionally -- or because of association with others who are under chastisement, can we be at any loss to say to which of these classes we assign the living sufferings of the Lord Jesus? We agree (?) in saying they were *not substitutional*, neither were they because of personal sin; if therefore they existed at all, and the scripture I have just quoted proves that they did exist, it must have been because of *association or connection* with others. . . These afflictions were not vicarious." (Observations, pp. 22, 23.)

EXTRACTS from Mr. Newton's writings relative to the Body of our blessed Lord and His asserted natural subjection to death.

"He was exposed for example because of His *relation to Adam*, to that *sentence of death* that had been pronounced on the whole family of man. . . And if He was exposed *to the doom of man*, was He not equally exposed to all the sinless penalties that had fallen upon Israel as dwelling under Sinai?" (Observations, p. 9.)

"All that pertained to man's nature in Mary pertained to Jesus -- its weakness, its dishonor -- sin only was excepted. He was in the likeness of sinful flesh; *penalties therefore of the fall were connected even with the constitution of His human nature.*" (Observations, p. 34. Note.)

My loins thou hast filled with burning heat or dryness [Psa. 38:7] would [only] shew that *in body as well as in soul* He felt Himself as the green ear scorched by the fire." (Remarks, p. 17. Note.)

"He had *in His nature* not only a possibility and aptitude, but even a *necessity* of dying." ("A Letter^s on Subjects" adopted from another writer, p. 19.)

"The characteristics of the humanity of Adam *after he had fallen*, were, through His mother, transmitted to the Lord Jesus, but without sin, either communicated or imputed." (Letter, p. 33.)

"It was determined. . . .that He should commence His course of suffering by taking (not in Paradise) a weak humanity, like *in everything* excepting sin, *the humanity of Mary His mother, and exposed to ALL the sinless consequences of Adam's sin.*" (p. 9.)

"All His sufferings were in consequence of His having assumed a *relative position*, that is one in which He consented to forego that which was due to His own individual position and to subject Himself to sufferings *due to the position of those* to whom He stood related by voluntary association." (Brief Statements by Mr. Newton.)

"And even as His humanity had *all sinless infirmities*, so also was it *mortal.*" (Ancient Truths, by Mr. Newton, p. 10.)

"We mean by ascribing mortality to Him that His humanity was so constituted, that the vital conjunctions of His soul with His body would, under certain supposed circumstances {which we omit because the supposition is so painfully irreverent}, necessarily cease, unless a miracle was wrought to prevent it." (Ancient Truths, p. 15.) [p. 16 in the second edition, 1869.]

It should be remarked that the expression "sinless penalties" is illusive, for no penalties inflicted by the hand of God could be anything but righteous, whether temporal wrath, death, or final damnation; also, that whilst every Christian believes that Christ was mortal, in the sense of being able to die, the idea of inherent mortality is entirely subversive of the glory of His person, opposed to the statements of Scripture, and unfits Him for dying as a sacrifice, for a life already attained could not be offered to the justice of God for others. The word of God tells us expressly that death can only come by sin, either inherited or imputed (Rom. 5:12; 6:23); and the miraculous action of the Holy Ghost in the conception of our Lord, removed not only the sinfulness of nature, but the seed

g. This "Letter," [A Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lord's Humanity, 1848] and the extracts from other publications which follow, are all of later date than the "Statement and Acknowledgment," [Nov. 26, 1847] and in this "Letter" the principles of the two former tracts, "Remarks" and "Observations," from which we have quoted are fully justified, and the author disclaims "any shrinking from the explanation or defence of more minute statements in the tracts." One statement more we may add from it respecting the Lord, which confirms all he has said before:

"He forewent the title of His personal position the moment He took flesh; He then assumed a relative position, and resolved to abide therein." (p. 35.)

If this was the case His personal glory as the Son of God could not save Him from any consequences of the fall of man. Of course we have no Scripture, nothing but assertion, for all this.

of physical corruption and decay which exists in all others, so that in this sense we can discern the meaning of the words "that *holy thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Various old writers, such as Hawker, &c., have regarded our blessed Lord as suffering penally before the cross, but, however mistaken in this, they looked upon Him as a substitute throughout, and *never* as a *part*, by birth or association, of that which was exposed to the judgments of God.

As space does not admit, and it is not our object to enlarge upon these doctrines, that having been done by others at the time they were first published, we only subjoin a few passages showing the true position of our Lord.

1. In the nation of Israel, as heir of the promises made to Abraham and David, and King of the Jews: Matthew 1:; Luke 1:32, 68, 69, 72, 73; Matthew 2:2, 6, 9; Isaiah 9:7.
2. As bringing relief, light, and salvation, to deliver them out of their wretched condition, instead of being identified with it: Luke 1:77-79; 2:11, 30-32.
3. The relation of His birth to man and to the Gentiles: Luke 2:14, 32.
4. His relation as man to God: Luke 2:40-52; John 8:29: 1:41, 42; 15:10, 11; Psalm 22:9, 10.
5. His relation to John the Baptist: Luke 1:17; 3:16, 17; John 1:7, 27, 29.
6. His position relative to death: John 10:17, 18; 12:24; 6:47-51; 11:25; Hebrews 2:9.

LIST of Mr. Newton's tracts here quoted.

1. Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus. B. W. Newton, Campbell, 1, Warwick Square, London; Tract Depot, Cornwall Street, Plymouth. 1847.
2. Observations on a Tract entitled, The Sufferings of Christ, &c. B. W. Newton. Same publisher. 1847.
3. A Statement and Acknowledgment respecting certain doctrinal errors. B. W. Newton. Plymouth. November 26, 1847.
4. Brief Statements. B. W. Newton. July 11, 1848.
5. A Letter on Subjects connected with the Lord's Humanity. B. W. Newton. Jenkyn Thomas, 9, Cornwall Street, Plymouth [1848].
6. A Letter to a Friend on a Tract recently published at Cork. By B. W. Newton. Houlston and Stoneman, Paternoster Row, London. August, 1850.
7. Ancient Truths respecting the Deity and true Humanity of the Lord Jesus. By B. W. Newton. Houlston and Wright, Paternoster Row, London. 1857.

Appendix 8:

J. N. Darby on the Sufferings of Christ

There was once an innocent man left to himself; the spring of thought and feeling being simply man, however called on by every blessing and natural testimony of God without: we know what came of it. Then there was man whose heart alas! was the spring, "from within," of evil thoughts and the dark train of acts that followed. What I see in Christ is man, where God has become the spring of thought and feeling. (Did He hereby cease to be man? not at all. It is, though "according to God," in man and as man these thoughts and feelings are to be found. And this extends itself to all the sorrows and the pressure of death itself upon his soul in thought. He had human feelings as to what lay upon Him and before Him, but God was the spring of His estimate of it all. Besides, the manifestation of God was in His ways. We had known man innocent in suitable circumstances; and guilt, subject to misery; but in Christ we have perfectness in relation to God in every way, in infallibly maintained communion in the midst of all the circumstances of sorrow, temptation, and death, by which He was beset, the spring of divine life in the midst of evil, so that His every thought as man was perfection before God, and perfect in that position. This was what marked His state as being down here this new thing.) And, through this wonderful mystery, in the new creation in us, all things are of God. That, if we speak of His and our humanity, is what distinguishes it. Metaphysically to say "His and our humanity" is nonsense; because humanity is an abstraction which means nothing but itself, and always itself, and nothing else (just as if I said Godhead); and if I introduce any idea of its actual state I am destroying the idea and notion the word conveys. But the moment I do associate other ideas, I must introduce the whole effect and power of these ideas to modify the abstract one according to the actual fact. Thus humanity is always simply humanity. The moment I call it His, it is *sui generis*, because it is His; and in fact humanity sustained by Godhead is not humanity in the same state as humanity unsustained by Godhead. (Hunger, thirst, uneasiness, are not a kind of humanity, but a state of circumstances in which it is placed. That Christ came into these circumstances is undoubted. I have not different humanity when I am hungry and when I am full. But I am placed in a condition in which hunger and starvation may fall upon me if God so permits. Who will say *if* Adam had not had food he would not have been hungry? But God had not set him in that condition. Further, even as to death, there is much misapprehension. No creature is, in itself, in a state which cannot perish. That is the condition of existence of God alone, "who only hath immortality." If Adam was not mortal before he sinned, it was by God's continual sustaining power -- we may say, by Christ's. By God's appointment, when man sinned, he passed out of that state of continually sustained existence, and was not to continue beyond a limited period in his actual condition of existence. This was not humanity but man's state, as such, when Christ came. Now, Christ came expressly to die, and took all this sorrow in its full weight upon His soul; He was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. But His doing this in obedience, "Lo I come to do thy will," to glorify God and manifest and accomplish His love, exalt His righteousness and be the suffering vessel of witness to the claims of this necessity, was infinitely acceptable to God, so that His relationship to God as being in flesh, and by being in it, was one of infinite acceptability to God. But, though He came on purpose to die, because of the ruined condition in which man was, to raise His people, and so was in a capacity of

dying, as made lower than the angels, yet it was in such sort that it should be a matter of pure grace in Him to give up His life. He laid it down of Himself. He had authority to lay it down and authority to take it again, still in obedience. "This commandment have I received of my Father." That was the real condition of Christ's death. He came to die, but He came to give His life. He had life in Himself. The condition of His existence here was to lay down by grace, obediently, but of Himself, His life. He was not, as of God, in a condition of losing it. He was not in Adam's condition. For Adam could not lay down as Christ, or take again his life, nor had he life in himself. To speak of Him as liable to death, if something had happened, is mere irreverence -- He was in a position of commanding His own death and life, but could do this, because of His perfection, only in obedience to His Father's will -- it is nonsense; because in the supposition is denied the condition of His existence, which was to lay it down; and, as I have said, if Adam had so lived under violence, and been hewed in pieces, would He have survived as a living man? The answer was, That was not His condition of existence. When Christ gave Himself up to the appointed consequences of sin, He took the wrath and the consequences. He came with that purpose, so that it was always before Him. His relationship to God in this (yea, because of this) was of infinite acceptance; not only because He was eternal Son of God, the title of which He did not forego, as towards God, in assuming flesh, but was in His acceptance all through. But the position itself that He assumed was a cause of infinite acceptance, and in that He stood as man even in what He suffered. "Therefore doth my Father love me.") Sinless humanity sustained in that state by Godhead, is not the same as sinful humanity left to itself. If it be said it was in the same circumstances, this is a question of fact, and to what extent? And here we have to guard against confounding relationships and circumstances. Thus deprivation of paradise is stated by Mr. N. as one thing which the blessed Lord had in common with ourselves. As to circumstances, it is quite clear it was so; but as to relationship to God -- was Christ deprived of paradise as we are as guilty outcasts from it? Clearly not. And here let me remark on moral distance. Mr. N. says He could not be in moral distance (p. 11), for moral distance is hatred to God. Hence (p. 13), "The Lord Jesus never knew and never could know, moral distance or distance of affection from God His Father:" and then speaks of the change of circumstances from paradise and his future glory. Now, all this is merely avoiding the real question. What was meant by moral distance was this, that by His own relation to God, because of others perhaps, but in which He Himself was, He had to find His way to a point where God could meet Him, rising out of the region of man's distance from God, a distance inconceivable to us.

Now, that is not mere circumstances. He felt, Mr. N. tells us, in His soul, according to truth, the present and future condition of ruined man. Now the circumstances of exclusion from paradise, hunger, thirst, uneasiness -- in a word, the effects or results, death itself -- are not inconceivable by us. The question is, not what were His affections, but in what light God regarded *Him*. What was His relation to God? And let me add here, this enquiry is only puzzled by talking about personal position and relative position. If by the former is meant merely His person, it does not touch the question. We all own the Father's delight in Him personally. If anything more is meant, relative position is a personal one. If I am a child, it is my personal position, and it is a relative one.

Further, then, if infirmities mean being in the circumstances of sorrow in which man was, and not screening Himself from them, no one, of course, questions it or the truest reality of it. As to death: if it be meant He was capable of dying, the fact is evident -- He died, and that death was pressed upon His soul even before; if, that He was under the necessity of death in respect of His relationship to God, then it is false. And you cannot, in His person, separate the sustaining power of Godhead nor having life in Himself so as to make a necessity without His will in grace. He laid it down of Himself. "The Lord's own words seem purposely intended to set aside such a doctrine." I quote from

Mr. N. when he had not yet lost the influence of truth, though he had introduced the worst of his errors: and further reasoning about it is vain. If Herod, we are told, had beheaded him, He would have died. I see no reverence in this -- He was not liable to it till He let Herod do it. Nor is it sense. What would have become of Adam, innocent, if he had been beheaded?

But scripture never uses the term that Christ was subject to infirmities. Nor is being in infirmities necessary to sympathy with those in them; but being out of them, though having a nature capable of apprehending in itself the suffering it brings into. The mother sympathizes with the babe in the pain she does not feel. Further, Christ is contrasted in His priestly sympathies with men having infirmity. The law makes men priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, the Son consecrated for evermore. (Hebrews 7:28.) The high priest taken from among men had compassion, for that (while priest, note) he was compassed with infirmity. That was mere man's way of sympathy; for he had to offer for his own sins. Instead of this, Christ in the days of His flesh, when He was not a priest, cried to Him who was able to save Him from death, took the place of lowly, subject, sorrowful man, and received the weight of it in His soul, and then being made perfect acts as priest. It is not said that He was infirm like us, but in all points tempted like as we are: and that He suffered, being tempted, and therefore is able to succour them that are tempted.

Another important passage connected with this is in Matthew. Christ took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. Now how was this? "And he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet: saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." I do not doubt his whole soul entered into them in the whole sorrow and burden of them before God, in the full sense of what they were, so viewed, in order to set them aside and bar Satan's power as to them. But was He sick and infirm because Himself took our infirmities? Clearly not. In a word, it is not being Himself in the state with which He sympathizes which gives the sympathy.

This connects itself with another point Mr. N. charges on others, that is, saying that Christ took the nature of the regenerate. This seems to me nonsense. I have just the same nature now as to my body, as I had when unregenerate; though the Holy Ghost may have a title to my body, exercised in resurrection, in virtue of Christ's redemption. Christ partook of flesh and blood; that is what scripture states, and that is the whole matter. He was a true real man in flesh and blood. But there is a very important point connected with this which has been spoken of, and in which Mr. Newton's fearful error lies. It is this: according to Mr. N., when Christ did take flesh and blood, he was associated with man and Israel so as to be in their distance from God. That He was truly a man and an Israelite in true flesh and blood, born such, no one questions. But His associations in relationship with God were with the saints in Israel. They no doubt had the thoughts and feelings of an Israelitish saint; that is Israel's responsibility, failure, hopes and promises formed the basis, or structure, or character of their feelings as saints; but Christ's relationship was with them. And this is the distinctive character of the book of Psalms. It takes up Israelitish hopes, and circumstances and conditions, no doubt, but as held by the saints only; and excludes the ungodly as an adverse party. Now that was Christ's place. It was associated with the holy remnant in their Israelitish condition. Their relationship to God was a holy relationship; and though they might go through every test and trial of the new nature and faith on which it was founded, and acknowledge all the failure and the sin under which they were suffering, the relationship was a holy one with God. Into that Christ enters; (This was His relative position as regards even Israel. Any other would have been morally incompatible with His being and proper relationship to God. A saint may feel the guilt: into that Christ could enter

but He could not be in it in His relationship to God save vicariously) and therefore, though He may enter into their sorrows and bear their guilt, He has no need to be in any other relationship to God than a holy one. In that he may feel the effects of another, just as a renewed soul, because it is near God and feels accordingly, feels its former state of sin and guilt; but it is not in it, save where guilt is not yet removed from the conscience, in which position of feeling clearly Christ was solely as a substitute. He is not associated with man's or Israel's distance (save as bearing sin), but with the children's relationship to God. Because the children partake of flesh and blood, He partook of them. The taking flesh and blood is stated as the consequence of His relationship with the children. Let us quote the passages.

"Both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified, are all of one."

"Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren."

"I and the children which God has given me." Compare Isaiah 8.

"I will put my trust in Him."

That is, the proof of His being in human nature is godly relationship in man.

It was not, then, that by taking flesh and blood He placed Himself in the distance of man; but that because He associated Himself with the children He partook of flesh and blood, and this is all that is said. The sanctifier and the sanctified being all of one, He was not ashamed to call them brethren. But His relationship was with the sanctified. His spirit entered into every sorrow, His soul passed through every distress, and He suffered sorrow, His soul passed through every distress, and He suffered under every temptation: but His relationship with God was never man's or Israel's as it then was, unless the cross be spoken of, because His was sinless, theirs sinful. It was His own. His relative position, that is, His relation to God, was according to what He was, whatever He might take upon Him or enter into in spirit, which included every sorrow and every difficulty felt, according to the full force of truth, and that before God.

Collected Writings 15:148-153.

Appendix 9:

Views on Newtonism

INTRODUCTION

By Newtonism I mean the doctrines concerning Christ's Person which B. W. Newton taught regarding Christ's distance from God. First we will look at views of some "exclusives."⁵⁹ After that we will have before us views of some Open Brethren. They do not believe that the presence of tolerated leaven in a company of saints leavens that entire company. (This was given expression corporately in the Bethesda division -- which we have examined in Section 9). Then we will look at some miscellaneous judgments.

VIEWS OF THOSE WHO EXCLUDED EVIL

W. Kelly referred to BWN as a "blasphemer against Christ."⁶⁰ Here is his judgment of BWN's system of doctrine.

No heretic more thoroughly or subtly debased Christ. . . but does any false system more thoroughly than his make Jesus anathema? Compare 1 Cor 12:3.⁶¹

C. H. Mackintosh wrote,

. . . I consider the doctrine quite as bad as Socinianism itself. . .⁶²

Warnings were given by "exclusives" that BWN continued to propagate his evil in print.⁶³

VIEWS OF OPEN BRETHREN

When there is a rejection of the scripture doctrine that the presence of tolerated leaven changes the character of the lump, this affects one's discernment and judgment. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). This is seen in the following quotations. Some Open Brethren admit that BWN taught evil doctrine concerning Christ's Person before his retraction. Some do not. In general, they do not admit that he taught evil doctrine subsequently. Yet in chapter 9.4 we saw that BWN himself asserted that he **continued** to teach those doctrines (except a point or two, which he adjusted); additionally, several of his works were cited that showed this to be so -- even as the "exclusives" pointed out. Why cannot Open Brethren see this? Why, obviously their discernment was clouded by their denial that the presence of tolerated leaven in a company of saints leavens them all. Open Brethren fellowship (such as it is) is founded directly upon this denial and Bethesda received from Compton St. (where the supporters of BWN moved in mid-1848) which was a leavened lump.

Some Open Brethren have given assurances that no Newtonism was ever among them. This assurance is worthless as coming from those who either say BWN never held fundamentally evil doctrine or that he did, retracted it and did not teach it again; when in fact he did, and it was called to their attention, since they were incapable of recognizing it. Besides, there are testimonies like that

of J. G. Deck that Newtonism has been among them.

Some Deny that BWN Ever Held Fundamentally Evil Doctrine Concerning Christ's Person

The well known F. F. Bruce (Open Brethren) indicated that at no time was BWN unorthodox.

Newton, indeed, may still be looked upon as a heresiarch (for aught I know to the contrary) by some representatives of the Darbyite tradition; it is an amazing testimony to the perverse capacity of the ecclesiastical mind that such a charge should stick to a teacher whose whole career proclaims his absolutely uncompromising orthodoxy.⁶⁴

F. R. Coad (Open Brethren) wrote of that aspect concerning BWN's doctrine that touched on the Person of Christ:

The teaching hardly touched orthodox doctrine concerning Christ's Person.⁶⁵

Some Admit He did at One Time, but Retracted It

I do not know if all cited below actually recognized that BWN had taught fundamentally evil doctrine; perhaps only mistakes.

H. P. Barker (an "exclusive" who went "open") said:

. . . Mr. N. recanted and wrote a most penitent letter of confession with regard to what he had taught.⁶⁶

E. K. Groves had a hearing problem. He wrote:

Nor in the Scriptural expositions which he has published, during more than thirty years, have I heard of error (such as has always been attached to his name) being detected.⁶⁷

A writer, G., claimed that ". . . eighteen years ago, Mr. Newton renounced and confessed this teaching as sin."⁶⁸

G. H. Lang acknowledged that BWN's doctrine was "fundamental error" but that it was "withdrawn" and he "disavowed all writings of his in which it was to be found."⁶⁹

Why were the "exclusives" able to see clearly and the Open Brethren not see at all?

A. Stenhouse wrote:

Mr. Newton then published a statement in which he humbly confessed his errors and withdrew them.⁷⁰

As a rule, palliators of evil charge their opponents with a lack of love. G. H. Lang charged:

If it be asked why so thorough a confession and withdrawal did not end the controversy, the answer must be that Mr. Newton's opponents had ceased to walk in love, and therefore carnal influences, such as bitterness, ambition, a party spirit overcame them."⁷¹

The author of the last statement published BWN's "confession" in its entirety

I. McDowell tells us that never after did BWN teach his errors! ⁷²

E. H. Broadbent said, after palliating the evil of BWN's teaching:

This acknowledgement made no impression on Newton's accusers, who continued with unabated zeal to connect him with the heresy he denied. ⁷³

F. R. Coad, referring to JND's "Notice of the Statement and Acknowledgment of Error Circulated by Mr. Newton," *Collected Writings*, vol. 15, says that by "semantic and doctrinal juggling" JND tried to show that BWN had not renounced his errors. ⁷⁴

And what did BWN say?

The above mentioned retraction had nothing whatever to do with these tracts, but only with that expression in the Reprint of the article on Irvingism [in the *Christian Witness* -- regarding the Lord's connection with Adam's federal headship]. ⁷⁵

MISCELLANEOUS JUDGMENTS

Various Fundamentalists and Evangelicals have also palliated the evil of BWN and slandered JND. Some of the names of those who have done so might startle some readers.

The Strict Baptist, G. F. Fromow (a BWN supporter) wrote:

The breach became final in 1847, when Darby charged Newton with serious heresy regarding the Person of Christ. In a letter dated November 26th of that year, Newton unreservedly withdrew certain unguarded expressions which might have appeared to give some colour to the charge (although all who are acquainted at first hand with Newton's works know how unfounded the charge was). Darby and his adherents practically ignored Newton's withdrawal, and to this day some Darbyists think of Newton as a heresiarch who denied the personal sinlessness of our Lord! ⁷⁶

Concerning numerous papers of BWN, according to G. Fromow, a minister of Westminster Chapel wrote (October, 1952):

"This is precisely the type of writing that I enjoy. It is theological writing at its very best. Would that these were read more to-day. You are doing a great work in keeping before the public writings of this order."

(Signed) D. M. Lloyd-Jones. ⁷⁷

Henry Varley lauded BWN:

The late venerable man of God, Mr. Henry Varley, well known as an evangelist and Bible teacher in Europe, America and Australia, said to me on one occasion: "If I were asked to name the godliest man I have ever known, I should unhesitatingly say, Benjamin Wills Newton." He described him as tall and of patriarchal bearing, with the calm of heaven on his brow, and the law of kindness on his lips. His intimate associates loved him devotedly and listened with rapt attention to his expositions. ⁷⁸

Listen to the following incredible slander of JND by the posttribulationist Robert Cameron:

"Over forty years ago, at my own table in New York City, Mr. Darby called

Mr. Newton 'dear brother Newton.' I expressed by deep surprise at the use of such an endearing term concerning the one whom he had freely called 'that dangerous man,' and other equally harsh terms. At once Mr Darby replied: 'Mr Newton is the most godly man I ever knew.' I said: 'Well, then, what was all this trouble and condemnation about, if Mr. Newton is such a godly man?' He answered promptly: 'Oh, but Mr. Newton had taught blasphemous doctrines about the person of our blessed Lord, and these had to be dealt with.' 'But,' I said, 'Mr. Newton withdrew the tract on which this charge was made, and afterwards published another tract that is the clearest, most scriptural and most reverential treatment of that delicate question that has ever been published.' (*Ancient Truths Concerning the Deity and True Humanity of Christ*, 1858, 1/6). 'Yes,' said Mr. Darby, 'but there never was any adequate repentance for the sin!' Here the conversation ended, because Mr. Darby (for I loved him) was too old and too venerable a man to admit of my giving 'adequate expression' to my indignant feelings.⁷⁹

BWN himself said that the brethren referred to *Ancient Truths* . . . as "ancient lies." And here we are told by the posttribulationist, R. Cameron that JND said it was the "clearest, most scriptural and most reverential treatment of that delicate question that has ever been published." I call this a brazen falsehood, not wishing to impute a deliberate, planned lie; but emanating, nonetheless, from a mind given to slander JND. R. Cameron also had some story about H. A. Ironside at the end of his life giving up the truth of the pre-tribulation rapture. What a spirit!^h This Robert Cameron was a posttribulationist. Where did he obtain that teaching?

The writer craves the privilege of saying a personal word. When he first began to drink in these truths concerning the Lord's coming, he met none who accepted and taught them except "the Brethren" who had been moulded by the teachings and writing of J. N. Darby. Although the Coming of the Lord had been preached by the writer, the "any moment" Advent never had been mentioned without a question mark -- where was the Scripture to enforce it? When attending Toronto University, the widow of a British officer, who was wonderfully versed in the Scripture of the prophets, called the writer's attention to the teachings of Tregelles, Newton and others. This led to a careful and independent study of the truth, without prejudice . . .⁸⁰

So B. W. Newton and S. P. Tregelles are among those who formed R. Cameron's ideas.

Concerning his comment, "Although the Coming of the Lord had been preached by the writer, the 'any moment' Advent never had been mentioned without a question mark -- where was the Scripture to enforce it?," L. D. Pettegrew remarked:

In another place (Robert Cameron, "To the Friends of Prophetic Truth," *Watchword and Truth*, XXIV (1902), p. 135.) Cameron says that he had accepted the pretribulation position "with enthusiasm."⁸¹

R. Cameron has published other similar stories, slandering J. H. Brookes and C.

h. John Bray also put forth this story about H. A. Ironside. It was thoroughly demolished by R. L. Sumner, "In defense of H. A. Ironside," *The Biblical Evangelist*, May 13, 1983.

I. Scofield also.⁸² R. Cameron had *acourse* of calumny and I regard these stories as fabrications that present pre-tribulationists in a bad light.

C. B. Bass, at the time Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Bethel Theological Seminary, relying heavily on S. P. Tregelles, says B. W. Newton's withdrawal of his statement did not end the painful controversy . . .⁸³ Notice he used the singular: "statement." The phrase cited from him is quite correct and tells where he is, for the issue was not one statement, as we have clearly seen, but a system of teaching which the withdrawal of that one statement did not alter. C. B. Bass could not discern evil and so attacked JND in his book. He stated that BWN's ". . . chief mistake seems to have been an overzealous desire to identify Christ's humanity in every way with that of man."⁸⁴

D. W. Frank, Associate Professor of History, Trinity College (Deerfield, IL) has joined the ranks of the palliators of evil. He wrote about JND (what I have emphasized shows absurdity as well as his stance concerning the evil of BWN's doctrine):

. . . he [JND] was also certain that his own doctrinal formulations were the only biblical ones, and he did not hesitate to force them on his fellow Plymouth Brethren under *threat of excommunication and eternal punishment*. He found it easy to describe the opinions of those who disagreed with him on *relatively minor points* as "abominable evil" and to ascribe their existence to a work of Satan.⁸⁵

J. H. Brookes, an American Presbyterian who accepted the pretribulation rapture, wrote:

J. N. Darby and B. W. Newton had a quarrel more than fifty years ago, the latter, a very able and scholarly man, becoming the founder of the doctrine that the church will pass through the tribulation.⁸⁶

I am sorry he was only able to regard the issues as merely a quarrel. His opinion that BWN was the founder of the doctrine that the church will pass through the tribulation I do not think is correct. However, it may be that BWN's writings were indiscriminately spread in the USA through the instrumentality of Charles Campbell's *Repository of Scripture Testimony*⁸⁷ and certainly through James Inglis' periodical, *Waymarks in the Wilderness*, though he himself, as J. H. Brookes, became a pretribulationist.

JND pointed out how BWN's prophetic system gave rise to his evil teaching.

I believe that what has been the instrument of ripening this terrible doctrine as to Christ, subversive as it is of the truth, is really the prophetic system of the writer. And in this way: he does not admit the existence of a Jewish remnant which has life, and which is consequently within the reach, and the immediate object, of the sympathies of Christ. Hence he is obliged to associate Christ in His condition with the sinful and rebellious nation, (and the consequence follows immediately,) instead of His being the gracious vessel of feeling, thought, and faith, for the believing remnant, in the position of which He did put Himself, and sympathy with which He perfectly has; though it must indeed, in its application, be based upon that in which He was alone -- the atoning work which He wrought for them as for us. Psalm 16 shows this association. All their sorrow was His, and He enters into and associates Himself with it. He had that which was His own, whether bearing or feeling and anticipating the curse and the sin of others. But

the means of falling into the error, though important as a guard to the saints, are nothing to the error itself, because the person, relation with God, and condition and work of Christ Himself, are concerned in it, and have been lightly sacrificed to these notions. The paper in the "Witness" shows that the principle has long been adopted by the writer of the tract.⁸⁸

These extracts that palliate Newtonism contain humbling lessons of what our flesh is like, and how our flesh can masquerade as something Christian.

Appendix 10:

*Examination of
the Letter of the Ten*
by G. V. Wigram

Letter of the Ten.

[The larger print is the text of the *Letter of the Ten* while the smaller print is the comments of G. V. Wigram.]

Dear Brethren,

1. Our brother, Mr. George Alexander, having printed and circulated a statement expressive of his reasons for withdrawing from visible fellowship with us at the table of the Lord; and these reasons being grounded on the fact that those who labour among you have not complied with his request relative to the judging of certain errors which have been taught at Plymouth; it becomes needful that those of us who have incurred any responsibility in this matter should lay before you a brief explanation of the way in which we have acted.

Observe the general outside-facts of the case. There were three persons, one of them an aged lady, who had left the Bath Gathering, because Mr. Newton would not be received, and was standing in the position toward Bath of a person excommunicate. Hear her character from Mr. Bellett: "She would heartily prosper the principles, and views, and purposes of Compton Street, and make it her delight and her business to advance them all, in their full measure and stature, unconfessed and unretracted." There were also the two MrWoodfalls: one of them intimately known, from his connexion with Davenport, and some of the worst parts of the evil; the other charged by a brother abroad with being an active emissary of the evil. Both charged, upon the testimony of many witnesses, with being accomplices in the evil of Plymouth.

Now, firstly, without entering into details of the letter of the Ten, what is it but a vindication, whether good or bad, called for or uncalled for is not the question now -- It is a vindication of the laborers for their receiving such suspected persons. Robert Chapman, John Code, John Bellet, O'Brien, the Bath Brethren, some of their own congregation; brethren in the distance, as Wilkie, Dorman, Brenton, Darby, Macadam, and I know not who, warned and entreated, by letter or in person: "No; we shall not attend to you." The doctrine makes out that the Lord needed a Saviour for himself! There is a system of lying like that of the Jesuits goes along with it! The evil has broken up Ebrington Street; and you can ask Harris, Campbell, Hake, Hall, Deck, Jarrat, etc., etc., etc., or read what

they have said. "No, no, no!"ⁱ

Secondly, let us turn to the paper . The substance of it is nine reasons -- "The grounds on which we have felt a difficulty in complying with the request of our brother Mr. Alexander, that we should formally investigate and give judgment on certain errors which have been taught among Christians meeting at Plymouth." And yet, as you will see, these reasons, and all the in and out argument they contain, are not the kernel, -- that is hidden beyond; and only when the mind has been wearied, and fretted, and lost its calmness with what is found in these reasons, the important matter is quietly slipped in -- slipped in as a well-known truth, which no one would question. See p. 35 [in GVV's paper].

But there are these reasons. And who are the people who signed them? The Ten, whose signatures and conduct in having received certain suspected persons were clearly testimonials that they had all thus far judged that they *were sure there was no practical danger in receiving the persons charged*. Again, though none of them, I suppose, did really apprehend, or do apprehend, the Jesuitical system of Compton Street, yet they had, some of them at least, formed a judgment about the doctrine; and, in some of them, the judgment belied their act in signing. H. Craik, for example, could combat, and I heard did combat, Mr. Code's counter-statements, was not clear as to the doctrine, and had taken special care never to set himself against it. George Muller, again, at one of the meetings at which the paper was read, was asked by J. Code, whether he objected to state in public what he had stated in private? At first he objected, but afterwards said, that, *as an individual*, he considered there were some very bad errors in the tracts, and that he did not know to what evil they might lead.^j Then, again, John Meredith had read and condemned the doctrine; and Robert Aitchison had investigated it, and favored Mr. N. Moreover, they all have committed themselves to those that know the doctrine, to an utter rejection of it, as we shall see when we come to VI. -- XI.

Now, what would be thought of such a proceeding I will not say on the Stock Exchange, or at the bar, but in any commission office in the city, or in business. Change the subject-matter, and imagine any men in London so acting as to insurances, or the sale of shares, cattle, coals, estates, etc. Here it is a gathering committing the purity of the church, in a question touching the person and work of the Lord Jesus.

The *prima facie* thought on reading the paper is -- These ten men had nine reasons common to them, why they could not meet what they call Mr Alexander's request, and form a judgment about the doctrine. But, lo! four of them had formed private judgments for themselves about it, as well as the whole ten had, both accredited the doctrine by the reception of the emissaries of it, and yet discredited it by declaring they held it not. See VI. -- X.

i. It has been well said, When obstinacy blinds the mind of even a wise man, the simplicity of a foolish companion will oft lead him astray.

j. It was at this time Mr. Muller was understood "to protest against the conduct of those who would *force* them to judge the doctrine. If asked and entreated, they might have acted differently; but they were determined to maintain their liberty in this matter; and, rather than give it up, they would forego the fellowship of those who made the requirement." They were *entreated* by many outside of Bethesda.

And now to go a little in detail into the paper. There is much of it which is true according to *the letter*, but not true according to the drift and meaning. As to Mr. Alexander: -- read over the document again, and see what impression it leaves on your mind. The feelings it awakened in mine, on a first perusal, might be expressed in one sentence, thus: "What a dangerous person that is; piqued by the most reasonable refusal of the laboring brethren of Bethesda in Bristol to form and record their judgment about a controversy with which they had nothing to do down in Plymouth, he has revenged himself by awakening suspicions among the congregation." And the first sentence would rather lead a stranger to think, ^k"How unreasonable of Mr. Alexander, to be piqued because Bristol people would not go and examine the errors at Plymouth!" than to say, "When the representatives of a doctrine charged by numbers as being subversive of the Gospel and of a lying system of Jesuitry stood at the door, it was right for any one to insist upon the evils said to be connected with those *who were entering* to be investigated and judged, and too bad of Bethesda to refuse this." ^l The case is really stronger, for instead of being at the door merely, Mr. A.'s letter says they were at the table, and there desired to continue their fellowship with the place whence they came. If so, instead of being hasty or premature, Mr. A. was really too tardy in acting, for meeting them at the table ^midentified *him* with their evil, since he knew it. Mr. A.'s statement, expressive of his reasons for withdrawing, is not at all fairly stated here. He went out, and said he went out because certain persons, charged with being accomplices in certain evil things, were received *without the evil being investigated*, and not because of the ten workmen refusing to judge an abstract question.

To leave Bethesda because it would not examine some abstract question which has troubled saints in Demerary is one thing. No one could demand such a thing in reason, faith, or the Spirit. But to leave Bethesda because when persons credibly accused of being accomplices in certain sins committed in Demerary were coming, or had come, into Bethesda, is quite another thing. The latter was the case, and so A.'s letter proves. They misstate the case in **1**. Though this misstatement is nigh enough to the truth, and presented in a way to challenge displeasure against Mr. A. for misconduct in unreasonable demands and foolish pique as to beloved pastors, etc., sufficient at once to pass current, and yet have a decided influence on the simple-minded. I speak of what the document *is*, not of what the writer or adopters of it intended.

2. And first, it may be well to mention that we had no intimation whatever of our brother's intention to act as he has done, nor any knowledge of his intention to circulate any letter, until it was put into our hands in print.

Again, sentence **2**. This is partly true in the letter, and partly false. Looking at it in the facts referred to, they are not the least objectionable. It was open to Mr

k. It must be remembered, that while I have presented Mr. G. Alexander's letter before the letter of the Ten, at the *first* church meeting the former was not read at all: the latter twice.

l. I cannot but remark, looking at the experience and present condition of Bethesda, now, how foolish it would have been to have given it credit for discrimination in 1845 and 1846 as some wished.

m. Mr. A. never personally *met* them, it may be, at the table; but Newfoundland Street and Bethesda were one table.

A. to choose his own line, and measure of warning too. It was open, too, to God to guide him in what way He pleased. One could suppose that, instead of the servants of the saints here speaking, it was the schoolmaster . All godly deference I entreat my brethren to show to those who labour among them and are over them in the Lord; but this is another thing, and a thing which most of all prevents that subjection in the Lord; viz., men's claiming it for themselves, and claiming deference as lords over God's heritage, which is due to the ensamples of the flock.

"We had no intimation whatever of our brother's intention to act as he has done, nor of his intention to circulate any letter."

Here, notwithstanding all that some have said about "nor" not being *always* "disjunctive" in grammar, etc., a common simple mind would understand two things, and not one: viz. that, first, he gave no intimation he would leave, which is not true, as may be seen by his Mr. A.'s letters; nor, secondly, of his circular. Mr. Craik drew up the document, -- he is a scholar , and a good English scholar; and he has spoken about this being *a very carefully* worded document. If it is so, I defy any simple person to understand "the acting as he has done" as the same thing with "circulating the letter." To grammar and logic I have no objection: I like both. But I will not acknowledge the place, as the church of God, which, in a document presented to five hundred poor people, has to vindicate its statements by logic and grammatical quibbling. He did not state that he should publish a circular. He did warn again and again that he should leave.

3. Some weeks ago, he expressed his determination to bring his views before a meeting of the body, and he was told that he was quite at liberty to do so.
4. He afterwards declared that he would waive this, but never intimated, in the slightest way, his intention to act as he has done, without first affording the church an opportunity of hearing his reasons for separation.

3 and 4. See Mr. A's letters. I may just here remark, that I think in Mr . A.'s letters we get several striking instances of how incompetent any one is to cope and deal with this system of things who is not awake to its character . A good man takes the *prima facie* aspect of a letter from brethren, or even honorable men in the world. Mr. A. did so with the letter of the T en; and so did others when it was read; and they erred, and were some of them snared. Suspicion and shrewd watchfulness are necessary when one is dealing with that in which Satan is working; but the place which accredits him, or needs such power to guard the intercourse of its members, cannot be the church of God.

5. Under these circumstances, we feel it of the deepest importance, for relieving the disquietude of mind naturally occasioned by our brother's letter, explicitly to state that the views relative to the Person of our blessed Lord held by those who for sixteen years have been occupied in teaching the word amongst you, are *unchanged*.
5. Is a painful sentence. A cry was heard, "You have driven me out, because the door is open and the wolf has entered." The shepherds answer, "We are all as sound now as for the last sixteen years." It is painful too, because by thus *suggesting* that A. had said otherwise, it called off the minds of those who were troubled for the Lord and themselves, by a call for sympathy towards the

pastors. See also, 7.

6. The truths relative to the divinity of His person -- the sinlessness of His nature -- and the perfection of His sacrifice, which have been taught both in public teaching and in writing, for these many years past, are, through the grace of God, those which we still maintain.
7. We feel it most important to make this avowal, inasmuch as the letter referred to is calculated, we trust unintentionally, to convey a different impression to the minds of such as cherish a godly jealousy for the faith once delivered to the saints.
8. We add, for the further satisfaction of any who may have had their minds disturbed, that we utterly disclaim the assertion that the blessed Son of God was involved in the guilt of the first Adam; or
9. that He was born under the curse of the broken law, because of His connection with Israel. We hold Him to have been always the Holy One of God, in whom the Father was ever well pleased.
10. We know of no curse which the Saviour bore, except that which He endured as the surety for sinners, -- according to that Scripture, 'He was made a curse for us.'
11. We utterly reject the thought of His ever having had the experiences of an unconverted person; but maintain that while He suffered *outwardly* the trials connected with His being a man and an Israelite, -- still in His feelings and experience, as well as in His external character, He was entirely 'separate from sinners.'

Sentences **6, 8, 9, 10,** and **11**, are most strange, passing strange! in a paper in which a Decemvirate state nine reasons why they decline to "formally investigate and give judgment on certain errors which have been taught at Plymouth." Why, here all the leading points of the controversy are touched upon! And where were these, the leading points of the controversy, so far as doctrine is concerned, -- where were they picked up? And how can your expression of a judgment here harmonize with the well-known contrary thoughts of some of you, as Mr. Aitcheson? or how with your reception of the persons charged with being the underhand circulators of the doctrines you condemn? Did you draw a bow at a ventureⁿ in these sentences? or do you condemn what *report* has wafted to your ears? If so, report about whom but about Ebrington-street people, whom you are receiving? But it is utterly impossible to call this fair dealing. Utterly impossible to say it is worthy of the church of God, or of the rulers that belong to it. Utterly irreconcilable with the drift, in good faith, though not with the very letter of, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th reasons (see **19-25**), or grounds afterwards assigned; and, I cheerfully thank God to add, utterly irreconcilable with the characters of George Muller and Henry Craik. They have their faults like us all, but disingenuous shuffling is not, I think, the natural fault of either.

n. Mr. Muller said, before many witnesses, he had read Mr. Dyer's tract.

12. We now proceed to state the grounds on which we have felt a difficulty in complying with the request of our brother , Mr. Alexander, that we should formally investigate and give judgment on certain errors which have been taught among Christians meeting at Plymouth.

And now in **12**, we come to the grounds or reasons against a judgment. Alexander's words are, "After waiting some time in the hope that this subject would be thoroughly investigated and judged of," etc., and then finding "there being no judgment here concerning this truly momentous subject," and "unjudged in these meetings," -- "there being no judgment," -- "there is no judgment in the matter," -- "while such a matter remains unjudged and uninvestigated," -- that is, he complained of the absence of judgment *which could be acted upon*. Why is this twisted round here into something else?

13. 1st. We considered from the beginning, that it would not be for the comfort or edification of the saints here -- nor for the glory of God -- that we, in Bristol, should get entangled in the controversy connected with the doctrines referred to.

14. We do not feel that, because errors may be taught at Plymouth or elsewhere, therefore we, as a body, are bound to investigate them.

The 1st, that is sentences **13** and **14**, is mere evasion. The question was this, "Will you, as overseers, though warned, mix, in the day when the plague is in the country , some suspected strangers with the healthful people?" The answer is, "The citizens, as a body, could not have been profited by having been exercised with the contests about the cause and indices of the plague in Smyrna." And let me ask here, first, as to **13**, whether is it more evil, to have to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints and for moral integrity, or to be corrupted by that which makes the needs-be of controversy; Cain's, Balaam's and Kore's sins. Would to God Bethesda saints had had the sorrow of watching and praying, rather than that of falling into temptation. As to **14**, the pastor is no pastor who does not study the current dangers of the day; and the talking about "at Plymouth," and "the body ,", investigating is mere quibbling.

15. 2nd. The practical reason alleged why we should enter upon the investigation of certain tracts issued from Plymouth was, that thus we might be able to know how to act with reference to those who might visit us from thence, or who are supposed to be adherents of the author of the said publications.

2nd reason, sentence **15**. Whence got they this? But why not rather think of the glory of God, -- the honor of Christ, -- the presence of the Spirit, -- the welfare of the church, -- its name before the world, as the keeper of the truth, -- victory over the adversary, -- the putting out of the world and the flesh, -- the soul of a zealous (if not by them esteemed wise) brother? No, none of these things are thought of; -- but a minimum of an answer is given.

The practical reason alleged -- perhaps what is meant above, is 'the reason practically alleged,' *i. e.* the practical substance of what is alleged.

16. In reply to this, we have to state, that the views of the writer alluded to could only be *fairly learned* from the examination of his own acknowledged writings.

17. We did not feel that we should be warranted in taking our impression of the views actually held by him from any other source than from some treatise written by himself, and professedly explanatory of the doctrines advocated.

16 and 17, are, of course, true in some sense; but "in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established," must not be forgotten; and in this case there were witnesses at hand most unimpeachable. Not those who had been "bitter" and hard in controversy against Satan and the evil, but gentle and tender spirited men also; some of whom, like Deck, who had stood by and watched and thought himself rather deceived with what he heard and saw, than that those he loved *could* be so wrong, and some too, who had been plucked as brands out of the fire, after having lost more than man's heart knows how to estimate, for the one who led them into the evil; who treated them dogmatically while they owned his Tirshathaship, and cast them off when their conscience could not consent to continue to hold a false Christ, or to abide in the devious, tortuous, course he had marked out for them. Alas! it was easy for Bethesda to speak of the mercy which had saved such, as "servile fear of having no leader." -- But, so far as 16 and 17 are true, why are they put in the form of objections, as though Mr. A, had not gone to the fountain-head? He did, and he said he did.

18. Now there has been such variableness in the views held by the writer in question, that it is difficult to ascertain what he would now acknowledge as his.

18 is, alas, alas! the confession at once of disbelief of the charge of delusion and treacherous dealing, and the avowal of entire ignorance as to Satan's mode of warfare. An argument to silence an opponent it may be, but reason for not investigating, it is none; if it shows the difficulty of investigation, does it not the more show the need that those who are responsible as pastors, and who know most the help God gives, should investigate? And who is George Muller to talk of *difficulty*? Besides, the question is, not what the writer acknowledges as his, but for what is he responsible. A Roman Catholic Priest is held responsible, and justly so, for more than he will own to.

19. 3rd. In regard to these writings, Christian brethren, hitherto of unblemished reputation for soundness in the faith, have come to different conclusions as to the actual amount of error contained in them.

19, the 3rd reason is monstrous. For the very things, which, before God, constitute the responsibility to do the thing, are pleaded as the reason why it should not be done. And, I must again say, *not honest*. A man and his party are accused of blasphemy, and delusion, and Jesuitry; and George Muller who never was afraid of any responsibility, God being his helper, says, -- the difficulty must justify our not doing that, without which we could not act for God in this matter. And is it not a mere *diversion* to talk about the brethren hitherto of unblemished reputation for soundness in the faith, who have come to different conclusions as to the amount of error contained in them? Shades of difference, of course, there are in those who are of one judgment, but light and darkness, Christ and Belial, are the antipodes the one to the other; and the question raised, was never how much of evil, but are they fundamentally evil or not? And I do say that Romanism or Swedenborgianism could sail in under this most

shameless statement. And pray where, if true, is the church of God at all, -- where the Holy Ghost? Satan is abroad everywhere, and most true, human wit cannot meet him; but has God made no provision for our need in the Spirit and the word? Surely he has, and for worse days too. But it is a regular fog and mist here, as ever, when human opinions are looked to instead of God, and the word of his grace. But the fact is, sound godly men in every denomination only condemn the doctrine; but these will not do that, but only talk of measuring the amount. But I pray brethren to observe two things here; first, that the talking about shrinking, "from the responsibility of giving any *formal* judgment in the matter" has no weight in it at all. They were not asked, -- that was not the request, -- to form and record a formal judgment before others. They had no responsibility to do so. No one asked it or wished them to do so; but they had a *responsibility* laid upon them by God TO ACT in certain cases; and they did, because they were obliged to it, act. The question was, "Will you act prayerfully and deliberately according to a sound judgment, and a sober mind, or will you act blindfold, and darkly, though warned of danger?" In some cases, not to act is to act. That is, when things are simply in progress onward, not to act is to let them go forward. But in this case it was not merely so, for it was quite clear to all around, and to themselves as warned by many, that not to reject the Mr. Woodfalls, etc., would be to reject a great many others.

- 20.** The tracts, some of us knew to be written in such an ambiguous style, that we greatly shrunk from the responsibility of giving any formal judgment on the matter.

Mark too here, under **20**, that the knowledge of "some of us" could at times effect "that we [all] greatly shrunk," etc.

- 21.** 4th. As approved brethren, in different places, have come to such different conclusions in reference to the amount of error contained in these tracts, we could neither desire nor expect that the saints here would be satisfied with the decision of one or two leading brethren.
- 22.** Those who felt desirous to satisfy their own minds, would naturally be led to wish to peruse the writings for themselves.
- 23.** For this, many amongst us have no leisure time; many would not be able to understand what the tracts contain, because of the mode of expression employed; and the result, there is much reason to fear, would be such perverse disputations and strifes of words, as minister questions rather than godly edifying.

21, 22, 23, i. e., Reason 4, is mere trifling. The request is, Examine an evil which is at your door, and see whether it does not betray the foundations of the faith? The answer is, If we attempt to record in a formal creed our exact estimate of the amount of the evil, the saints around us will not be satisfied whether or not, to the grain and half grain, we are correct: how should they, when approved brethren elsewhere have not agreed as to the precise and exact amount of the evil. Saints will want to measure the writings for themselves: the result will be that, in their incompetency, they will come to difference of judgment about the amount of the measure, and fall out about it.

Brethren inside Bethesda may answer how far they think that G. Muller is really one *among* those who *share* the responsibility of being the conscience-

keepers of the body of the saints there. Is he one with a single vote in the assembly? Do they look at him as such? or rather as a bell-bearer in the flock? I pray that the way in which, when there is a body of conscience-keepers of an assembly, their incompetency to meet evil must appear, may be observed. And how the old saying, that a committee has no conscience must lead, when the saints have thus a committee, both to the choking of conscience and the dishonor of the Lord. And if in men like G. Muller, how much more in those of less power.

It sounds very well, and if the attention is absorbed by it, and the real question forgotten, may seem very wise. But the real question is not, What to an infinitesimal is the measure of the evil, and how will you put this exactly before each one? but, *Does it not destroy the foundations?* And do the Ten mean to say, either that in Arianism or Socinianism, they have measured to a minim the evil, or that they are able to satisfy the saints, or make the saints see and hold exactly the same thoughts of any evil.

And how will this bear the scrutiny of being compared with the conduct of these responsibility-bearers of the gathering on other occasions? Here they could not give a formal judgment, because of difference of judgment of approved brethren about the exact amount of the evil, etc. etc. Here the question is about the person of the Lord Jesus. How was it when the conduct of Muller was impeached needlessly (as I, unacquainted with the case, trust) about the Orphan-houses? Was there no difference of judgment about the amount of evil? Was there the same excessive fear of leading brethren to enquire, and of the incompetency and quarrelsome tendency of their company?

To my mind the most precious sympathies between those who are ensamples to the flock, and the flock are here all denied. And if I had been in Bethesda when the letter was read, I should have felt that it was a rebuke to the whole body -- a sort of vote of want of confidence in it -- which its most true love for and deference to G. M. made not meet.

24. 5th. Even some of those who now condemn the tracts as containing doctrine essentially unsound, did not so understand them on the first perusal.

25. Those of us who were specially requested to investigate and judge the errors contained in them, felt that, under such circumstances, there was but little probability of our coming to unity of judgment touching the nature of the doctrines therein embodied.

24, i. e., Reason 5, goes a step further. --

[Reason 1 says, "There could be no comfort to us in Bristol intermeddling with a matter at Plymouth."

2. To the remark, How then will you know how to act towards persons coming from thence? we reply as to the controversy, Who can tell what the writer would acknowledge as his views?

3. Good men elsewhere could not come to one mind as to the exact measure of evil.

4. We will not get our flock upon this dif ficulty of the exact measure; but] Here in --

5. Some who now condemn did not do so on a first perusal.

Therefore, **25**, there is little probability of our coming to unity of judgment touching the *nature* of the doctrines therein embodied! And this upon foundation-truth: upon error which destroys the foundations. If this is not filthiness of the spirit, 2 Cor. 7:1, what is? But I cannot bring my mind to admit that any spiritual Christian, not under a delusion (much less George Muller), could pen this. What has become of God -- of Christ -- of the Holy Ghost -- in the mind of these signers and of the congregation identified with the paper? What an apple of discord did the signers own to be among them. What a confession to the flock of the character of the union without faith of the congregation! What a presentation of the value of outward union above the sound faith. "Let heaven and hell be confounded together," was the impassioned word of Protestant Luther, "ere one jot of truth be sacrificed." ° 'Here is something of which R. Chapman says, 'that it presents a Christ who could not save -- who himself would need a Saviour.' Flock, we ten, are afraid to examine it, for "there is little probability of our coming to unity of judgment touching [not now the exact measure of the *evil*, but] the *nature* of the doctrine." That is (see **24**), whether we shall condemn as "essentially unsound, or not so understand them." What can these ten have been about to sign their names thus, the one against the other, and to present the document to the flock. What a.....But, no; I am sure they meant it not. The mind of the writer was absorbed in making out a case: the minds of the signers only looked to see that it met the case; but delusion is the best thought one can have about it. And what was to be the end gained of all this pleading, but to stupefy their own minds as to the horrid sin of letting bearers of leprosy in among the people.

- 26.** 6th. Even supposing that those who inquired into the matter had come to the same conclusion, touching the amount of positive error therein contained, this would not have guided us in our decision respecting individuals coming from Plymouth.
- 27.** For, supposing the author of the tracts were fundamentally heretical, this would not warrant us in rejecting those who came from under his teaching, until we were satisfied that they had understood and imbibed views essentially subversive of foundation-truth; especially as those meeting at Ebrington street, Plymouth, last January, put forth a statement, disclaiming the errors charged against the tracts.

Reason 6, **26**, **27**. Under **24** and **25**, we were told they had little *probability* (strange word where salvation through grace is concerned, or the church built thereon) of coming to unity of judgment touching the *nature* of the doctrine; i. e., whether upon a second perusal they would condemn, or on a first perusal not so understand them. Now, **26**, *the amount* is brought forward again, and then its *nature*; neither of which would suffice to condemn the avowed followers of Mr. N. upon, seeing they have repudiated the errors charged. Here we get to a new point: let us review, ere proceeding. -- 1st. The doctrine cannot have a formal judgment pronounced upon it; then, **5-11**, we utterly repudiate it; **12**,

o. It is singular that a Bethesda saint, about the date of the letter, circulated a statement of Roman Catholic Luther's as so very beautiful a picture of the value of unity.

we will tell you why we will form no formal judgment upon it.

Reason 1. What comfort to us in Bristol to intermeddle with a controversy so far off as Plymouth.

2. Besides, it is unapprehensible; for who can tell what views the writer would own as his.

3. Good men have failed of unity as to the *measure* of the evil.

4. Let not our flock be similarly troubled as these good men about the measure of the evil. And --

5. As some who now condemn did not so at first, we fear our unity is at stake if we try to judge *the nature* of the doctrine. And --

6. If the exact amount of positive error was apprehended, this would not have rejected Plymouthians; for, even if the head of the party was fundamentally heretical, his followers could not be rejected unless individually proved to be holders of views essentially subversive of foundation-truth, etc.

Indeed! A heresy and a heretical party are not to be condemned, unless the individuals are deniers of individual salvation doctrine. This is what is meant. An Arian or Socinian denies the foundation doctrine of individual salvation, and makes a heresy and schism upon it. Condemn the man; but receive the followers, because they repudiate the notion that they hold what some see in their leader's doctrine. Why then are they followers of him? The theory here involved is that there is no such thing in the world as the church of God; no such thing as heresy or schism; no Holy Ghost in the church; no difference between the church and Babylon, or between the preserved in Christ and the misled. But if they disclaim, why do they circulate, that which poisons? Or is there no *faith* once delivered to the saints;? And how comes it, too, that the ten thus speak about the disclaimer? Did they see it? Did they weigh it? Did they hear what others had to say about it? The disclaimer can be read when the controversy cannot. Plymouth is not now so far off as it was. There is no such fog and mist over the disclaimer, or over their minds, as there was a few lines back. Cut off from all other brethren they were just now; but now they are in company with some. And what have they done with the charge of untruthfulness and of jesuitism? Are they able at once to receive everything the Jesuit-priest says -- take his word for everything, though no one else can be listened to?

28. 7th. The requirement that we should investigate and judge M^Newton's tracts, appeared to some of us like the introduction of a fresh test of communion.

29. It was demanded of us that, in addition to a sound confession and a corresponding walk, we should, as a body, come to a formal decision about what many of us might be quite unable to understand.

7. **28** and **29**, is mere child's play and quibbling, and is most untrue. It was never demanded. All that was demanded was, if you have the faith and are the church of God, act upon that godly discipline which becomes that house which is the temple of God, through the Spirit. A man, most active and energetic, is accused of being untruthful, a subverter of the faith, the former of a party reckless of all truth to maintain his views; some of his disciples come to you,

and you stand quibbling about being called upon to judge his doctrine, lest you should be setting up a new term of communion. **29** gives up, not only the church, but the individual's portion; "ye have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things." And sure I am, that many a simple poor woman in Bethesda, every one there that is godly, is, with the living God and the word of His grace, competent to judge such things, and also the conduct of the ten in thus systematically setting themselves against God, and thus despising the church of God.

30. 8th. We remembered the word of the Lord, that 'the beginning of strife is as the letting out of water.'

8. **30** is a garbled use of Scripture. "Contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" is not inconsistent with freedom from strife about the things of this world.

31. We were well aware that the great body of believers amongst us were in happy ignorance of the Plymouth controversy, and we did not feel it well to be considered as identifying ourselves with either party.

32. We judged that this controversy had been so carried on as to cause the truth to be evil spoken of; and we do not desire to be considered as identifying ourselves with that which has caused the opposer to reproach the way of the Lord.

31. It has been well said, if the two parties are God and Satan, it is not hard to say on whose side the professedly neutrals will really be found. **32.** A while back, the controversy was down ever so far off at Plymouth. Then the question was about Mr. N.'s errors. But the distance was not, when the question was of the self-pronounced soundness of his followers; still, the distance is little, and we can see great error in the mode [? *whose*] of the controversy.

33. At the same time, we wish distinctly to be understood, that we would seek to maintain fellowship with all believers; and consider ourselves as particularly associated with those who meet as we do, simply in the name of the Lord Jesus.

33. contains the denial of the church. We will have persons merely as individuals. If believers, though the partisans of a heretic, they are welcome -- if believers, though members of a Jesuit college or Unitarian chapel, let them come -- we will not doubt the goodness of human nature; they profess to be all right, and that all the hard things said against them are false. Who are we, to question them? Who so good a witness as a man for himself? We meet simply in the name of the Lord Jesus: let who will come in, they are welcome. God forbid that I should speak lightly. Is not God, indeed, among us? Is not the church His house, the residence of the Spirit, the place of the Lord's holy discipline? And does not George Muller know the power and truth of the living God? But what is all this but sheer Romanism over again? The leading truths of the church, as its unity, catholicity, holiness, power, all betrayed, because acted out in the flesh and not in the Spirit: and George Muller the leader in all this! May God awaken him as one beloved to Him and to us, and snatch him from the dangers of this sin.

34. 9th. We felt that the compliance with Mr Alexander's request would be

the introduction of an evil precedent.

35. If a brother has a right to demand our examining a work of fifty pages, he may require our investigating error said to be contained in one of much larger dimensions; so that all our time might be wasted in the examination of other people's errors, instead of more important service.

9. 34 and 35. This surely is merely an *excuse*. If the glory of the Lord Jesus and the safety of the flock which he tends, needed the study of 600,000 volumes, -- surely George Muller is not the man to say him nay. Delusion blinded his eyes ere he set his name to a paper having such a sentence in it.

36. It only remains to notice the three reasons specially assigned by Mr. Alexander, in justification of his course of action.

37. To the first, viz. -- 'that by our not judging this matter , many of the Lord's people will be excluded from communion with us,' -- we reply, that unless our brethren can prove, either that error is held and taught amongst us, or that individuals are received into communion who ought not to be admitted; they can have no scriptural warrant for withdrawing from our fellowship.

38. We would affectionately entreat such brethren as may be disposed to withdraw from communion for the reason assigned, to consider that, except they can prove allowed evil in life or doctrine, they cannot, without violating the principles on which we meet, treat us as if we had renounced the faith of the Gospel.

36, 37, and 38. Here we are upon new ground; but new ground described so similarly to the old ground that the careless reader will confound the two together, and now accredit the former (on which perhaps he had a question when he read it) for the sake of this. Observe, "individuals....who ought not to be admitted" are all of them to be shut out; and then comes a strong appeal about the evil of pressing more than this. But let not the reader be deceived -- the early part is the definition of *who ought to be shut out* -- and that includes the partizan of the heretic, and every man, however accused, who gives himself a good character.

39. In reply to the second reason, viz. -- 'that persons may be received from Plymouth holding evil doctrines' -- we are happy in being able to state, that ever since the matter was agitated, we have maintained that persons coming from thence -- if suspected of any error -- would be liable to be examined on the point; that in the case of one individual, who had fallen under the suspicion of certain brethren amongst us, not only was there private intercourse with him relative to his views, as soon as it was known that he was objected to -- but the individual referred to, known to some of us for several years as a consistent Christian -- actually came to a meeting of laboring brethren for the very purpose that any question might be asked him by any brother who should have any difficulty on his mind.

39. The word "*maintained*" should have had "in our own minds" put after it, to make it accurate; or else have been exchanged for *allowed*. Observe, the guard as to Plymouth is what? Why, we are towards it as to every *well*

accredited gathering. "Persons coming thence, if suspected of any error would be *liable* to be examined *on the point*." The mass would be received without a question; if a particular person had a particular error charged against him, on that *point* he would be **LIABLE** to be examined. *Liable* does not necessarily mean surely and actually subjected to. I am liable to sudden death and various accidents which never yet have come near me. We should not say of the crew of a ship from Smyrna, when plague was known to be there, as it neared our shore, that crew is *liable to be put on quarantine ground*. The explanation of the "private intercourse" may be seen in Mr. A.'s letter. The laboring brethren felt no responsibility; some who have been driven out since did, and went to Mr. W's. Two or three ^p individuals I can name who did, who were the suspects, voluntary visitors, and unsatisfied by the visit; but the fact of whose visit is now dragged in in vindication of the Ten by themselves. Every word is true, for there (was) private intercourse with him (the suspected of error) as to his views. The rest of **39** is quite true, but not all the truth. For the reason why he left the meeting was, that *the meeting* judged that that was not the time for it, and he was requested to leave on that ground. But there was a very particular something in the mind of the meeting as to the person also, besides the fact of there being a question for that meeting different from that which he brought to it, as we shall see in **40**. Some one, I hear, said, as he was going, "that such an opportunity might be desirable *on another occasion*."

40. Mr. Alexander himself was the principal party in declining the presence of the brother referred to, on that occasion, such inquiry being no longer demanded, inasmuch as the difficulties relative to the views of the individual in question, had been removed by private intercourse.

41. We leave Mr. Alexander to reconcile this fact, which he cannot have forgotten, with the assertion contained under his second special reason for withdrawing.

40 and 41. People had better look back at **39** and forward to Mr. A.'s letter to Mr. Withy, in which he says that the objection by all to Mr. W's presence was, that having been at Plymouth, and a partizan, he could not possibly be a fair party in the discussion -- the stress was laid on this, and not on his coming to answer questions, -- and that Butler and Naish made it; on which ground only, Mr. A. declined his presence. He adds, Feltham and others objected to Mr. W. *breaking bread at all* till that had been investigated. I consider this **40** and **41** to be *very, very* dark.

42. In regard to the third ground alleged by Mr. Alexander, viz.: that by not judging the matter, we lie under the suspicion of supporting false doctrine, we have only to refer to the statement already made at the commencement of this paper.

43. In conclusion, we would seek to impress upon all present, the evil of treating the subject of our Lord's humanity as a matter of speculative or angry controversy.

p. Mr. Craik assented (I hear) to the propriety of any one who had it on his conscience to do so, going to M. H. W.

44. One of those who have been ministering among you from the beginning, feels it a matter of deep thankfulness to God, that so long ago as in the year 1835, ^q he committed to writing, and subsequently printed, what he had learned from the Scriptures of truth relative to the meaning of that inspired declaration, "The Word was made flesh."
45. He would affectionately refer any whose minds may be now disquieted, to what he then wrote, and was afterwards led to publish.
46. If there be heresy in the simple statements contained in the letters alluded to, let it be pointed out; if not, let all who are interested in the matter know, that we continue unto the present day 'speaking the same things.'

(Signed)

Henry Craik,	Edmund Feltham,
George Muller,	John Withy,
Jacob Henry Hale,	Samuel Butler,
Charles Brown,	John Meredith,
Elijah Stanley,	Robert Aitcheson.

The above paper was read at meetings of brethren at Bethesda Chapel, on Thursday, June 29th, and Monday, July 3rd, 1848.

Copy of Notice read at the three places of meeting, on Sunday, the 25th, inst.
 -- "It is intended, the Lord willing, to have an especial meeting of all the brethren and sisters in communion, next Thursday evening, at Bethesda, at 7 o'clock, at which, explanations will be given relative to the printed letter of our brother Mr. Alexander. All the brethren and sisters are especially requested to be present. The usual meeting at Salem will be given up that evening."

42. See before.

43. Heartily can I say, Amen and Amen; but I would add, with sorrow that the word "speculative" comes in unhappily in connection with 44, as to H. Craik and G. Muller, who circulated his book as a specimen of orthodoxy. It contains expressions which to those who know the controversy, are painful, as in a measure criminating Mr. Craik, though not so much as his words have since, or his letter to T. M., which I published. It is painful to notice, too, the accuracy, verbally, of 44-46. The book, as thus described, may have no error in it. The error is in the pieces, not then in the book, *i. e.* in the first edition, but written and added afterwards, *i. e.* in the second edition.

Observe.

1. It is to be remembered Mr . G. M. is a *thorough* man of business, and knows what the meaning and result of putting his name to a paper is. He knows that if he wrote a cheque for a thousand pounds it would be paid, though he

q. "Pastoral Letters," by Henry Craik.

may have meant to write but a hundred. He knows also, that, in legal documents, his name commits him to the contents of the paper. His intelligence as a man of business in every way is of the very highest order. Probably, few merchants in Bristol are superior to him in this, if equal. Several of the other signers are also men of business, who know what a signature means.

2. One of the questions eighteen years ago, among us, was, "Does the Church make the Spirit, or the Spirit make the Church?" That is, "Has that which man calls, or which calls itself the Church, the sanction and power of the Holy Ghost? or is that only which the Holy Ghost indwelling makes the habitation of God, to be reckoned as the Church?"

I beg it may be distinctly observed, that the paper of the Ten makes no allusion whatever to Mr. Newton's recantation; whether that was good for any thing, or, to those conversant with the facts of the case, worse than nothing -- need not be touched upon. The paper of the Ten makes no allusion whatever to it.

If I take the paper as a picture of Bethesda's spiritual state, how lamentable is it? A cry is heard at the gate. "Three are come, charged with being connected with delusion, jesuitism, blasphemy." "Peace! Peace (is the governor's answer)! bring them in, and hush your hard words, watchman. Bring them in, even if you have to yield your place to them." Alas! that paper tells of a fallen sunken state. It tells of untruthfulness, a shuffling system, and a deceptive spirit's presence. God has gone down in their consciences as the sun that is set. The veil, grown thick, hides the living Christ from their faith. The Holy Ghost is not owned as being in the company. Circumstances absorb the mind -- the world enters, and the flesh; and Satan is forgotten as the gliding serpent; and faith and vital union with Christ in the heavens are all as the by-gone tale of yesterday. The Church is no longer that which has vital fellowship with Christ, and is able to shut out evil; but has sunk down into a company of men with a certain profession of faith and practice; but the spiritual responsibilities and associations are all denied: it is nothing more than a mere evangelical alliance. Do I say this haughtily? Nay; with deep sorrow of heart. Time was once when Bethesda was Nazarite in character, and decried by the world and by Dissenters; and I gloried in fellowship with her reproach. Now, alas! with shorn locks and eyes put out, it labors for the Philistines, and my heart is grieved. I see nothing now to prevent its becoming the hold of every evil thing, unless God in His mercy may yet hear. I would see it restored, but my heart fears that the opposite of the Plymouth tale will now be told there. Feeble as the faith was at Plymouth, there was a little faith when a man of God went in and blew the alarm. The congregation has been rescued there, and the very name of Ebrington-Street ceased to be named upon the remnant left in the evil: they are moved to a smaller room in Compton-Street, while Ebrington-Street is honored as the scene of the testimony of an ex-clergyman who preaches salvation by Christ. I fear lest the opposite of this awaits Bethesda. I say the opposite; but the Lord shew mercy, if it be possible.

The Ecclesiastical Position^r

As to the ecclesiastical position proposed, I shall say a few words. I shall now put before you the theory which it aims to establish. The rest was the chaff -- the theory is the grain -- its great object, as I judge. Now observe: "Supposing that those who inquired into the matter had come to the same conclusion touching the amount of positive error therein contained, this would not have guided us in our decision respecting individuals coming from Plymouth. For supposing (see 27) [a man or] the author of the tracts were fundamentally heretical, this would not warrant us in rejecting those who came from under his teaching, until we were satisfied that they had understood and imbibed views essentially subversive of foundation-truth; especially as those meeting at Ebrington-Street, Plymouth, last January, put forth a statement, disclaiming the errors charged against the tracts." Again, after saying, "We did not feel it well to be considered as identifying ourselves with either party" (31), or with a controversy "so carried on as to the cause the truth to be evil spoken of" (32). "At the same time (33) we wish distinctly to be understood, that we would seek to maintain fellowship with all believers; and consider ourselves as particularly associated with those who meet as we do, simply in the name of the Lord Jesus." "Unless our brethren (37), can prove, either that error is held and taught amongst us, or that individuals are received into communion who ought not to be admitted, they can have no scriptural warrant for withdrawing from our fellowship. We would affectionately entreat such brethren as may be disposed to withdraw from communion for the reasons assigned, to consider that, except they can prove allowed evil in life or doctrine, they cannot, without violating the principles on which we meet, treat us as if we had renounced the faith of the Gospel." "We are happy in being able to state, that ever since the matter [? of Plymouth] (39) was agitated, we have maintained [? in our own minds] that persons coming from thence, if suspected of any error, would be liable to be examined on the point."

This is of all importance. It shows the theory on which Bethesda is *now* acting. This they will do. It might better have been presented either nakedly as stated above. -- i. e., without the many reasons why they would not do what they would not do (which serve as dust to hide and conceal this) -- or have been condensed into two or three propositions, into which its principles resolve themselves. It is most important, both in what it asserts and in what it omits. While I admit that Bethesda has always, so far as I know, been behindhand as to truth and the practical results of faith in Christ *in heaven*, and returning thence, and of the presence of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, during His absence -- I do not admit that it is now in the state it was nine years ago. Practically, there is a new theory and new practice in it; and I think this might easily be shown, if necessary.

r. So entirely is this *slipped in*, as if it were acknowledged, unquestionable truth--that few readers of the letters have noticed what it contains: intent upon the parts which were most prominently put, this part they have not *weighed*--because it is put in, by the bye, as a matter of course. It is interesting as the parent of the "Declaration," "Memorandum," and "Record."

Propositions of Bethesda's Present Position.

1. OUR FELLOWSHIP; *in itself*. -- We meet simply in the name of the Lord Jesus.
2. *In its connections*. -- We seek to maintain fellowship with all believers, Even with those of that party, as to the doctrinal statements of whose leader we avow that some of them *we know not* (10); some *we utterly disclaim* (9); some "we utterly reject" (11); whose views are so variable (18), whose tracts are written in such an ambiguous style (20), that neither the amount of error (21), and positive error (26), approved saints can agree upon; so written, too, that a second perusal has led some to condemn that, as utterly unsound, who did not so understand them on a first perusal (24). The author of which may be fundamentally heretical (27). Or [? on the other hand] of that party whose mode of controversy has caused the truth to be evil spoken of, and the opposer to reproach the way of the Lord.
3. *As to receiving persons*. -- We receive all [nominal Christians ?] [even though coming from the temple of Heresy, from under the teaching of one whose writings are fundamentally heretical], until we are satisfied that they have understood and imbibed views essentially subversive of foundation truth (27).
4. *As to protection of the Lord's glory, and the flock committed to us* . -- Any individual suspected of any error, would be *liable* to be examined on the *point*.

We hold also, *as to a person withdrawing from us*, that --

Unless error is held and taught among us, or that individuals are received into communion who ought not to be admitted, unless, that is, there be allowed evil in life or doctrine, he who withdraws from us [and so treats us as if we had renounced the faith of the gospel], violates the principles on which we meet (38), and has no scriptural warrant (37).

It has been suggested to me, that the Ten avow a sectarian position (33) in these words, "we would seek to maintain fellowship with all believers;" and yet we "consider ourselves as PARTICULARLY *associated* with those who meet as we do:" *i. e.* special membership is owned.

These four propositions seem to me to contain the theory stated above. Of one thing they may be quite sure, and that is, that those who believe it is a question between God and Satan, will neither recognize them any longer, nor those who associate with them; so that they will not be neutral after all.

Now, if words have a meaning, I get here something lower than the church of Rome, England, or any denomination or sect whatsoever . Nay , it is contrasted with all these things, for they spread the veil over their naked points, and make fair avowals. This openly avows *spiritual lawlessness*: and this from the pen of godly men, and with the fair sanction which their past holiness and devotedness gives.

The members and supporters of Romanism, Swedenborgianism, Irvingism, Princism, and of all those systems which have been the expression and hold of *a lying spirit*, have a highway thrown up for them here into Bethesda, as much as Newtonism. The question is not, "Did Bethesda mean to do so?" or "Does she think she has done so?" but simply , "What is the meaning of the

document?" Neither, again, is it the question, "Whose pen wrote the document?" but rather, "Whose energy blinded the minds and eyes of saints, so as that some have produced, and others accepted such a document?" And here, as before, the more honesty is proved in man, the more delusion from Satan also is proved.

In the theory (and as is the theory, so has been, and is the practice), truth and grace are not only separated from the Spirit, and faith, and good conscience; but may be used as the screen and shelter of any lying spirit which comes, of bad faith, and the seared conscience. The theory omits the Holy Ghost altogether, whose presence in the body is the distinctive difference of the church from every other company whatsoever; and shuts out the idea of "a fellowship in Him, or of vital union in Christ"; and it opens the door to all false doctrine, if the holder of it has but effrontery and subtlety enough to deny and baffle his examiners; for, denying the unity of the church of Christ, it sets aside letters commendatory, and the question concerning the company from which he comes, and of which he is still a member; and takes him as a unit upon his own testimonial of himself. "The manifested judgment of the Spirit of God in one gathering of saints is valid for all -- this is here trampled under foot."

To meet ^s in the name of the Lord Jesus, is not enough. If He is the center of unity, the Holy Ghost is the alone energizer in the quickened nature given -- its sustainer. If this is forgotten, of course the Holy Ghost, personally present in the body, must be so also, as it is in so many places; and then there is no safeguard whatever for holiness or grace; and the table becomes that which sinks the soul of the individual into principles and practices of evil, from which, as an individual, he had emerged.

The fellowship of *all believers* in the above extracts is not commensurate with that which follows. *Professor* would have been a better word than *believer*, as conventionally large enough to include known false brethren and heretics. But there is another error here, and it is more pointedly stated afterwards "to treat us as if we had renounced the faith of the Gospel." The fellowship of *all believers* assumes that every believer may be in communion; the excommunicate being "as if we had renounced the faith of the Gospel" puts discipline upon altogether a wrong basis, as if no man could be excommunicated who was a believer: whereas Paul says, "delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." To set aside this is to set aside the clearest token, the most overt one, of God's moral government in the Church on earth. He, God, is with her in her extreme acts of zeal for His name in her courts, when she puts away any; and the God whom she vindicated cheers her hearty love of grace, and vindicates her holy act by restoring the excommunicate in soul. There is here also the neglect of the difference of the Church standing upon earth in its perfectness as a whole, in contrast with the world and what Jude speaks of -- the faithful few in the midst of false profession; while the danger of the framers of it is but too evident. The enemy seeks not to hurl them back into worldliness and fleshliness merely, but into that moral and spiritual corruption described by Jude, out of which we all came: if he succeeds they will build again the things they destroyed, and their last state be worse than their first. I speak of them now as if still retaining their Christianity. Lot's last going to Sodom was his worst.

s. See "The Living God and His Church," in *Present Testimony*.

The distinction between actual and practical union with all saints, and also the difference of holding a position not only open to all, but having a claim upon all, and a position of actual communication with all, seem too much forgotten. I have, as an individual, actual union with all saints who are in the world, for one Spirit sustains and feeds the life given in common to us all; but I know not all even so as to be able to practice communion with them, beyond praying for the (to my mind) undetailed all. Again, scattered and buried in various systems, whose centers are points of difference, and not the one center (viz., the grand common points of agreement), if I take up any position of fellowship at all, it cannot be one of actual communication with all saints, because some are buried in systems which deny the Word and the Spirit, and will not come where they and spiritual holiness are owned; and besides, some, in coming, could not be received, because they would demand the sanction of what God's word and faith and the Spirit would prohibit the surrender of, or would bring evil which he forbids the reception of. Of course, the communion of the brethren, if around the person of the Lord Jesus, is in the Holy Ghost and in the hallowing presence of God, even the Father -- ever separative of all evil, whether of the world, the flesh, or the devil, as that will be found. To attempt a position of actual fellowship with all that have life, now, can only lead either to disappointment, if we be indeed true to God, or to latitudinarianism, if the heart, forgetting God, prefers the notion of brotherhood. And here let me remark, that the fallacy which troubles many upon this subject, is the assumption, made by themselves, that Jude's epistle is not true, and that the Church on earth has not failed; they think the Church is still an unbroken body, standing in the world in contrast with it. The fact is, that amid all the confusion of worldly Christianity and Christian worldliness, saints may be found everywhere and in every system; but witnessing for God will be in those who, ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, cleave to the living God in His present vindication of His competency and wisdom to keep whom He will. That these will have an obedience of faith as to all that was given at the beginning, and no other standard save Scripture, is quite true. It is also true, that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." But serving the living and true God -- that is their clue through the maze which man's wickedness has reared around them. And most surely, if I would take a position in the world of serving the living and true God, and waiting for His Son from heaven, that is possible; and not only is accessible to all saints, but has a claim upon all to come and do likewise.

Instead of all this, the theory proposed presents a system utterly at variance with God's truth as to the Church, utterly incompatible with the present walk of faith.^t

t. What effort did Bethesda make either to retain the godly men it has driven out, or to get them back? One letter (and that was connected, too, with sad shuffling) I saw, which said that some would be glad to receive them back, if they would but consent to "the little" matter of giving me up. As if they had not acted entirely without me. They had been breaking bread apart from Bethesda I know not how long, ere I went to Bristol, and took their course upon matters which I knew nothing about. The powerful presence of the Lord in their room, amid their manifest and felt weakness, has made me since oft find refreshment there.

*Appendix 11:**G. V. Wigram*

George Vicesimus Wigram was given his unusual middle name, which means twentieth, because he was the twentieth child of Sir Robert Wigram and his wife, who had 10 boys and 10 girls.⁸⁹ He was born in Feb. 1803. We have an account of his conversion:

Good instruction as to the contents of the Bible were mine at school, at seventeen, under a John the Baptist ministry; but I never knew the gospel till, at nineteen, I went abroad, full of the animal pleasures of a military life. I and my comrade spent a long and tiring day on the field of Waterloo in June, 1824. Arriving late at night at . . . , I soon went to my bedroom. It struck me, 'I will say my prayers.' It was the habit of childhood, neglected in youth. I knelt down by my bedside; but I found I had forgotten what to say. I looked up as if trying to remember, when suddenly there came on my soul a something I had never known before. It was as if some One, Infinite and Almighty, knowing everything, full of the deepest, tenderest interest in myself, though utterly and entirely abhorring everything in, and connected with me, made known to me that He pitied and loved myself. My eye saw no one; but I knew assuredly that the One whom I knew not, and never had met, had met me for the first time, and made me to know that we were together. There was a light, no sense or faculty my own human nature ever knew; there was a presence of what seemed infinite in greatness -- something altogether of a class that was apart and supreme, and yet at the same time making itself known to me in a way that I as a man could thoroughly feel, and taste, and enjoy. The Light made all light, Himself withal; but it did not destroy, for it was love itself, and I was loved individually by Him. The exquisite tenderness and fullness of that love, the way it appropriated me myself for Him, in whom it all was, while the light from which it was inseparable in Him, discovered to me the contrast I had been to all that was light and love. I wept for a while on my knees, said nothing, then got into bed. The next morning's thought was, 'Get a Bible.' I got one, and it was thenceforward my handbook. My clergyman companion noticed this, and also my entire change of life and thought.

We journeyed on together to Geneva, where there was an active persecution of the faithful going on. He went to Italy and I found my own company -- stayed with those who were suffering for Christ.

I could quite now, after fifty years' trial, adopt to myself these few lines, as descriptive of that night's experience:

Christ, the Father's rest eternal,
 Jesus once looked down on me,
 Called me by my name external,
 And revealed Himself to me.
 With His whisper, light, life giving,
 Glowed in me, the dark and dead;
 Made me live, Himself receiving,
 Who once died for me and bled.⁹⁰

Edward Dennett remarked:

His ministry, like his conversion, was of no ordinary kind. Like the precious

stones on Aaron's breastplate, it sparkled with the varied beauties and glories of the Person of the living, glorified Christ -- Christ as Son of man and Son of God. The Christ of God was his one theme. Whatever might be the Scripture preached from, the truth unfolded was always exhibited as some ray of His glory. This was the feature of his earlier, whatever his larger spiritual apprehensions in after years, as well as of his later ministry. It was, on this account, ministry of the highest kind -- of the highest kind, because it bore the evident stamp of the Holy Spirit, who (said our blessed Lord) "shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14).

Nor can it be forgotten that his life (as those who knew him most intimately testify) equally with his ministry was characterized by the power of the Spirit of God. In one of his addresses he says, "The first impression on my heart when converted was, 'Enoch *walked* with God.' That was my start. 'Now then,' I said, 'I will walk with God.' Beautiful as far as it went; but I very soon found, as Luther said to Melancthon, 'You will find old Melancthon stronger than young Philip.' I came to my wits' end, for I wanted a fund whence to draw so as to live it out." He found that fund; for he goes on to say, "You are unable to live out of resources in yourself -- you must not act as though your life is separate; CHRIST must be the fountain."⁹¹

There are two remarks GVV made which have struck me very deeply:

But for the incarnation of the Son of God, I should be ashamed to be a man.⁹²

... a Man upon the throne of God. Is it possible?⁹³

In 1826 GVV entered Queens College, Oxford, intending to become a Church of England clergyman. There he met J. L. Harris and B. W. Newton of Exeter College. He also met JND and was instrumental in the beginnings at Plymouth. He initiated like meetings in London between 1832-1838. Regarding GVV's role in developing hymn books, A. Roach wrote:

Various hymn books were at first used among them until 1838, at which time G. V. Wigram compiled a book called "Hymns for the Poor of the Flock" (Zech. 11:7). This book had a special arrangement of hymns by category such as "Baptism", "Lord's Day", "Lord's Supper" etc. Mr. Darby makes reference to "The Poor of the Flock", in his letter of October 25, 1879 *Letters of J.N.D.*, Vol. 3, p. 45). It contained many hymns written by the gathered saints as well as others of the Lord's people. Apparently other books were also in use among the gatherings. In 1856 Mr. Wigram was called upon to review the whole matter of hymns. We shall let him tell in his own words what took place:

Upon this let the compiler's private account of his labors be heard. I was asked in 1856 to examine carefully some hymn books which were in common use. To do so was easy; to express my judgment faithfully and yet not invidiously, was difficult. After consideration I determined to give my judgment by this attempt at a book more suited for present need than any I know of. It rests with others to decide how far I have or have not succeeded. I may add that my rules while working were these:

1. Retouch as little as possible, and with as light a hand as possible; --
But
2. Allow to remain (1) no false, no faulty, no defective doctrine -- cost what it might; (2) no dispensational incongruities; (3) no want of keeping in the truth or truths stated; (4) no ambiguities between that which is and that which is not true, And

3. Add as many new hymns as the Lord might enable me. I now leave my labor with the Lord.

G. V. Wigram.

This book was entitled "A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs (selected 1856)". It was published by Groombridge and Sons of Paternoster Row London, England.

In the years just prior to 1881 Mr. J. N. Darby gave his attention to a revision of the 1856 hymn book. He was chiefly concerned about the lack of hymns to the Father. On June 10, 1880, he wrote:

I had been going through the hymns that we have, for a new edition, and the question of hymns to the Father presented itself, and the study of our relationship with the Father was much blessed to me, developing it to my heart. How gracious He is! (*Letters*, Vol. 3, p. 93).

Again in July 1881 he wrote:

Take hymns and see how many you have addressed to the Father , or which continue to have Him and not ourselves for their subject after the first verse, etc." (*Letters*, Vol. 3, pp. 173-174).

He therefore included in the new book these hymns to the Father: #25, 41, 50, 178, 331, and App. #7 and 48.

This edition was completed soon before his going to be with Christ, which took place April 29, 1882. It is known as "A Few Hymns and Some Spiritual Songs for THE LITTLE FLOCK" (Luke 12:32).⁹⁴

Regarding the production of the *Englishman's Greek Concordance* (1839) and the *Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance* (1843), N. Noel remarked:

The plan of these Concordances was determined on, after conference with the Rev. William DeBurgh, who became the chief constructor of this invaluable work, finding the workers for the same; whilst Mr. Wigram, who was a wealthy man, provided the money for the same.

The extraordinary completeness and perfection of detail, was the result of TEN years spent in its revision by the ripest scholars in the United Kingdom; the principal Editor of the Hebrew being Dr. Bialloblotzky; a Polish rabbi of great learning; and the principal Editor of the Greek, was Dr. Tregelles.

Ten thousand pounds were spent in carrying out plans, which, for some defect, were afterwards abandoned; and upwards of FIFTY thousand pounds (approximately \$250,000 [in 1840 dollars]) had been freely bestowed by Mr. Wigram in biblical research, before he found himself in possession of the finished result.

Mr. Wigram, *in a truly humble way*, simply referred to this amount expended on this work as *only passing through his hand*; so truly did he regard himself as *God's Steward* in the matter.⁹⁵

He also was the editor of the magazine, *The Present Testimony* (1849 - 1881). There are 18 vols.; the last three are New Series, the last being dated 1871-1881,⁹⁶ two years after his death on Jan. 1 1, 1879 in London. The *Synopsis* by JND, written in French, was translated by W. Kelly and appeared serially in this magazine.

He also travelled overseas in the Lord's service as indicated in his Letters: West Indies (p. 310), Switzerland (p. 191), Quebec (p. 227, 246), Georgetown (p. 278), Boston (p. 228, 229), France (p. 257), Barbados (p. 237), New York (p. 224), New Zealand (p. 283, 317),⁹⁷ Demarara (p. 258), and Jamaica (p. 266).

I am under the impression that GVW had one child, a daughter. She died of illness, caught nursing brethren in Christ. Hear the man of God, oh my soul, and learn from it:

It has pleased Him, verily, to permit me to be called upon to pay back a loan of His love to me. And the way in which He has wrought has been most merciful and pitiful, saying, as it were, to herself, If you *know* love, in that He laid down His life for you, do thou also lay down thy life for the brethren. This hindered its being an accident, as many call it. "My steps, thy steps" involves, and grows up out of, the privilege of having been made, through grace, one with Himself.

The reality that she is gone before remains, however, and through grace, by the Spirit, I justify Him in every step of the way, and cannot call it hard that He should have permitted her to go on high through nursing the sick.⁹⁸

We are hardly up to the mark as to walking with God down here; walking as the Lord walked.

I see this abundantly in myself as to, and under, the privileged departure of my daughter. The iron may enter into the soul -- and it does in my case, and that of us all in this departure -- but there should be no surprise. For two or three years she has been in work as a nurse, and been exposed in worse forms to that which the Lord was pleased to remove her by. I think she had counted the risks, and this was not the one she deprecated.

Perhaps it is my want of girdedness which makes me feel that others are not girded up, ready to depart at any moment. She and I had a talk, after I had spoken at North Row, on 1 John 3:16, and I found her mind thoroughly made up, at least so far as the theoretic and practical parts of the question.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."⁹⁹

You may both have heard that it has pleased the Lord to call my child to Himself, and to have appointed the nursing of the sick poor, as her chariot of fire. The last Monday in April she went, hoping to save M. C. --, a nursemaid, from being overtaxed in nursing a case of malignant scarlet fever; on Tuesday night she saw she was ill; Wednesday was ailing, but about; Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, ill, and departed at 7.30 that evening. When HE told me, Saturday, 5.30 a. m., "Pray not, for I take her," I said, "Not my will, but thine be done. Only enable thou me to glorify Christ therein, so shall I neither repine nor wish her back." He has been faithful as ever, and His grace perfects itself in weakness. Sorrow is selfish, and makes us turn in on self. I know that, and know *too* who has touched me herein. But not one single thing is displaced in heaven, but the Lord's loan to me, through 39-1/2 years, being moved up there. Till she was gone I had no idea of what she was to saints, and to many of the laboring ones too. She had got quietly into work, and had grown in grace and truth perceptibly to all around her. To me the way of her departure was a great grace, not disease accidentally contracted, but in service, and in one of danger, known danger; but her mind was made up that 1 John 3:16 meant what it did. And, grievously too, the danger on that one occasion seemed nothing compared with the other cases she had met.

But the Lord's mercy is perfect. I have not the will, if I had the power, to alter one item. Thank God, I feel *what* He has done! but surely the Lord Jesus is welcome to the best of what He has given me, to take it back at any moment; and for herself, how much has she gained! I know many of you will sympathize with me¹⁰⁰

A. T. Schofield said GVW was at his wedding and also commented about GVW's brother, Octavius. He wrote:

I soon came over to Ireland again, and we were married in 1871, at Cheltenham, and our wedding was graced by the presence of an old friend of my father's, a very remarkable man. His name was George Vicesimus Wigram, so called because he was the twentieth child of his mother, ten boys and ten girls.¹⁰¹

P. J. Lineham (with Open Brethren) recounts an interesting incident regarding GVW's visit to New Zealand (Jan. 14, 1874 - Jan. 20, 1875, except for a visit to Melbourne in March 1874):

It is said that when Wigram was disembarking from a ship during his visit one of those on board commented how "that man is very like the Lord Jesus" both in his demeanor and actions.¹⁰²

This is the Christian that withstood B. W. Newton and Bethesda, and stood with JND in the controversy over the sufferings of Christ.

Appendix 12:

Henry Craik

HENRY CRAIK'S ATTITUDE AND VIEWS

Introduction. Henry Craik, with G. Muller, a most principal person at Bethesda among the leaders there. He was a gifted and learned man; not that this keeps one from an evil course. We will consider his attitude and principles brought to bear in his conduct regarding the evil of B. W. Newton's teaching. This may help in accounting for Bethesda's unfaithfulness to Christ.

Some of the thoughts of H. Craik were formed by A. N. Groves. Henry Groves, a son of A. N. Groves, and an ardent supporter of Bethesda, has informed us that Henry Craik learned his principles of fellowship from A. N. Groves:

It is interesting to trace the early connection between these men of God, who were subsequently to be united in the flesh, as well as in the Lord, and who were to stand together as helpers in the conflict of 1848, of which we are about to write. Of Mr. Craik it may be well just to observe that he had been between the years 1826 and 1828 in Exeter, under the roof of Mr. Groves, at the time when the mind of the latter was exercised about entering the ministry of the "Church of England," and which he was obliged to give up, as the Lord had revealed to him the real character of Christian ministry, and the true grounds of Christian fellowship. These truths Mr. Groves, feeling deeply the importance of, sought to impress on the minds of those over whom he had influence; so that, as Mr. Craik said to the writer, "it was not at St. Andrew's, it was not at Plymouth, it was at Exeter that the Lord taught me those lessons of dependence on Himself and of catholic fellowship, which I have sought to carry out." On these points Mr. Muller and Mr. Craik were fully in harmony, and which, through upwards of thirty-six years, till the lamented death of the latter, they labored together to maintain.¹⁰⁵

The character of A. N. Groves' principles may be seen in Appendix 2, where, note particularly, he wrote:

I would infinitely rather bear with all their evils than separate from their good.

It is only to be expected that H. Craik would be a palliator of evil and a "neutral."

Henry Craik a Neutral. There are a number of things that bear on Henry Craik's conduct in the Bethesda division. The first is *neutrality* when faithfulness to Christ was called for. On Nov. 15, 1848, he wrote,

But I am too weak to write any longer. Exercise of mind, lying awake at night, the difficulty of maintaining a neutral position, the evil effect of these controversies upon the spirit, render me the object of your sympathy. I would not be implicated in Mr. Newton's errors, nor have I sympathy with his teaching; but I dare not reject those whom Christ has received. The opposing party will give us no rest, because we will not yield to these demands, and refuse to hold fellowship with those who are unable to denounce Mr. Newton. I must conclude.

Pray for us.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

To T. M.

HENRY CRAIK.¹⁰⁴

Henry Craik's Attitude Regarding Evil. Another extract from Henry Craik as quoted by H. Groves (a Bethesda supporter) lays bare his attitude:

According to the light I have, both parties are so far in the wrong that I have no wish to be identified with either. I wait for further light, and my prayer is, 'Hear the right, O Lord.' Should it turn out that Mr. Newton's errors are only those of a rash speculative intellectualist, who is yet sound at heart and seeking to honor Christ, it will be no cause of regret that I have refused to have fellowship with those who have been seeking to crush rather than to recover him; if, on the other hand, it should appear that after all his long course of service he is really an enemy to the cross of Christ, it will be no cause of regret that I have been rather too slow to believe so terrible a charge. Until George Wigram be subjected to discipline, I shall not feel it any cause of sorrow to be standing in separation from a body where such a course is tolerated.¹⁰⁵

How blinded must his supporter be to quote such a piece. Well did F. W. Grant remark:

Now the charge was not as to Newton's state of soul, but his positive teaching. Yet a course of conduct is adopted, and the evil is allowed to spread, and division is accomplished, and why? Just because -- and in full accord, note, with what A. N. Groves taught of "catholic fellowship" -- the leaders of Bethesda have charitable hopes as to Mr. Newton's state of soul. A strange catholicity this, however, when for all the ruin wrought Mr. Craik has NO regret; and why? "Until *George Wigram* be subjected to discipline, I shall not feel it any cause of sorrow to be standing in separation from a body where such a course is tolerated!"

Alas, Newton's errors are slightly dealt with, because of a charitable hope as to his state of soul; but the failure to deal with one no heretic at all, for some supposed bad conduct toward *them*, takes away all the sorrow of the wide separation. And yet this has been cited for its CHARITY!¹⁰⁶

H. Craik learned such unholiness from A. N. Groves, who wrote:

Should we be asked: What is to be done with errors? Are they not a bar to communion? No; unless they bar Christ from the temple of the erring brother's heart. While we hope Christ lingers let us linger, and rather be behind than before to quit, in pitiful remembrance of our own iniquities and unnumbered errors. So long as we judge Christ to be dwelling with a man, that is our warrant for receiving him. . . .¹⁰⁷

H. Craik Did not Regard BWN as a Heretic. H. Craik's comments quoted above would lead us to believe that he did not regard BWN as a heretic.

It would also lead one to believe that persons coming from under BWN's teaching could be received. Indeed, in 1857, G. Rymer wrote to H. Craik and received an answer from H. Craik:

But further, Mr. Craik says in the same letter, that the doctrine is not bad enough to be separated from. I first quote a passage from my letter to him, and then give his reply, *verbatim*. "One who brings not the doctrine of Christ you reject; but,

are not those who receive the heretic partakers of his evil deeds, and to be treated the same as himself?" (2 John 10,1-11.) "Until Mr. Newton retracts his evil doctrines, all who receive him are partakers with him, and to be treated the same as himself." To this Mr. Craik replies: "Supposing we were all satisfied that Mr. N. was one who had renounced the faith of Christ, your remarks would be just: *such persons, and all who follow them, ought to be avoided and set aside from the fellowship of the Church of God.*" But "*I am not aware of any amongst us who would regard him in the light of a heretic, in the sense you use that term.*" Surely this is plain enough. They have not judged it, because none in Bethesda think it heresy bad enough, that "such persons," (those who hold it,) "and all who follow them, should be avoided, and set aside from the fellowship of the Church of God." Mr. Craik allows the force of the passage in 2 John, but denies that the doctrine is so bad as to come under it.¹⁰⁸

Here again we have H. Craik expressing the either/or view of the teacher of evil [in this case heterodox] doctrine. Moreover, he stated that neither he nor as far as he knew, none at Bethesda (including G. Muller) regarded BWN as a heretic. This raises a question: Did H. Craik sympathize with BWN's view of the Lord's humanity?

WAS H. CRAIK SYMPATHETIC TOWARDS B. W. NEWTON'S DOCTRINE?

Interestingly, H. H. Rowdon, a modern supporter of Bethesda, wrote:

There are some grounds for thinking that Craik, in particular, was not wholly unsympathetic to Newton's emphasis on the humanity of Christ.¹⁰⁹

Apparently near the end of Oct. 1848, G. V. Wigram quoted a letter he had received regarding some statements made by H. Craik:

And now, in premising, I must state, beloved brethren, that it was painful to me to be written to from Bristol some months ago.

He (Mr. Craik), said with great warmth the other day, that J. N. D. and his followers made too much of the humanity of the Lord Jesus, and that he believed if the Lord *had not been crucified* he would have lived to be a shrivelled old man, and have died a *natural* death."

It was painful to hear, on coming here, that Mr. Craik had said something like this, that if the Lord had taken arsenic he would have died. It was intensely painful to find it argued by one, that had he fallen into the water he must have been drowned; -- and by another, that had he been stabbed at any time, he would have died, etc., etc.

Great grief it was to find such topics in *discussion* among many in Bethesda; great sorrow to find some puzzled; and great indignation to find some accrediting and vindicating the blasphemy.¹¹⁰

In the following month, on Nov. 15, 1848, H. Craik wrote a letter, evidently meant to be circulated, responding to G. V. Wigram's charges. Here is an important statement that appeared in H. Craik's letter:

2. That the statement relative to my questioning the soundness of M^r Darby and his followers, was made at a church meeting in a moment of excitement. That it was *at the same meeting* confessed as sin before the brethren, and acknowledged as such before God in prayer. I last Monday week appealed to those *present* at

the time the expression was used, whether I had added the words about "shrivelled old man"; and on all sides the answer was " *No.*" Not a creature present heard any such words employed.¹¹¹

To this G. V. Wigram replied:

As to No. 2 in Mr. C.'s letter, I may remark: I did not know there had been confession before brethren, and acknowledgment before God, at that meeting by Mr. C. about what Mr. C. has said as to the unsoundness of Mr. D. and followers; nor do I understand now why or what he confessed; because in this same letter under division five, he again charges some with unsoundness, and has elsewhere. The fact is, he does differ from J. N. D. and myself, and (as I believe) the sound faith which cannot be gainsaid; and therefore we must appear to him unsound.

As to the appeal he made "last Monday week," to those *present at the time*, as to whether he had used the expression "*about shrivelled old man*" *at the time*, does he forget that some sixty or eighty at least have left Bethesda *since that time*. And is it not monstrous to appeal to a mass, four and a half months after a tumultuous meeting (when sixty or eighty have left the assembly, and party spirit is now running high), and then to quote it as having any value whatever? The statement was made to me in two letters: -- I found the report *current* in London, and at Bristol; the report about "shrivelled old man." I asked the party from whom it came, and got it confirmed. But all this is really special pleading; for if Mr. Craik could set aside the having said these words, he cannot deny his having said what is equally bad; that had the Lord taken arsenic he must have died; and he cannot deny the same doctrine stated by himself in his own letter. Neither can he disprove or undo what I found among the poor of Bethesda: the doctrine discussed and held, and attributed to him by the poor of the flock.¹¹²

In the same letter, H. Craik wrote:

Certain brethren seemed to me desirous of making out that the flesh of Christ was substantially different from ours. Hence arose the employment of such illustrations as the other expressions alluded to. What I asserted was, that our blessed Lord, having life in himself, could have prolonged his life for ever if he had so chosen. Secondly, that he could not by any possibility die but as the sacrifice for sin; but that he was so truly human that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body, had he not put forth his power to prevent the natural result.¹¹³

This was the doctrine of B. W. Newton. ^u Concerning H. Craik's comments,

u. I repeat here something in Appendix 6 from B. W. Newton (1850):

What we mean by a mortal body, is a body which (unless the laws of its constitution are miraculously reversed) is capable of retaining its vital union to the soul when subjected to certain circumstances, such for example, as being smitten by the sword, or being deprived of such nutriment as is naturally necessary to its support. Such a body the Son of God was pleased voluntarily to assume, (for He was made like unto His brethren in all things, sin excepted) and He was subject to the laws of that mortal body except as far as the Father or Himself might be pleased to reverse or alter, or modify their operation.

BWN referred to this teaching in his *Acknowledgment*. A. C. Ord remarked:

He adds, "I was right in stating that the Lord Jesus partook of certain consequences of

(continued...)

G. V. Wigram wrote:

... dishonoring to Christ, and destructive of the faith once delivered to the saints. It confounds "humanity" with "the state in which humanity may be;" as if "destroyable by the sword" was part of humanity, instead of being connected with its state.

It supposes that the humanity of the Lord had no perfect relationship to God *per se*, as being of the obedient one; and it overlooks THE grand difference of the state of Christ's humanity from ours; how it was *sui generis*, as being united to Godhead, which no one else's humanity ever was.¹¹⁴

Here the whole doctrine is ten times more objectionably stated than I ever could have said before.

I see no reverence in talking of the physical or chemical properties of the Lord's body

"The Lord having life in himself, COULD *have prolonged* his life for ever, if he had so chosen." I understand its being said, "The Lord having life in himself, *could* have prolonged Paul's life for ever if he had chosen"; because Paul had death in himself, and it required power to counterwork it; but I would not admit it to be said, that, if Adam had not sinned in Eden, God *could* have prolonged his life for ever; not because I doubt of the competency of God to do so, but because the expression implies uncertainty as to whether or not Adam was in the state of being upheld. Clearly he was. God *would* have upheld him; and he had no tendency to die before sin entered. Much less can I admit the expression as applied to our Lord, because he was not only *'abiding'* as sinless, but impeccable; not only had Satan nothing in him (and in *certès* no power of death); but, being Son of God, necessity of death could not enter from either below or around. He took it up, as in obedience to God, in fellowship with his Father's counsels -- His most perfect act of moral glory. Death was Adam the first's penal disgrace from God; it was Adam the second's distinctive act of moral glory.

When Adam was first set in Eden, he had not immortality essentially in himself; for if he had he would have been God, who only hath immortality. He stood in honored relationship to God however, and the continuity of his abiding in life and blessing, hung upon *the unchangeableness of God*, who said, "In the day thou eatest thou shalt surely die." He did eat, and this dishonor of the relationship involved to him the loss of the blessing, moral and circumstantial, and entailed death; so has every man, but One, been since. Was this true of the Lord's humanity? Was his moral state such as was Adam's after the fall? Most surely not. Was he in the circumstantial ruin and wretchedness, *as* one that had forfeited Eden or *his own inheritance*? Most surely not. Was death entailed on him penally as being a man? Most surely not. Death to every other man was the

(...continued)

Adam's sin, of which the being possessed of a mortal body was one." So that the two main branches of false doctrine are adhered to in the only concession he has ever made; and this latter point has formed the subject of a series of tracts published *since* his "Acknowledgment," elaborately attempting to prove not only that our blessed Lord was able to die, but mortal and corruptible, as we are; and as man (in the form He adopts), under the same "necessity of dying."

wages of sin, to him it was the fruit of an obedience which none but himself could render.

The statement reported above to have been made by Mr. Craik, predicates of the Lord's humanity, that his body was in the state of subjection to the same contingencies to which ours in fallen humanity are. This is just what Mr. Craik does likewise elsewhere. If he had taken arsenic, he would have died, "he was so truly human that poison, or the sword piercing his heart, would have destroyed the union between his soul and body" . . . [I intentionally leave out the rest of the sentence, because it is *really* a false light to mislead].

Now what would be the sense of saying this of unfallen Adam in the Garden of Eden, "If he had taken poison, or the sword had pierced his heart, it would have killed him." It would be simply the proof that the person who said it forgot the presence of God there, pledged in *faithfulness to himself* to control all things for his obedient creature. It supposes man, fallen and unfallen, in Eden and out of Eden, in an acceptable relationship and not in an acceptable relationship *at the same time*; and entirely denies the faithfulness of God to Himself in man, innocent and obedient. It looks at man as God in himself; leaves out the all-important question of the Living God's relationship to him being honored or dishonored, and what was dependant thereon. I need not say the results of saying it of the Lord are *worse*. And if you add to Mr. Craik's sentence, as above, the residue of it, "had he not put forth his power to prevent the natural result," you do as bad, or worse. A great deal worse; for , while it seems to suggest a scriptural reason 'why a thing should not be which might have been'; it supposes the Lord was not what He was, under the protective blessing due to his acceptable relationship as a man; and was and was not what He was at the same time. It divides, too, the person of Christ, in a way Scripture never does; and which sickens the godly soul. 1st, it presents his humanity as being, as to relationship, not peculiar to himself alone, but broken like ours; and then, 2ndly , would account for different results by suggesting, that, though his humanity was in itself the same as ours, yet it was not the same as ours, but peculiar to himself alone. Now Godhead in manhood was his and his alone.

The simple truth is, the Spirit of God never leads us in our speculations; and it shows a bad state of soul to be speculating about the person of the Lord -- statements thence flowing are always in part erroneous. . . .¹¹⁵

Concerning H. Craik's letter of Nov. 15, 1848 to T. M., W. Trotter wrote:

The statements made by Mr . H. Craik in his letter to T . M., in answer to G. V. Wigram's Appeal. What he says there of the Lord's humanity, leaves no room for doubt that he does to a great extent sympathize with Mr. N.'s unsound views.¹¹⁶

L. Pilson wrote,

Mr. Code^v also said that when on one occasion he was urging the necessity of removing from communion the lady above referred to, who was an active emissary of Mr. Newton's, that Mr Craik replied to him, in the presence of Mr. Muller and the lady herself, by asking him this awful question -- "If the Lord Jesus had taken poison, would He not have died?" Mr . Code very properly

v. J. M. Code was a brother at Bethesda who objected to proceedings there, but stayed with Bethesda.

answered that he would not trust himself to reply to such a blasphemous and irreverent question. If this question be a little analyzed, it will be seen that it contains the germ of Mr. N.'s false doctrine. But I dare not pursue the thought further.¹¹⁷

J. N. Darby wrote:

I have seen none where integrity has not suffered by having to say to it. Mr. Bewley, urging reconciliation, writes a pamphlet blaming us, and told me Mr. Craik was a decided heretic, and ought to have been put out; and when I said, Why then do you blame me for not going there when he was not put out? I do not blame you at all, he replied, and then goes on to do his best to condemn us.¹¹⁸

Elsewhere JND said,

The fact is that Mr. C. favored the doctrine, and taught in a great measure the same errors.¹¹⁹

In the face of all this, F. F. Bruce made the ludicrous and contemptuous comment:

Darby knew very well that there was nothing heretical in what Craik had written, and is reported to have said that, when he received Wigram's criticisms of Craik, he put them at the back of the fire.^w He must have seen moreover, the docetic direction in which Wigram's arguments tended. But for purposes of ecclesiastical politics Wigram was too useful a henchman to be disowned.¹²⁰

In a letter dated April 7, 1897, T. Weston cited a teaching of BWN that appeared in a then recent edition of a paper of his (pp. 1, 2).

Now I will give just one quotation from Mr. Newton, containing his doctrine as to our blessed Lord's humanity doctrine to which I specially drew Mr. Muller's attention when writing to him (see letter p. 10 appendix) and this is not merely "errors he *once* taught," as Mr. Bennett puts it, but error taught in recent editions -- "His humanity was physically so constituted that the vital conjunction of His soul with His body would, under certain supposed conditions, such as the withdrawal of nutrition or external violence, necessarily cease, unless a miracle was wrought to prevent it." I need not multiply quotations, but I ask Mr. Bennett, Is the teacher who "fully agrees" with this doctrine, leavened with heterodoxy or is he not? A direct reply to this plain question might enable us to understand one another. Mr. Bennett quotes without expressing any dissent, Mr. Muller's words, "Mr. Newton is sound in the faith." This being Mr. Muller's deliberate conviction, is it likely he would refuse fellowship at Bethesda to any for holding Mr. Newton's doctrines? And Mr. Bennett himself, the defender of O. B., [Open Brethren] has not said one word to lead us to suppose that he would hesitate to break bread at or receive from Bethesda.

If H. Craik held similar doctrine to this of BWN, as we have seen above (see also Appendix 6), that would explain his attitude towards BWN and also G. Muller's sanction of BWN's writings. Moreover, we can see why H. Craik, and Bethesda, would not regard BWN as a heretic.

w. [I suggest that what we see here in this preposterous hearsay about JND, and the alleged docetic tendency of G. V. Wigram, is a Newton-tendency in F. F. Bruce. See also Appendix 5.]

W. B. Neatby is himself compromised regarding this teaching. He wrote:

Wigram . . . did not see that Craik was merely stating, in opposition to an incipient Docetism^x the real humanity of the body of Christ, "sent in the likeness of sinful flesh."

The Darbyites (and indeed the Open Brethren are not clear in the matter) should have considered what their position involved. If Christ's body had not the physiological properties of our own, the statement that he died "the death of the Cross" becomes unmeaning. A year or two ago I heard an address from a Brother of the Open section, who actually taught that Christ did not die from crucifixion, but by a mere miraculous act. The good man was certainly not a responsible teacher, nor did I ever know a man of weight to set Holy Scripture on one side with quite so much definiteness and completeness;^y but I have heard much that glanced in the same direction. Newton had a sense of this peril.¹²¹

x. Here he warns of docetism as did BWN and as does F. R. Coad now. See Appendix 5.

y. "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have authority to lay it down and I have authority to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:18). ". . . and having bowed his head, he delivered up his spirit" (John 19:30). Those responsible for Christ's crucifixion were charged by Peter with murder because **Scripture characterizes an act by its tendency**. In reality, it is W. B. Neatby, palliator of B. W. Newton, who here has "set Holy Scripture on one side with quite so much definiteness and completeness."

Appendix 13:

George Muller's Views and Conduct Relative to B. W. Newton

George Muller and Henry Craik were the principal leaders at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, England. G. Muller is best known for his work with orphans at Ashley Down. It is a sorrow that the following course of such a one must be traced, but it is due the truth's sake.

Recall that J. L. Harris had exposed BWN's lectures on Psalm 6. W. B. Neatby wrote:

George Muller was afterwards greatly blamed by the Darbyites for calling Harris' act a "work of darkness."¹²²

Such a reaction on the part of G. Muller was prophetic of his future conduct.

It was only under pressure that G. Muller finally looked into the matter. Here we will trace the effect upon himself that this evidence of want of corporate holiness had upon him personally with respect to BWN and his doctrines. G. Muller's conduct in this period forbode the sequel.

Here is an extract from a letter he sent to J. G. Deck, dated Dec. 12, 1848.

My hope, however, was that poor Mr. Newton might recover himself out of the snare of the devil, as he had confessed the fearful error concerning the federal headship of Adam, and had also withdrawn those two fearfully erroneous tracts for re-consideration. When, however the re-consideration came out, and I found that notwithstanding all the filing and polishing with regard to expressions, this last tract was nothing but a defense of those two former ones, I felt it my duty to change my way of acting, and at full length did I expose, many weeks ago, those fearful errors which touch the very foundations of our holy faith. . . .¹²³

Note well, then, that G. Muller said this concerning a paper BWN wrote *after* BWN's 'retraction'.¹²⁴

In one of the few correct statements in *Why I Abandoned Exclusivism*, H. P. Barker confirmed this (p. 8). See also W. Trotter, *The Origin of (so-called) Open-Brethren*, p. 36, who says the same. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 148, wrote that "Muller later summed up this point of view, by remarking that the teaching implied that Christ Himself needed a Saviour."

Alas for G. Muller's subsequent course. The corroding influence of the teaching, that fellowship with tolerated leaven does not leaven a company of saints, will surely corrupt discernment and judgment as is pathetically illustrated in G. Muller's case, which will now be indicated. After several comments, H. A. Ironside cited an important letter by G. Muller:

Nothing however could now allay the feeling among many of the Exclusives that

there was something radically evil, still unjudged, in the Open fellowship and the most amazing charges were made by utterly misinformed men and circulated as truth. It was even declared that MrMuller maintained frequent intercourse with Mr. Newton and had "all his books in the Bethesda lending library." To this slander Mr. Muller replied as follows:

NEW ORPHAN HOUSE, ASHLEY DOWN,
BRISTOL, AUGUST 23, 1895.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

1. Neither Mr. Newton nor any of his friends have been in fellowship with us since 1848. If the contrary is stated, I ask who and where?

2. I have only seen MrNewton once since 1848, to know of his present state; this was about 10 years since; yet you say I attend his Bible readings. See how false!!

3. You state that Bethesda library contains *all* his books. False. We have no Bethesda lending library. There is a library at the Orphan Houses, for the teachers, a *private* library, in which there are three of Mr. Newton's son prophecy. They are quite sound.

Yours in our Lord,
GEORGE MULLER.¹²⁵

Concerning point one, perhaps G. Muller meant at Bethesda. I cannot say yea or nay to this; but that Open Brethren had Newtonites among them is demonstrable (see below).

Perhaps point two was a false charge.

As to point three, we may take his word for it that Bethesda had no lending library containing all of BWN's books. Note well, however, that he admits to three books on prophecy^z of BWN's at Ashley Down lending library; but he did *not* say that others of BWN's books were not there. Before the reader reprobates my "suspicious mind," let me say that there is a letter of G. Muller's wife, cited below, about BWN's books at Ashley Down, and I have here merely provided a way out for G. Muller concerning the appearance that either he or his wife did not tell the truth about B. W. Newton's books at Ashley Down. T. Weston wrote:

It is felt that it is due to the Lord and to His saints that the knowledge of the following sorrowful facts should no longer be confined to a few, but should be made known to all who, from an honest desire to be loyal to our absent Lord and Master, are really interested in what so nearly concerns His glory. . . .

As a sample of "the testimony of some well acquainted with Bethesda," I will give an extract from a circular sent out by Mr. J. J. Sims of Montreal in 1891. In it he gives a long letter from Mr. D. D. Chrystal, of Bethesda, Bristol, a brother whom all would suppose ought to know the truth about "Open" Brethren, and particularly about Bethesda. He writes:

^z. As was B. W. Newton, G. Muller was a posttribulationist. See his, *The Second Coming of Christ*, Bristol: Bible and Tract Depot; Mrs. Muller, *The Preaching Tours and Missionary Labours of George Muller*, London: Nisbet, pp. 140, 141 (1889). I have not been able to determine where H. Craik stood concerning this.

"As far as I can learn, there is no gathering of 'Open' Brethren in this country at the present time where Newtonian or any other form of heretical doctrine is known to be allowed." Again, "Bethesda is to-day a large and prosperous gathering of believers, and perfectly free from evil doctrine." And he asks: "Would it be possible for Bethesda to have received for so many years so many leavened persons, or those who were 'partakers' of evil doctrine, even in the sense of 2nd John without some trace of the leaven being apparent in her midst?"

Well, let the following facts answer his question; and also show beyond possibility of doubt how more than misleading, to say the least, are all these disavowals of evil.

In the spring of 1882 our brother, Mr. J. Beaumont, whilst preaching in Ryde, was invited by the leading "Open" brother there (Dr. M ---) to his house, where the doctor volunteered the following: -- "We are in trouble in our meeting because of what has recently taken place. One of our brethren, Dr J --- recently invited Mr. Newton to his house, who whilst there gave readings for three weeks. Nearly all in our meeting attended these readings. I, therefore, after the breaking of bread the other Sunday morning, asked the brethren to stay behind, when I rebuked them all for their unfaithfulness to Christ; in consequence of which they have left the meeting, some having gone to church or chapel, and some to Mrs. Peter's meeting, intending to return when I am gone. I am leaving Ryde for London; and I am thankful, as I will be glad to be out of this meeting."

Our brother pointed out that he might as well remain where he was as go to London, for he would be just as much in fellowship with the evil in the one place as the other. To which Dr. M --- replied, "But I believe London will deal with it." Our brother rejoined, "I am no prophet, but I will venture to predict in this case that London never will." And in result so has it proved.

Eleven years rolled past, and in the spring of 1893 our brother was again in Ryde. At the close of one of his lectures, a Mr Morley and his wife, both with "Open" Brethren, came up to him and said: "God has sent you here in answer to prayer. We have been crying to God for the last three months to send a man of God here to put his hand upon Mr. Newton's evil doctrines, which are spreading extensively amongst the people of God in Ryde, and have even found a place in our own meeting, for there are those in it who hold those evil doctrines; and not only so, but we heard them taught." Mrs. Morley had in consequence refused to go any more to that meeting, but Mr. Morley still continues in their fellowship.

This appeal led our brother to make inquiries, and he was much grieved to find that several whom he had known a few years before as sound in the faith, had since imbibed these deadly doctrines. Feeling his responsibility to warn saints of the true character of the evil, our brother announced a public lecture on "Certain Teachings of B. W. Newton, tested and exposed by the Word of God." Towards the close of this lecture, he told his hearers that they were not to suppose that he, and those he was with were the only persons who thought so badly of these doctrines; that there was such a company as "Open" Brethren (so called), who said they repudiated them just as much as he did himself, and would not receive into their fellowship any who were known to hold them, nor would they retain any who were known to have imbibed them. He also reminded them of Mr. Muller, of Bristol, who, he said, would refuse even social intercourse with Mr. Newton, and certainly would not break bread with him, inasmuch as he rejected his teaching on the humanity of our Lord in language as strong as any

could use. This was said by our brother in all good faith, honestly believing that such was indeed the case, and having no idea that Mr. Muller had actually been ensnared, or how fearfully the heaven had spread.

Three days afterwards our brother was asked to tea by a Mr. Douglas Caws, whose wife it appears is an ardent propagator of Mr. Newton's views. Presently Mr. Douglas Caws produced a letter written by Mrs. Muller to Mr. Newton on the very day the lecture above mentioned was delivered. After apologizing for not writing sooner, the letter went on to say: "We have all your books in our lending library, which are extensively read and greatly appreciated. If you have written anything lately, please tell me what it is, and where I can get it. I always greatly enjoy your writings." Mr. Caws asserted that this letter proved that the statements made in the lecture as to Mr. Muller's rejection of Mr. Newton's doctrines were not true, and that our brother was bound publicly to own this. He, however, reminded Mr. Caws that he had said nothing about Mrs. Muller, and that Mr. Muller might not at all approve of the letter. Still Mr. Caws pressed for a public withdrawal, to which our brother at length consented on the condition that Mr. Caws would write to Mr. Muller asking him the following three questions: -- 1. Are you prepared to have social intercourse with Mr. Newton? 2. Are you prepared to break bread with him? 3. Do you believe his teaching as to the humanity of our Lord? Mr. Caws promised before witnesses to do this, but, as it afterwards proved, instead of writing himself, he deputed that duty to his wife.

In what terms Mrs. Caws wrote to Mr. Muller is not known, but she received a letter from him, dated March 30, 1893, in which he says: [I cite the letter more fully from another source, R.A.H.]

In reply to your enquiry I write to say that I *entirely disapprove* of my name being used by Mr. Beaumont, as though I ever was opposed to the teaching of Mr. B. W. Newton in the manner you have described in your letter of March 29th. I consider Mr. Newton's writings to be most sound and scriptural, and my wife and I are in the habit of reading them, not only with the deepest interest, but great profit to our souls. His books are certainly most valuable, for they exalt the person and work of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ to the very utmost.

... if he *honestly* wishes to know what Mr. Newton's views *really* are, let him carefully and attentively read some of his principal writings through, such as *Salvation by Substitution; Atonement and its results; Gospel Truths*, etc., from which he will clearly see not only that Mr. Newton is sound in the faith, but also that his teaching is of a most valuable character.¹²⁶

Well, then, G. Muller must have had a sizable collection of them; and we saw that his wife kept herself informed concerning what BWN was publishing.

So the case is not as favorable to G. Muller as his Aug. 23, 1895 letter, cited by H. A. Ironside, makes it appear.

Well, perhaps G. Muller did not go to a lecture of BWN's. But it certainly would fit the pattern. The charge was repeated in *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:335.

Recall that G. Muller had written the following to J. G. Deck on Dec. 12, 1848 (quoted by T. Weston):

"Bristol, Dec. 12, 1848.

My dear Brother, -- I thank you for the loan of the three letters which I return. I have never written to you on the subject of Mr. N.'s fearful errors on account of the greatest pressure of work; but as your letter calls for it, I just desire to tell you, dear brother, that not only have my eyes been opened long to the fearful errors contained in those two tracts, but I have stated twice before the assembled Church in June and the beginning of July, this my judgment as also before the laboring brethren in the early part of June.

My hope, however, was that poor Mr. N. might recover himself out of the snare of the devil, as he had confessed the fearful error concerning the federal headship of Adam, and had also withdrawn those two fearfully erroneous tracts for reconsideration. When, however, the reconsideration came out, and I found that notwithstanding all the filing and polishing with regard to expressions, this last tract was nothing but a defence of those two former ones, I felt it my duty to change my way of acting, and at full length did I expose, many weeks ago, those fearful errors which touch the very foundations of our holy faith. And since then I have perhaps ten times or more before the assembled Church denounced in the strongest terms these fearful errors, and not only I have done so, but eight or ten leading brethren besides. I only add that Mr. Newton's errors have few more decided opposers than myself, and that Mr. N.'s friends are not a little displeased with me.

T. Weston went on to say:

Alas, so far from Mr. Newton being "recovered out of the snare of the devil," as Mr. Muller had once fondly hoped, it sorrowfully turns out that it is even this aged and honored servant of God who himself has been so far corrupted by the evil as to endorse the writings of Mr. Newton for the last thirty years as sound and Scriptural, though they contain his dreadful doctrines as to our Lord's humanity! Nor ought we to be much surprised, however shocked and grieved, when we call to mind that at the very time when he before the assembled church denounced in "the strongest terms these fearful errors," both he and that assembled church deliberately elected to receive to the closest fellowship those who were known to be nothing less than "partakers of his wicked works," according to the Spirit's Word in the 2nd Epistle of John. . . .

Afterwards Mr. C -- wrote to Mr. B -- a letter dated June 7, 1893, in which he says: "Mr Muller has been written to upon the points you mentioned, and he has replied that he fully agrees with every doctrine taught in Mr. Newton's books, and considers them in strict accordance with the Scriptures." "As to Mr Muller being in fellowship with Mr. Newton, Mr. Muller considers his teaching so valuable that both he and Mrs. Muller have travelled from *Folkestone to Tunbridge Wells* in order to be present at *one Bible Reading of Mr. Newton's*." The italics are Mr C -- 's.¹²⁷

In a letter dated April 7, 1897, pp. 1,2, T. Weston cited a teaching of BWN that appeared in a then recent edition of a paper of his:

Now I will give just one quotation from Mr. Newton, containing his doctrine as to our blessed Lord's humanity doctrine to which I specially drew Mr. Muller's attention when writing to him (see letter p. 10 appendix) and this is not merely "errors he *once* taught," as Mr. Bennett puts it, but error taught in recent editions -- "His humanity was physically so constituted that the vital conjunction of His soul with His body would, under certain supposed conditions, such as the

withdrawal of nutrition or external violence, necessarily cease, unless a miracle was wrought to prevent it." I need not multiply quotations, but I ask MBennett, Is the teacher who "fully agrees" with this doctrine, leavened with heterodoxy or is he not? A direct reply to this plain question might enable us to understand one another. Mr Bennett quotes without expressing any dissent, MMuller's words, "Mr. Newton is sound in the faith." This being Mr . Muller's deliberate conviction, is it likely he would refuse fellowship at Bethesda to any for holding Mr. Newton's doctrines? And Mr Bennett himself, the defender of O. B., [Open Brethren] has not said one word to lead us to suppose that he would hesitate to break bread at or receive from Bethesda.

It is clear that G. Muller, Bethesda, and its followers practiced indifference to the evil of Newtonism. In 1873, J. G. Deck wrote:

I had heard from a brother in England, now with the Lord, that B. W. N.'s "doctrine was a myth, and that no one held it or taught it now;" but shortly after coming to Motueka, a brother, T. M., brought me a volume entitled "Fundamental Truth," in which the false doctrines concerning our blessed Lord were maintained. This had been given him by a Mr. G. lately arrived in Wellington. The brethren in Wellington wrote to me on the subject. He had come among them, without letters of commendation, or acquainting them with his connection with Mr. N.'s party. A correspondence took place with him on their part and mine, which led to his exclusion. I desired to give public warning to all the assemblies in New Zealand, and as I had by me a note written by our brother G. Muller on the subject, written after Mr. N.'s retraction, giving his judgment and public testimony against the doctrines of the most decided and solemn kind, I thought the testimony of such a witness would be more unquestioned by many than if it came from persons who were looked upon as Mr . N.'s personal antagonists. I therefore printed and circulated his testimony , subsequently reprinted in the preface to my "Second Letter." ¹²⁸

The publications of the writer, who was the leader and originator of this solemn controversy, I myself have met with in Auckland, at the Thames, in Invercargill, Wellington, Dunedin, and I doubt not are to be met with all through these colonies, introduced and scattered by the active zeal of his followers and friends. Publications, advocating the loose unscriptural principles which caused the sorrowful divisions connected with the Bethesda question, and the principles themselves, are rife everywhere. ¹²⁹

Charles Stanley (of Rotherham) cited a letter from the son-in-law, and successor to, G. Muller at Ashley Down.

Is it true then, that Bethesda really does now receive from those in fellowship where those minister who teach errors? Certainly not, many will say. C. L., a Christian young man in London, being much perplexed as to this question, wrote to Bristol to inquire at the fountain head. He received the following: --

*New Orphan Houses, Ashley Down,
Bristol: 19th Dec. 1883.*

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your enquiry, the ground on which we receive to the Lord's table is soundness in the faith, and consistency of life of the *individual* believer. We should not refuse to receive one whom we had reason to believe was personally sound in the faith and consistent in life *merely* because he, or she, was in

fellowship with a body of Christians who would allow Mr. Newton to minister among them; just on the same principle that we should not refuse a person *equally sound* in faith and consistent in life simply because he, or she, came from a body of Christians amongst whom the late Mr . J. N. Darby had ministered, though on account of much more *recent* unsound teachings of the *latter*, we might well feel *á priori* greater hesitation.

I am faithfully yours,

Signed. JAMES WRIGHT. ¹³⁰

Note once again indifference to leavened associations coupled with hostility to JND. We see here also that since they receive one coming from under such a heretical teacher as BWN, such a one has an alleged "consistency of life." Such is Bethesdaism. We also see here a pretension not to have had Newtonites among them. The facts are quite otherwise.

Appendix 14:

*The Open Brethren View
of Leaven Leavening the Lump*

Do ye not know that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, according as ye are unleavened (1 Cor. 5:6,7).

J. N. Darby wrote:

. . . the principal brethren in a so-called neutral meeting signed a printed circular affirming that, if an assembly should admit fornication knowingly and willingly, we ought none the less to acknowledge that assembly and to receive letters of recommendation from it. We judged that, if an assembly (not taken by surprise, which may happen everywhere, or through carelessness, of which we are all capable, but) knowingly and willingly admits sin or blasphemy, it is not a new lump; that in order to be a new lump it must pur ge itself from the old leaven (1 Cor. 5:7); and that in so doing the other members proved themselves pure in this matter (2 Cor. 7:11): otherwise they would not have been so. This is the principle in question. Several went farther , maintaining that in no case does blasphemy or any kind of doctrine call for discipline.¹³¹

Another wrote:

Can any saint doubt that, if the Corinthians had disobeyed the apostolic command, they must have become a leavened lump? For the church to bind up evil with the Lord's name by glossing it over is to judge itself no longer fit to be called God's church: holy discipline is the indispensable condition of its recognizable status and title. For God is not mocked.

Evil doctrine is yet worse and more dangerous to others; it lowers Christ or His work [and pretends that God is the author of it]. So we read in Gal. that their adding a Jewish element is vehemently rejected and designated as "leaven," no less than immorality. What can be more unspiritual (not to say faithless) than to treat it now with more indulgence?¹³²

Concerning the standing of the saints before God, they are unleavened. This is expressed as, "according as ye are unleavened." That is positional truth. Christians are to conduct themselves according to the position they have before God. In Christ, I am unleavened. In practice, in conduct, I am to answer to that position and be unleavened in practice. The Apostle stated that when he wrote, "That ye may be a new lump, according as ye are unleavened." The saints were told to maintain a new lump character (in their practice, obviously), according as they were unleavened -- in accordance with their position in Christ.

In order to maintain a new lump character in practice, they must purge the leaven out of the assembly. They could not have new lump character if they did not remove the leaven. If they did not remove the leaven they would no longer have the new lump character. They would then have an old lump character -- by tolerating "the old leaven." They would not be unleavened because by

tolerating leaven in the lump, the lump is no longer an unleavened lump. What, then, is it, if it is not an unleavened lump? It is a leavened lump.

1. We see, then, that in 1 Cor .5, **the presence of tolerated leaven characterizes the state of the assembly as leavened.** The assembly has by that lost the new lump character. Those breaking bread with the leaven express, in practice, that they are one with the wicked person (1 Cor. 10:16). Thus they are leavened by indifference to the honor of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words of A. C. Ord (written in a conversational style) are much to the issue:

A. But we meet in the name of Christ.

B. Or, rather in the name of Christians; for your principle of association is your estimate of a man's Christianity, not Christ himself, and the truth of His person, what is worthy of Him and suitable to His presence. Thus you lower down your unity to whatever Christians are capable of, instead of bringing them up to what accords with His name and glory.¹³³

2. The Scripture used to set this aside is Matt. 13:33. W. Hoste seeks to make the Lord Jesus the author of the unholiness that an assembly cannot be leavened until all in it personally imbibe the evil practice or evil doctrine:

Where the leaven is allowed to work unjudged, the whole must sooner or later become leavened, that is, each member will become knowingly inoculated with the evil, be it doctrinal or moral. Our Lord in Matt 13:33 sets His seal on this exegesis by saying, "till the whole was leavened."¹³⁴

That is quite a misuse of Matt 13:33. Matt. 13:33 has to do with the corruption of doctrine in Christendom, as some Open Brethren correctly point out,¹³⁵ not with the status of an assembly, which changes as soon as evil is tolerated. Matt. 13:33 does not set aside the fact that in 1 Cor. 5 the character of a lump is changed by tolerating leaven in it. Of course it will spread, but that does not change the fact that the character of the lump is changed before everyone in the assembly personally engages in the evil practice. But this is the Open Brethren position, that the lump is not a leavened lump until all practice the evil.

It is quite clear on the very surface of Paul's words that failure to purge out the old leaven would change the character of the assembly. In fact, and in practice, they would be a leavened lump. The tolerance of known leaven changes the character of an assembly. The presence of tolerated leaven characterizes the assembly as a leavened lump -- i. e., even before the leaven has worked its way throughout. The character of the assembly is changed by the presence of tolerated leaven. It is a responsibility-escaping perversion of the Apostle's statements to say that leaven leavening the lump only means that tolerated leaven will spread so as to cause others to commit the same evil. It is true that tolerating leaven will also do that; but Paul tells us that the character of the lump is changed. No leavened person is permitted at the Lord's table. And those in fellowship with the leaven are part of a leavened lump; and thus, as being leavened by evil fellowship, they also have no place at the Lord's table.

Please keep in mind that I have cited numerous Open Brethren throughout this book who say that the presence of known leaven in an assembly does not

leaven the assembly. Therefore, if we consult expositions of 1 Corinthians written by Open Brethren, we would expect that there will not be comments on 1 Cor. 5 saying that if a wicked person is tolerated in an assembly, that assembly is leavened. Of course, that is exactly the case, which we shall now see.

In chapter 9.10, I quoted from R. E. Harlow for his testimony to the kenoticism among Open Brethren, which I am sure grieves him. But he will not admit that tolerated leaven changes the assembly into a leavened assembly. In his exposition of 1 Cor., he wrote:

Sin will spread, 5:6-8

Why was it important for the assembly to put this man out? Because evil is likely to spread through the whole assembly. A younger Christian sees another who is not punished for committing sin, so he thinks he can do it too. In this way sinful habits will soon spread to others.¹³⁶

The reason it is important to put the leaven out is threefold, and in this moral order:

1. If the Lord Jesus Christ is present (Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor 5:4) in the assembly, the presence of leaven is a grave dishonor to Him (1 Cor . 5:7, 8), and is incompatible with His presence.
2. The character of the assembly is changed into a leavened lump, and each person is leavened by the fellowship with leaven. Breaking bread with such shows communion with them (1 Cor. 16:16, 17).
3. Moreover, it is unloving to treat the sinning one with tolerance. The discipline is meant for his restoration (2 Cor. 2).

And after that we may also think about how evil doctrine, or the commission of evil acts, spreads from one person to another in the assembly. But note that the indifference, in itself, partakes of the character of what it tolerates. Those who tolerate its presence become leavened, and this evil indifference spreads to other assemblies when these leavened persons are received.

R. E. Harlow's view on when a lump becomes leavened (i. e., not until everyone in the assembly is personally imbibing) is a consistent expression of the Bethesda heritage and position. J. S. Oliphant, who left the Bethesda position, quoted William Yapp (Open Brethren), publisher, writer, inventor of Yapp bindings for Bibles, and an ardent supporter of Bethesda:

In a tract published by Mr. Yapp, entitled "The Church of God According to Scripture," I find the following statement:

"Meetings of believers cannot be defiled by the allowance of false teaching in them."¹³⁷

I find a specimen of these unsound views in a tract on the Scripture Doctrine of the Local Church, . . .

"They cannot be leavened with the sin which they have not committed, or with the doctrine they have not received."¹³⁸

From another tract, entitled, "A Drop of Oil on Troubled Waters, or Remarks on the Fellowship and Mutual Responsibility of the Churches of the New Testament," I take the following extract:

"That no individual in any church was held responsible for evil existing in it, either doctrinal or practical, simply because he was one of the worshippers."

Thus we have *assembly responsibility* and *assembly defilement* entirely denied.¹³⁹

Not only did well-known persons propagate such things in support of Bethesda at the time, but assemblies issued statements.¹⁴⁰

The well-known W. E. Vine wrote:

... there is a certain stress on "little": if a small amount of leaven spreads through the whole lump, how much more must this gross evil of tolerated fornication affect the assembly! To be indifferent is to incur to some extent the responsibility for the evil. Moreover such an attitude debases the normal standard, and the evil effect spreads surely and rapidly.¹⁴¹

What do the words, "incur to some extent," mean? Corinth was fully, totally responsible. It is a characteristic, Open Brethren attempt to blunt responsibility. For example, on May 6, 1959 I wrote to Edwin Fesche (a travelling preacher among Open Brethren) concerning 2 John 9-11 and he replied by saying that "they become a partial partaker of his evil deeds." Where did the word "partial" come from?

Let us see what William MacDonald says in his commentary on the N. T.:

The apostle is saying that if they tolerate a little moral sin in the church, it will soon grow and expand until the whole fellowship is seriously affected. Righteous, godly discipline is necessary in order to maintain the character of the church.

5:7 Thus they are commanded **to purge out the old leaven**. In other words, they should take stern action against evil so that they might be a **new**, in the sense of a pure **lump**. Then Paul adds: **Since you truly are unleavened**. God sees them in Christ as holy, righteous and pure. Now the apostle is saying that their state should correspond with their standing. As *to position* they were unleavened. Now as to their *practice* they should also be unleavened.¹⁴²

It appears to me that he has been influenced by "exclusivism," but he has held back from declaring that an assembly that tolerates evil is *ipso facto* leavened, each one being leavened. To declare *that* is to abandon the true Open Brethren position that fellowship with leaven leavens a person/assembly, and shows that their system of reception is unholiness. Instead, he explains that "it will soon grow and expand until the whole fellowship is seriously affected." So, if one or two evil doers are tolerated, the "fellowship" is not "seriously affected." Toleration of evil (leaven) is thus (to him) tolerable "until" later. Nor does he define "seriously affected" as *leavened*.

J. Hunter says something somewhat similar:

The whole assembly was defiled and polluted by this unjudged moral evil, and if left unjudged others would soon take advantage of such moral laxity. The evil did not attach to the man alone who was guilty of it. The assembly was only seen to be clean when the evil was judged.¹⁴³

Certainly such an assembly that would not purge out leaven would be unclean. That is not the issue. It would also be leavened, and therefore none should break bread there or receive any coming from there who did not judge this leavened

fellowship and break with it.

John Heading wrote:

But given time, a little leaven could leaven the whole lump, and one sin could affect the whole company before long.¹⁴⁴

"Before long" denies that the toleration of leaven leavens an assembly, rather postponing into the indefinite future what he does not want to acknowledge. "Given time" and "could" are expressions that deny the *now* of the leavened condition.

Interestingly, J. M. Davies wrote:

If their life and practice was to correspond with this [the unleavened position in Christ], they would have to purge themselves of the "old leaven." Only thereby would they become a new lump.¹⁴⁵

He did not tell the reader what they would be if they did not. Back a ways in time, the well-known J. R. Caldwell surveyed the Scripture use of leaven as a type and figure, and said it should be put out. As to our subject, he wrote:

Not that those in contact with it become necessarily guilty of the same evil actions, but their moral tone is lowered, and failing to abhor and to judge it their conscience becomes defiled.¹⁴⁶

Saying that "their conscience becomes defiled" avoids affirming that the evil action they become guilty of is complicity with the leaven and that they are leavened. Some Open Brethren have used the word defiled, even of the assembly, as we have seen, but not in the sense of being leavened, as "exclusives" have used the word. Do not be deceived by this. What we are seeing is a studious avoidance of declaring that an assembly that tolerates evil is, in fact, leavened, even though such words as "defiled and polluted" are used. Recall what J. S. Oliphant quoted from William Yapp:

In a tract published by Mr. Yapp, entitled "The Church of God According to Scripture," I find the following statement:

"Meetings of believers cannot be defiled by the allowance of false teaching in them."¹⁴⁷

W. Hoste said:

. . . we totally reject the collateral theory of defilement . . .¹⁴⁸

But why continue on? The Open Brethren position is clear. It is how it began with Bethesda in 1848 and has necessarily characterized them ever since. The meaning is that an assembly of, say, 1000 persons cannot be leavened until person # 1000 personally commits the evil; or, in the case of evil doctrine, until person # 1000 imbibes the evil doctrine which the other 999 have imbibed. If those numbers are too large for you, try # 100 and the other 99. Bring it down to # 10 and the other 9. Or, think about an assembly of 3 persons and 2 are fornicators; or, one where 1 is a known fornicator and 2 are not. Not only does the unholy theory state that such an assembly is not leavened; besides that, the one who is not a fornicator is, allegedly, living a consistent Christian life though breaking bread with known wicked persons!

Those that rejected Bethesda were called "exclusives." Why? because they

rejected the wicked persons and rejected the persons in fellowship with those wicked persons. J. G. Bellett said:

We are now called "Exclusives." If this title belongs to us, it belongs to the apostle who tells us to act upon the principle which has given us the title.¹⁴⁹

I could not refuse to say that such principles of Church action as this would make any place a defiled place, in Levitical language, leprosy would be detected by the priest to be in the house.¹⁵⁰

J. N. Darby wrote:

My experience of the opposite system in the [United] States in all shapes has made me firmer than ever in the path of what is called exclusiveness -- exclusion of false doctrine and false practice, in contrast with protecting and excusing it.¹⁵¹

W. Kelly was not ashamed to be known as an "exclusive" either:

Only let the writer beware of being influenced by the imaginary difficulties of *ad infinitum* contact with evil,¹⁵² which speculative minds urge to destroy conscientious action. No sober mind but rejects a theoretical association extending through endless ecclesiastical receptions and ramifications. If he believes we are right in refusing a sound man who cleaves to and justifies an unsound or wicked association, he surrenders the principle of "Open Brethren," and is bound to act accordingly. The more devoted the saints may be individually, the worse is their sanction of what is unholy. The writer endorses this himself, which is really the principle, and defines the position, of so-called Exclusive Brethren.¹⁵³

After J. G. Deck was recovered, he wrote:

That, by His grace, I desire to bear the reproach cast on every side on those brethren that are called "Exclusives," because they desire to exclude all that is inconsistent with the glory of Christ and the unity of the Spirit, and to walk "with those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart."¹⁵⁴

Allow me to warn those who now shun the word "exclusive" and substitute the word "guarded fellowship." The word "guarded" is a standard-lowering word and is indicative of a shift that has been taking place. And in what direction, think you? I close with the warning of the recovered J. G. Deck:

. . . in a work of Satan *neutrality*^{aa} is impossible; and that if there is an attempt to shun the responsibilities and sorrows of a path of entire decision for Christ, the spiritual senses become deadened, the heart hardened, the conscience torpid, the judgment perverted, and soon even hostility to the witnesses against the evil succeeds indifference to the truth.¹⁵⁵

aa. Henry Craik, one of the two most principle leaders at Bethesda (along with George Muller) was a **neutral**. Here is what he wrote on Nov. 15, 1848:

But I am too weak to write any longer. Exercise of mind, lying awake at night, the difficulty of maintaining a **neutral** position . . . (letter quoted in full in G. V. Wigram, *An Answer of G. V. Wigram to "Mr. H. Craik's Letter, Dated 15 November 1848*, p. 7).

Notes for the Appendicies

1. See, for example, D. J. Beattie, *Brethren, the Story of a Great Recovery*, pp. 6,7; E. H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church*, p. 350; G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 124; W. Hoste, "Rejudging the Question," p. 15; H. H. Rowdon, *The Origin of the Brethren*, p. 40; W. B. Neatby, *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 7; F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 20. The above were with Open Brethren. C. E. Bass, *Backgrounds of Dispensationalism*, p. 66, wrote, "This memorable suggestion seems to have laid the foundation of Brethrenism. The chief members of the group were Groves, Bellett, Francis Hutchinson, and Edward Cronin." -- and cites Mrs. Groves for his authority. Note how A. N. Groves has been substituted for J. N. Darby.

We can see from this how easy it is to manufacture history.

2. *Family Matters*, p. 10.

3. W. Kelly's Annotations to W. B. Neatby's *History of the Brethren*, p. 12.

4. *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

5. G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 107, directed attention to the *Christian Witness*, 1837 (really, 1834, first ed.), p. 306, where we read, ". . . a credible profession of faith in the Lamb, and a consistent conversation is all we have a right to require. . . ." Rather than the looseness he desires to find, I see a guard in the words "consistent conversation." (My table of contents has B. W. N. [Newton] written alongside the title of the article.) Recall JND's letter to Plymouth in 1832:

My heart is with you, dear brethren, while you walk in order, and therefore was your letter such a comfort (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:10).

6. Some fundamentalists are presently discussing this question under the name "secondary separation."

7. Cited by G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 112. The letter is found in the *Memoirs* . . . , pp. 538-543. It is cited in full by E. K. Groves, *Bethesda Family Matters*, Appendix.

8. *One Lord, One Faith*, p. 221.

9. *The Torch of the Testimony*, p. 227.

10. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 122.

11. *The Harvester*, May 1968, p. 78.

12. *Op. cit.*, p. 64.

13. *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 112. H. H. Rowdon thinks JND issued his pamphlet "Separation from Evil God's Principle of Unity" (*Collected Writings*, vol. 1) in answer to A. N. Groves' "prophetic letter" (*The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 292). F. R. Coad is not sure if JND issued it first and A. N. Groves replied, or *vice versa* (*A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 122). R. Nelson stated that it was issued during Oct. 1846 ("Protest Against the Proceedings of Mr. John N. Darby," p. 3). W. Kelly stated concerning it, ". . . a tract written by Mr. Darby in view of the Evangelical Alliance" ("God's Principle of Unity," p. 21, new ed.) Whether written in 1836 or 1846, A. N. Groves would have strongly disapproved, which, as a matter of fact, he did, (*Memoir* . . . , p. 483). W. Kelly continued,

But if separation from evil be the only principle on which the unity of a holy God can be conceived to be carried out in an evil world, and if He has sent down the Holy Ghost to be the efficient agent of it, uniting us to Christ on high, I need not occupy myself with your next error, the imputing of "sad consequences" to a holy principle. It is false that the maintenance of unity according to holiness "leads to separation between true brethren." It does suppose the judgment, in the power of the Spirit and

by the Word, of those who sin; but this is a blessed, not a sad, consequence, and the direct command of God. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." Separation from evil is here most unquestionably laid down as God's principle of unity: and in holiness is that unity to be guarded practically at any cost. Otherwise all degenerates into the mystery of iniquity, and a form of godliness denying the power. "From such," says the Spirit of God, "turn away."

14. W. Kelly, *God's Principle of Unity*, p. 22.
15. Cited in N. Noel, *Op. Cit.*, 1:371, 372.
16. *Memoir . . .*, p. 534.
17. *Memoir . . .*, pp. 534, 535 (Appendix D). These sentiments are approved by G. H. Lang, *Anthony Norris Groves*, p. 122.
18. *Memoirs . . .*, p. 287.
19. *Memoir of Lord Congleton*, p. 92.
20. F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, pp. 119,120.
21. This is the false claim that A. N. Groves was "the founder of the movement."
22. *Brethren, the Story of a Great Recovery*, p. 10.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 21.
24. Eventually as infidelity made increasing inroads among the denominations, reception was more restricted by those called "exclusives" because they refused those coming from leavened communions. This was just the issue in 1848.
25. *The Bible Treasury* 16:367. Read the whole article.
26. *Darbyism . . .*, pp. 26,27.
27. *Anthony Norris Groves*, pp. 13,14.
28. *The Origins of the Brethren*, p. 121; cp. p. 292.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
30. *Memoirs . . .*, p. 506.
31. *Fry MS*, p. 377.
32. *Letter to a Friend, Concerning a Tract Recently Published at Cork*, p. 17 (1850 and 1863).
33. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 152, emphasis mine.
34. The numbers after the following citations from B. W. Newton refer to the *Fry MS*:
 Afterwards he wrote a tract at my request. The very first he wrote -- at Plymouth at least -- on prophetic subjects; and it is exactly what Newman or any Romanist would write. I can carefully say I have never read a line [of his writing] which a Papist might not use (p. 250).
 . . . Mr. Darby. None so subtle as he and none so ingenious. These doctrines he said were "Extra Scripture" and we as believers possessed of the Spirit are "Not under the Bible" (p. 248).
 I often think he was in the employ of Jesuits . . . (p. 249).
 I don't know at all that he was not a Romanist (p. 249).
 Just then Darby made his appearance at Oxford (sent by Rome, possibly, to watch this Evangelical movement) (p. 139).

Nor did he ever see clearly the doctrine of Irving. He wrote a pamphlet in which he used and adopted the very words that Irving had used saying that Christ had sin in the flesh of course meaning His own flesh. Darby tried to answer that error and upon the very same ground, namely that Christ could not sin in the flesh, *but allowing that which Irving taught* (p. 237).

That doctrine of a Secret Coming is as an Angel of Light, yet it destroys the Bible from beginning to end. It destroys it under the guise of Love to Jesus. It is desolating and subversive of everything in Scripture. While I say this, I quite recognize that there are many who have not gone into the depths of Satan: -- that fact requires very careful attention" (p. 238).

It is likely that futurist posttribulationism was propagated in America through the writings of B. W. Newton. The same spirit as his is often found in posttribulationists; and in other antidispenationalists also.

F. R. Coad, *A History of the Brethren Movement*, sec. ed., 1976, speaks of B. W. Newton as a "shockingly ill-used man" (p. 153, note). He speaks of "the incubus of Darbyite ecclesiology" (p. 167). That is a key statement to understanding Mr. Coad.

As to JND personally, F. R. Coad says -- "he was arrogant" (p. 112); "used disingenuous tactics" (p. 143); "descended to the disreputable" (p. 145). Much of this applies to the controversy with Newton where JND was "dangerously unbalanced" (p. 141); used "semantic and doctrinal juggling" (p. 150). He was -- "more ruthless" than B. W. Newton (p. 146); and is guilty of a "long and viciously worded attack" (p. 149). On p. 162 he says of JND, "Psychologically, he was obviously abnormal: but so have been many geniuses," while, interestingly, on p. 113 he says "Yet, small as were his powers of self-analysis, Darby's personal counseling had about it something of those deeper insights into human nature which characterize the psycho-analysts." And what think you about "Darby's was a mind impossible to bring to objective debate" (p. 136)? I suggest that F. R. Coad has not helped at all to understanding JND, but he has helped us to understand F. R. Coad.

W. Kelly said of JND:

The late Mr. Darby was as highly educated as he was an extremely able man, of rare attainments in almost all branches of knowledge, of pre-eminent logical power, of moral and metaphysical analysts hard to match . . . his ablest critique the examination of *Newton's Thoughts on the Apocalypse* (W. Kelly, Letter dated Feb. 22, 1901).

35. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 160; here he is defending H. Craik's statements as "perfectly orthodox"!

37. "The Humanity of Jesus Christ," *The Journal of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship*, #24, p. 5, Sept. 1973.

38. In Forward to G. H. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future*.

39. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 148.

40. *The Origins of the Brethren*, pp. 263, 264. He cites H. Craik, *Pastoral Letters*, pp. 92-95.

41. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 210.

42. Letter CBA 7181 (28) in the Christian Brethren's Archive.

43. *Collected Writings* 10:135.

44. *Collected Writings* 10:44, 47, 135, 136; 14:249; and *Letters* 3:352; also the *Bible Treasury* 4:224.

45. *Five Letters* . . . , p. 30.

46. *Five Letters* . . . , pp. 29, 30.

47. *Salvation by Substitution*, p. 16.

48. *Collected Writings* 15:125. See *Miscellaneous Writings* 5:216.
49. *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .?*, pp. 28-30.
50. *Ancient Truths* . . . , p. 8.
51. *Ancient Truths* . . . , p. 8.
52. T. Weston, *Letter* of April 7, 1897.
53. *Ancient Truths* . . . , pp. 10, 11.
54. *Letter to a Friend, Concerning a Tract Recently Published at Cork* , pp. 4,5.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
56. "So with Bellet [sic]. -- He wrote on this subject; and quite in the Docetae heresy" *Fry MS*, p. 377.
57. *The Son of God*, Kilmarnock: Ritchie, pp. 33-36, 1945 reprint.
58. *The Journal of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship* # 24, "The Humanity of Jesus Christ," p. 7.
59. What is proper to "exclusivism" is that leaven is excluded from fellowship, whether a person is guilty of moral evil (1 Cor. 5:6) or doctrinal evil (Gal. 5:9). These scriptures, among others, show that fellowship with leaven leavens a company -- all in it. To receive to the breaking of bread (which expresses fellowship with those breaking bread (1 Cor. 10:16-18) someone from a leavened fellowship, is the receiving of leaven, thus becoming an accomplice to it. This is indifference to Christ and holiness. (This is presently being discussed by fundamentalists under the name "secondary separation." See, for example, Ernest Pickering, *Biblical Separation* . . . , pp. 217-225.) If the leaven cannot be purged out, one must purge himself out (2 Tim. 2:19-22). I have called attention to this in order to indicate the important factors that form attitudes regarding evil.
60. *God's Principle of Unity*, p. 22. See also *The Bible Treasury* 15:224; 14:270.
61. *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism*, pp. 10, 11.
62. *The Bethesda Question* . . . , p. 7.
63. See J. G. Deck, *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck of New Zealand* . . . , p. 12.
64. In Forward to G. H. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future* .
65. *A History of the Brethren Movement* , p. 148.
66. *Why I Abandoned Exclusivism*, p. 8. You can see what such a view of the matter contributed to his judgment.
67. *Bethesda Family Matters*, p. 180.
68. *The Exclusive Brethren* . . . , p. 36.
69. *Departure*, pp. 7, 8; see also pp. 11, 117.
70. *The Sin of Sectarianism*, p. 94. So G. H. Lang, *The Local Assembly*, p. 8.
71. G. H. Lang, *The Local Assembly*, p. 59.
72. *A Brief History of the Brethren*, p. 26.
73. *The Pilgrim Church*, p. 382.
74. *A History of the Brethren Movement*, second ed., p. 150, note.
75. *Fry MS*, p. 375.

76. *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, p. 5.

77. *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, p. 7.

78. H. A. Ironside, *A Historical Sketch of the Brethren Movement*, p. 31.

79. G. H. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, p. 25. This slander is also found in an article by G. H. Fromow in *The Evangelical Quarterly*, 1954, p. 150. G. H. Lang (Open Brethren) repeated it: *Departure*, p. 11. This conversation was repeated in *Perilous Times*, April, 1917, and again in *Watching and Waiting*, in July, 1950.

80. *Scriptural Truth About the Lord's Return*, New York: Revell, 1922, p. 144.

81. "The Niagara Bible Conference and American Fundamentalism Part IV," *Central Bible Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 3, Fall 1977, p. 55, note 214.

82. L. D. Pettegrew pointed out another Cameron story, this one regarding the pretribulationist, J. H. Brookes, editor of *The Truth*:

Cameron related in *The Watchword and Truth* that in a visit with Dr. Brookes in 1895, Brookes told Cameron that Cameron's article on posttribulationism was "absolutely unanswerable." Brookes was also supposed to have said:

The apostles did not expect the Lord to come in their day, but can't you leave me the hope after all these years have passed away, that I may live to see my Lord come, and escape the clutches of that awful enemy, death? (Robert Cameron, "To the Friends of Prophetic Truth," *Watchword and Truth*, XXIV (1902), p. 302.

This story greatly upset some pretribulationists, not the least, Gaebelein and C. I. Scofield, and Gaebelein says that "there was not a word of truth in it." (Arno C. Gaebelein, *The History of the Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: "Our Hope" Publications, n.d.), pp. 42-43).

In defense of Brookes' continued pretribulationism, Gaebelein points out several people including Mrs. Brookes, who testified that James Brookes was a pretribulationist up to the time of his death. (The accuracy of Cameron's story is hurt by the fact that he occasionally twisted history to fit his position. An obvious example of this is his statement that James Inglis was a posttribulationist. He says that sometime after he became a posttribulationist, he found in Inglis' writings in *Waymarks in the Wilderness* "very clear and strong teaching to the same effect." (Cameron, "To the Friends of Prophetic Truth," p. 135.) Inglis, however, was clearly a pretribulationist. (See further, Sandeen, *Roots of Fundamentalism*, p. 100.) Also, one of Brookes' last articles in *The Truth*, published in early 1897, the year of his death, is entitled, "Who Shall Be Caught Up?" In the article, Brookes says:

It is equally impossible to accept the teaching of many other excellent brethren, that the church . . . must pass through the great tribulation, or that there is no perceptible difference between the coming of the Lord for His saints, and His appearing with them. (James Brookes, "Who Shall Be Caught Up?" *The Truth*, XXIII (1897), p. 265.)

Whatever the truth be of Cameron's story about his 1895 article, Brookes was most certainly a pretribulationist right up to the time of his death.

Why say "Whatever the truth be of Cameron's story. . ."? This calumnious and distorting posttribulationist seems to have not much regard for facts. Of C. I. Scofield he wrote:

In a marginal note upon the seventh chapter of Daniel, and the eighteenth, twenty-second, twenty-fifth and, twenty-seventh verses, Dr. Scofield says, "That these are church saints seems clear from Acts 16:27 and other references.

What is written in the marginal note in the Scofield Reference Bible (1917 ed.) actually is this:

a vs. 18, 22, 25, 27. That church saints will also share in the rule seems clear from Acts 16:17; Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:10-12; 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4-6.

83. *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism* , p. 86.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
85. *Less than Conquerors: How Evangelicals Entered the Twentieth Century* , p. 95.
86. *The Truth* 20:204 (1894).
87. *The Scripture Testimony*, edited by Charles Campbell, Philadelphia: Repository of Scripture Testimony.
88. *Collected Writings* 15:42, 43. F. R. Coad prefers to believe that "Newton's teaching . . . arose from his doctrine of the incarnation rather than from any eschatological views." *A History of the Brethren Movement*, p. 162 (second ed.). But perhaps JND was wiser than F. R. Coad. See also *Letters of J. N. Darby* 3:238, 240 (1844).
89. A. T. Schofield, MD, *Behind the Brass Plate*, London: Sampson Low, 1922, p. 59.
90. Preface to *Memorials of the Ministry of G.V. Wigram*, vol. 1, p. vi.
91. *Ibid.*, p. v.
92. *Ibid.*, vol. 3, *Letters*, p. 258.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 320.
94. *The Little Flock Hymn Book -- Its History and Hymnwriters*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, pp. 2,3.
95. N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:58,59.
96. These dates are printed in the last bound vol., New Series 3 (that I possess).
97. For an account of this visit from an Open Brethren perspective, see P.J. Lineham, *There We Found Brethren*, pp. 52, 53. See also N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:392 and also references to JND's visit to New Zealand.
98. *Memorials of the Ministry of G.V. Wigram*, vol. 3, *Letters*, Fifth ed., p. 254.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 343.
100. *Ibid.*, pp. 255, 256. His wife had died in Sept. 1867. See pp. 229, 230 and 334-336 concerning this.
101. *Behind the Brass Plate*, London: Sampson, Low, Marston and Co., 1922, p. 59.
102. *There We Found Brethren*, p. 52, "Told by Harold St. John, *Treasury*, 37, 53 (1935).
103. *Darbyism*, pp. 25,26. See also, "A Sketch of the Late Mr. Henry Craik of Bristol," *Footsteps of Truth* 3:433 (1885).
104. The entire letter is cited in G. V. Wigram, *an Answer of G. V. Wigram to Mr. Craik's Letter Dated 15th Nov., 1848*, p. 7.
105. *Darbyism*, p. 46.
106. *A Statement for Examination as to Fellowship with (so-called) Open Brethren* , pp. 13, 14.
107. *Memoir*, p. 534.
108. *Another Appeal*, pp. 5, 6 (1860).
109. *The Origins of the Brethren*, pp. 263, 264, referring to H. Craik, *Pastoral Letters*, 1848, pp. 92-95.
110. *An Appeal to Saints that Remain Still in Bethesda and Salem, as to Certain Bad Doctrine* , p.8.

111. H. Craik's letter (to T. M.) is cited in full in G. V. Wigram, *An Answer of G. V. Wigram to Mr. H. Craik's Letter*, dated Nov. 15, 1848.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

114. *An Answer of G. V. Wigram to "Mr. H. Craik's Letter Dated 15th November, 1848*, Notice page. Concerning "*sui generis*," see *Collected Writings* 15:147, 149.

115. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.

116. *The Origin of (so-called) Open Brethren*, p. 46. See also N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:389, 390 as well as 359-361.

117. *A Vindication of Separation . . .*, p. 39.

118. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:224, 225 (1873).

119. The reference has escaped me.

120. *The Journal of the Christian Brethren Research Fellowship*, # 24, "The Humanity of Jesus Christ," p. 8 (1973).

121. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, pp. 167, 168.

122. *A History of the Plymouth Brethren*, p. 130. See N. Noel, *A History of the Brethren* 1:166, note, 238.

123. Quoted in J. G. Deck, *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck of New Zealand . . .*, p. 7. See also N. Noel, *the History of the Brethren* 1:151.

124. J. N. Darby wrote,

Mr. N. was maintaining a doctrine of which Mr. Muller himself said that if it were true, Christ would have needed to be saved as much as we did (*Letters of J. N. Darby* 1:200).

125. *A Historical Sketch of the Brethren Movement*, pp. 169,170.

126. This letter by G. Muller is taken from *Perilous Times or Wayside Notes for "Strangers and Pilgrims,"* May 1909, p. 194. The rest of the quotation is from T. Weston, *How the Leaven Has Wrought*, pp. 1-3.

127. T. Weston, *How the Leaven Has Wrought*, pp. 1-3. My copy of this paper says that Mr. C. is Douglas Caws. The letter by G. Muller is also quoted in N. Noel, *The History of the Brethren* 1:151.

128. *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, of New Zealand. . .*, p. 12.

129. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

130. *An Allegory: Things Supposed to Illustrate Things That Are*, p. 4, available from Present Truth Publishers.

131. *The Bible Treasury* 9:64.

132. *The Bible Treasury* 18:80.

133. *Is There not a Cause?*, p. 28.

134. *The Witness* 60:61 (1930). J. R. Caldwell used Matt. 13:33 for the same purpose (*The Northern Witness* 12:155 (1882)).

135. Concerning Matt 13:33, John Heading wrote:

For Christ as the Bread of life is the food of His people. Unfortunately, throughout the ages [the doctrine of] His holy Person has been adulterated by the woman with leaven;

these abominable insinuations have spread throughout Christendom . . . (*What the Bible Teaches, Matthew*, Kilmarnock: Ritchie, p. 195 (1984).

Thomas Newberry wrote:

Thus it is that the woman introduces the leaven into the meal, and thus not only are souls corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, but the whole system of revealed truth has been vitiated by her (*The Parables of the Lord Jesus Christ Analyzed and Explained*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, p. 42, n. d.).

136. *1 Corinthians: The Imperfect Church*, Scarborough: Everyday Publications, p. 41 (1982).

137. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship*, London: Morrish, p. 21.

138. *Ibid.*, p. 69; and etc.

139. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship . . .*, p. 23.

140. Recall that The Letter of the Ten, signed by ten principle persons at Bethesda, and approved by the vast majority of the assembly by their standing up to approve it, said:

For supposing the author of the tracts were fundamentally heretical, this would not warrant us in rejecting those who came from under his teaching, until we were satisfied that they had understood and imbibed views essentially subversive of foundation truth

Various congregations took the same position as Bethesda regarding leaven leavening the lump. For example, the Scarborough Statement (Jan. 26, 1849) said:

We do not think it right to exclude Christians from communion because they happen to belong to a gathering in which there are persons of unsound opinion; but we think that every Christian ought, in any case requiring examination, to stand or fall by his own personal innocence, or his own personal offense.

The Tottenham Statement (Mar. 4, 1849) stated:

We distinctly refuse to be parties to any exclusion of those who, we are satisfied, are believers -- except on grounds personally applying to their individual faith and conduct.

That is, the "faith" and conduct that breaks bread with, say, known fornicators is an acceptable faith and conduct.

The Torquay Statement (Oct. 28, 1849) reads:

We cannot *refuse* to receive any person except on *individual* grounds, that is, on grounds that reflect on that person's *individual* faith or walk.

So the faith and walk of one who breaks bread with known fornicators, or known teachers of evil doctrine, is regarded as a satisfactory Christian faith and walk.

141. *First Corinthians*, London: Oliphants, p. 74 (1951).

142. *Believer's Bible Commentary, New Testament*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, p. 576 (1990).

143. *What the Bible Teaches*, vol. 4, *1 Corinthians*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, p. 58 (1986).

144. *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, p. 85 (1965).

145. *Letters to the Corinthians*, Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, p. 46 (1982).

146. *The Charter of the Church*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, vol. 1, p. 148, n. d.

147. *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship*, London: Morrish, p. 21.

148. *Rejudging the Question*, p. 21.

149. *The Bible Treasury* 16:304.

150. *A Letter as to "Bethesda,"* Sept. 18, 1849.

151. *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:225.

152. [To document one of many cases, let us hear J. R. Caldwell on 2 John 9-11:

Therefore say they [the "exclusives"], You must treat the one who greets him exactly as you would treat the evil person himself; and, further, you must treat the one who greets HIM in like manner *ad infinitum!* (*Exclusivism*, p. 10).

The talk about *ad infinitum* springs from unholy notions that tolerate fellowship with leaven. It also springs from refusal to acknowledge the church as one. See *Letters of J. N. Darby* 2:219, 224.]

153. *The Bible Treasury* 12:143.

154. *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, of New Zealand . . .*, p. 11 (1873).

155. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Bibliography

B. W. Newton and Plymouth

Besides the papers and books listed below, there are references in the Bibliography in volume one under "General" that are relevant. Also, dates in brackets [] appear to me to be the original date of publication.

- *A Letter to a Brother in Christ on Liberty of Ministry*, Plymouth: Campbell, n. d. [1846?].
- *Remonstrance and Protest Addressed to the Saints at Rawstorne Street, London, Respecting Their Late Act of Excluding Mr. Newton from the Lord's Table*, Plymouth: T ract Depot, [1847].
- "Review: Propositions for the Solemn Considerations of Christians . . .", *Quarterly Journal of Prophecy*, vol. 17, pp. 77-79, (1865).
- Allan, J., "The Kingdom, the Power and the Glory," *The Harvester*, Sept. 1987, pp. 1, 2.
- Batten, J. E., *A Letter to the Saints Meeting In Ebrington St., Plymouth*, London: Blatchley, Dec. 1847.
- Batten, J. E., *Newtonism. Ravenism*, n. d.
- Bellett, J. G., *The Son of God*, Kilmarnock: Ritchie, 1945 reprint.
- Bible Treasury* 14:171,172, 1883. See also *The Bible Treasury* 14:171, 172, and *The Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:224.
- Campbell, A. T. C., *To the Saints Meeting for Worship in Ebrington Street*, n. d. (2 pages [1845]).
- Campbell, A. T. C., *To the Saints Meeting for Worship in Ebrington Street*, Jan. 1, 1846.
- Cole, W. H., *Reminiscences of the Plymouth Meeting of Brethren*, April, 1902.
- Congleton, Lord, *Reasons for Leaving Rawstorne-Street Meeting, London . . .*, London: Ryles, Feb. 27, 1847.
- Correspondence Regarding Mr. Newton's Refusal to Appear . . . at Rawstorne St.*, Plymouth: Campbell, 1846.
- Cox, Jr., John, *A Refutation of Certain Charges Made by the Brethren*, n. d.
- Cox, Jr., John, "Brethrenism," *The Rainbow*, Jan. 1, 1876, pp. 40, 41.
- Cox, Jr., John, "Brethrenism" (letters on), *The Rainbow*, Jan. 1, 1867.
- Darby, J. N., "Account of the Proceedings at Rawstorne St. . .," *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby* 20:81-166.
- Darby, J. N., "An Examination of . . . 'Thoughts on the Apocalypse' by B. W. N., . . .," *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby* 8:1-320.
- Darby, J. N., "Answer to 'A Second Letter . . .,'" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 8:344-377.
- Darby, J. N., "Answer to a 'Letter to the Brethren . . . in Ebrington St.,'" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 8:321-343.
- Darby, J. N., "Letter on the Confession of Error By Some," *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby* 20:198-202.
- Darby, J. N., "Remarks on 'A Letter on Subjects Connected With the Lord's Humanity,'" *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby* 15:134-161.
- Darby, J. N., "Letter of Acknowledgement as to Plymouth," *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby*

20:203,204.

Darby, J. N., "Letter to the Saints Meeting in Ebrington St. . . ." *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:73-80.

Darby, J. N., "Letter to the Rev. Mr. Guers" *Collected Writings of J.N. Darby* 15:172-189, (1853).

Darby, J. N., "Narrative of the Facts" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:1-72, (1846).

Darby, J. N., "Notice of the Statement and Acknowledgement of Error" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 15:117-125.

Darby, J. N., "Observations on 'A Statement from Christians in Ebrington St.,'" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 15:126-133.

Darby, J. N., "Observations on . . . 'Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord . . .,'" 15:34-96, 162,163.

Darby, J. N., "A Plain Statement . . . on the Sufferings of Our Blessed Lord" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 15:97-116 [1847].

Darby, J. N., "Remarks on Three Tracts Entitled 'Signs of the Coming of the Lord: for Whom are They Given?'" *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 11:1-23.

Darby, J. N., "Summary of the Meetings in London, Feb., 1847, *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:178-188.

Darby, J. N., "Two Letters as to Plymouth," *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:189-194.

Darby, J. N., "What Investigation Has there Been at Plymouth?," *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:167-177.

Darby, J. N., On B. W. Newton, see *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 4:173-175; 7:145, 163, 174, 221; 20:195; 31:290,307; 33:21.

Darby, J. N., See *Letters of J.N. Darby* under "Plymouth."

Davies, C. M., "Mr. Newton at Bayswater," *Unorthodox London*, London: Tinsley Brothers, third edition, pp. 183-191, (1875).

Deck, J. G., *Confession of a Verbal Error in a Hymn*, London: London: Bateman, [1850?].

Deck, J. G., *Observations on the Doctrine of Notes of Lectures on Psalms 23, 31, 37, Concerning the Sufferings of Christ: to Brethren and Sisters in Christ, Meeting in Ebrington Street, Plymouth, and Elsewhere*, London: Campbell, 1847.

Fromow, G. H., "Benjamin Wills Newton and His Message for Today, *Evangelical Quarterly*, 1954, pp. 147-153.

Fromow, G. H., *Teachers of the Faith and the Future: B. W. Newton & S. P. Tregelles*, London: Sovereign Grace, n. d.

Harris, J. L., *The Sufferings of Christ as set forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI. Considered by J. L. Harris*, London: Campbell, July, 1847.

Johnson, R. C., *The Point At Issue; or, Observations on "Remarks by J. N. Darby" . . .* Plymouth: Thomas, Dec. 15, 1848.

N., B. W., "On the Book of Daniel," *The Investigator*, 1833-4, vol. 3, pp. 286-292 (1833-4).

N., B. W., "The Times of Restitution -- Acts 3:19-21," *The Investigator*, vol. 2, pp. 53-55 (1832-1833).

N., B. W., "The Future Siege of Jerusalem," *The Investigator*, vol. 3, pp. 45-49 (1833).

Newton, B. W., *A Defense in Reply to the Personal Accusations of Mr . Darby*, included in, *Correspondance, Etc., Relating to Mr . Newton's Refusal to Appear Before the Saints at Rawstorne Street, London*.

Newton, B. W., *A Second Letter to the Brethren and Sisters in Christ Meeting for Communion"*

- London: Campbell, n. d.
- Newton, B. W., *A Statement and Acknowledgement Respecting Certain Doctrinal Errors*, Nov. 26, 1847.
- Newton, B. W., *Ancient Truths Respecting the Deity and True Humanity of the Lord Jesus*" second edition, 1893, [1857].
- Newton, B. W., *Answers to the Questions Considered at a Meeting Held in Plymouth*, Plymouth: Tract Depot," second edition, 1847, [1834 originally].
- Newton, B. W., *Brief Statements in the Form of Answers to Questions*, July 11, 1848.
- Newton, B. W., *Christ, Our Suffering Surety*, London: Houlston, 1858.
- Newton, B. W., *Five Letters on Events Predicted in Scripture as Antecedent to the Coming of the Lord*, London: Houlston, third edition, 1877. This is a reprint of the second ed. 1847, and the indications are that the first edition is to be regarded as the 1840 manuscript form of the five letters.
- Newton, B. W., *How B. W. Newton Learned Prophetic Truth*, London: Sovereign Grace, n. d.
- Newton, B. W., *A Letter to a Friend Concerning a Tract Recently Published at Cork*, London: Houlston, Aug. 1850.
- Newton, B. W., *Notes on the Doctrines of Mr. Irving*, London: Houlston, (1866) in *Occasional Papers*, App. 4, pp. 188-195.
- Newton, B. W., *Observations on a Tract Entitled "The Sufferings of Christ as set forth in a Lecture on Psalm VI Considered,"* London: Campbell, 1847.
- Newton, B. W., *On the Imputation Of Adam's Sin and Christ's Righteousness*, London: Houlston, 1871 in *Thoughts on Scriptural Subjects* , pp. 226-258.
- Newton, B. W., *Prophetic Psalms in Their Relation to Israel* , second edition, 1900, [1858].
- Newton, B. W., *Propositions for the Solemn Consideration of Christians* , fifth edition, n. d., [1864].
- Newton, B. W. ., *Remarks on the Sufferings of the Lord Jesus. A Letter Addressed to Certain Brethren & Sisters in Christ*, London: Campbell, July, 1847.
- Newton, B. W., *Remarks on Mr. Trotter's Pamphlet*, 1850.
- Newton, B. W., *Salvation by Substitution* , London: Collins, 1909, third ed., [1866]
- Newton, B. W., *Statement and Acknowledgement Respecting Certain . . . Errors*.
- Newton, B. W., *The Second Advent . . . not Secret but in Manifested Glory*, London: Houlston (1891).
- Newton, B. W., *The O. T. Saints not to be Excluded from the Church in Glory*, London: Houlston (1877).
- Newton, B. W., *The Wreck and the Rock* [1843].
- Newton, B. W., *Thoughts on the Christian and Jewish Remnants at the Time of the End*, London: Houlston, (1866).
- Newton, B. W., *Thoughts on the Apocalypse* , London: Houlston, second edition, (1853).
- Newton, B. W., *Thoughts on the Apocalypse* , London: Hamilton, Adams, first. edition (1844).
- Newtonianism, *The Bible Treasury* 15:224; see also 6:205, 238, 254, 255; 11:299; 14:171, 172, 269; New Series 2:12; 5:253, 254, 335.
- Pettegrew, L. D. "The Niagara Bible Conference and American Fundamentalism," *Central Bible Quarterly*, Fall and Winter, 1977.
- Quarterly Journal of Prophecy* review of B. W. Newton, *Propositions for the Solemn Consideration of Christians*, vol. 17, pp. 77-79, 1865.
- Rowdon, H. H., editor, *Vox Evangelica*, 1983.

Soltau, H. W., *Remonstrance and Protest [to] Rawstorne Street, London . . .*, Plymouth: Campbell, Dec. 25, 1846.

Soltau, H. W. *Transcript of an Account of what Passed at Plymouth, re Mr. Newton*, 1866.

Tregelles, S. P., *Five Letters to the Editor of "The Record," on Recent Denials of Our Lord's Vicarious Life*, 1910, sec. ed.

Trotter, W., *What Are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines as to the Human Nature & Relationships of the Lord Jesus Christ?*, London: Nisbit, 1850.

Bethesda

Besides the papers and books listed below, there are references in the Bibliography in volume one under "General" that are relevant.

- , "A Few Words on 'Things New and Old,' A Leaflet," 1890, *Bible Treasury* 18:32.
- , "Mr. A. N. Groves' Memoir," *Bible Treasury* 13:362.
- , "Open," "Exclusivism," *Bible Treasury* 13:361.
- , *A Dialogue Concerning Unity*, London: Worthiemer, third edition, n. d.
- , *An Astonishing Attack on Church Discipline*, San Mateo: Bible and Tract Depot, n. d.
- , *Bethesda Handbook, For the use of those in Fellowship* (1900).
- , *Christian Unity: Contrasted With its Counterfeits*, London: Yapp, n. d.
- , *Darbyite Discipline or a Buoy Fixed by a Friendly Hand . . .*, Dublin: Robertson (1865).
- , *Fellowship Among Saints*, Belfast: Adair, n. d.
- , *In Defence of the Truth*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, n. d.
- , *Notices of Meetings, &c., 1890*.
- , *Profession and Practice*, London, n. d.
- , *Prove all Things*, n. d.
- , *Terms of Christian Fellowship*, n. d.
- , *The Bethesda Question*, London: Morrish, n. d.
- , *The Four False Christs of Exclusivism*, London: Guest, second edition, n. d.
- , *What Are the Facts? An Affectionate Appeal to "The Brethren,"* London: Hawkins, n. d.
- , *Where Am I, and Why Am I There?*, Oak Park: Bible truth Publishers (1857 reprint).
- Bateman, J. B., *On the Divisions in the Church of God Recently Made . . .*, (1849).
- Bath Statement, Aug 6, 1849*.
- Batten, J. E., *A Letter to the Saints Meeting in Ebrington St. Plymouth*, London: Blatchly (1847/1905).
- Beacon, R., "Remarks on a 'Prophetic Letter,'" [re A. N. Groves], *Bible Treasury* 16:366-368.
- Bellet, J. G., *A Letter as to "Bethesda," Sept. 18, 1849*.
- Bellet, J. G., "A Letter on Neutrality as to Christ . . .," *Bible Treasury* 15:25-28.
- Bennet, W. H., "The Mutual Relation of Assemblies," *The Witness*, vol. ??, pp.177- 181.
- Bennet, W. H., *A Return to God and His Word: . . .*, [on W. B. Neatby's History], Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Bergin, G. F., et.al., *A Statement of the Position of Bethesda, 1906*, Bristol: Wright (1906).
- Boardman, W., *Darbyism*, Kingsland: Gurney, n. d.

- Booth, A. E., *Association With Evil: Does it Defile?*, Erie: Erie Bible Truth Depot, n. d.
- Burton, A. H., *What is Exclusivism?*, London: James Carter, n. d.
- C. [Code?], J. M., *Remarks on Mr. Newton's Doctrine on the Sufferings of Christ*, Cork: Purcell (1850).
- Caldwell, J. R., *Exclusivism*, Glasgow: The Publishing Office, 1882.
- Caldwell, J. R., *Leaven*, London: Shaw 1870.
- Caldwell, J. R., *The Gathering and Receiving of the Children of God -- Revised*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Cole, W. H., *Terms of Christian Fellowship . . .*, London: Horner, second edition, n. d.
- Congleton, Lord, *The Bath Case; or, Who made Division at Bath?*, Brighton, 1849.
- Congleton, Lord, *The Bristol Case; and Divisions in Other Places . . .*, June 30, 1849.
- Cox, Jr., John, *An Earnest Expostulation*, London: Houlston, May, 1869.
- Craik, H., et.al, *Letter of the Ten*, Glasgow: Scott & Allan (1866 reprint).
- Crain, C., *The Principles of Bethesda*, Philadelphia: Tract Depot, n. d.
- Crawley, H. C., *A Plea for Unity*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, (1909).
- Darby, J. N., and Bethesda, *Bible Treasury*, New Series 5:368.
- Darby, J. N., "Indifference to Christ: or Bethesdaism," *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 20:205-208.
- Darby, J. N., see *Letters of J. N. Darby* under "Bethesda."
- Darby, J. N., "The Bethesda Circular," *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 15:164-167.
- Darby, J. N., the question with Bethesda, *Collected Writings of J. N. Darby* 7:145; 15:168; 20:300; 33:21.
- Davies, E. T., *Bethesda Church, Great George Street, Bristol*, Bristol: Bible and Tract Depot (1917).
- Deck, J. G., *A Dialogue Concerning Unity*, London: Wertheimer, third edition (Jan. 1850).
- Deck, J. G., *Copy of a Letter from J. G. Deck, Of New Zealand . . .*, Bristol: Fryer (1873).
- Deck, J. G., *Letter on Receiving or Rejecting Brethren . . .*, London: Campbell (1850).
- Deck, J. G., *Two Letters from New Zealand . . .*, Belleville, (Jan. 1879).
- Deck, J. G., *A Second Letter on Receiving and Rejecting Brethren . . .*, London: Holborn (Feb. 16, 1852).
- Deck, S. J., *Discipline and Position of the Churches of God . . .*, Dunedin, (1871).
- Dorman, W. H., *A Review of Certain Evils and Questions . . .*, London: Campbell, second edition, (1849).
- Dorman, W. H., *Then and Now* (July 1916). [Not the Dorman of the 1866 controversy.]
- E., W., *A Letter to a Friend on the Difference Between Exclusive & Open Brethren*, Birmingham: Walthers, n. d.
- Elliot, R., *Some Plain Words to Brethren*, n. d.
- Elliot, R., *To the Law and to the Testimony: a Word to "Open" Brethren*, n. d.
- Fereday, W. W., *Fellowship in Closing Days*, n. d.
- G., *The Exclusive Brethren: Their Origin and Discipline*, London: Macintosh, n. d.
- Grant, F. W., *A Letter by F. W. Grant . . . to a Brother in Kansas, 1896*.
- Grant, F. W., *A Statement for Examination as to Fellowship with Open Brethren*, New York: The Bible Truth Press, n. d.

- Grant, F. W., *Independency*, Los Angeles: Grant Publishing House, n. d.
- Grant, F. W., *What is the Present Position of so-called "Open Brethren"?*, New York: Loizeaux (March, 1888)
- Greenman, B. C., *Exclusive Principles*, Eire: Eire Bible Truth Publishers, n. d.
- Greenman, B. C., *God's Principles, Are they Ours?*, n. d.
- Groves, A. N., *A Prophetic Letter . . . to J. N. Darby*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis (1836/1887).
- Groves, A. N., *Catholic Christianity and Party Communion*, London: Morgan and Chase, n. d.
- Groves, A.N., *The Tottenham Case; With an Introduction*, (1849).
- Groves, E. K., *Conversations on Bethesda Family Matters*, London: Horner, n. d.
- Groves, Henry., *Memoir of Lord Congleton*, London: Wheeler, n. d.
- Groves, Henry, *Darbyism: Its Rise Progress and Development . . .*, London: Hawkins, third edition, n. d.
- H., R., *To G. V. W. [Wigram]*, (1864/1865).
- Hall, P. F., *Unity: A Fragment and a Dialogue*, London: Campbell (1851).
- Heath, H., *Christian Fellowship not Exclusive . . .*, London: Edwins, (June. 1866).
- Howard, J. E., *A Caution Against the Darbyites . . .*, London: Stevenson (1866).
- Hunter, W. H., *Gathering and Receiving of the Children of God. A Review*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, n. d.
- Jennings, F. C., *Defilement and Wickedness: Are They Equivalent?*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Jukes, A., *A Second Letter to the Gathering . . . at Leeds and Otley, Nov. 27, 1848.*
- Jukes, A., *To the Gathering . . . at Leeds and Otley, Nov. 14, 1848.*
- Kelly, W., *The Doctrine of Christ and Bethesdaism*, London: Weston, new edition (1906).
- Knapp, C., *Practical Conduct Towards Open Brethren or Independency, by J. N. D.* (March 1933).
- Knapp, C., *The Bethesda Statement of 1906 and Subsequent Events* (May 1933).
- M., G. F, *Fidelity or Neutrality*, Glasgow: Walker, n. d.
- Mackintosh, C. H., "Fifteenth Letter to a Friend," *Things New and Old*, vol. 18 (1875).
- Mackintosh, C. H., *The Bethesda Question . . .*, n. d.
- Maunsell, T., "What Was I That I Could Withstand God?" *Acts 11:17*, Hereford, W. Yapp (1852).
- Marshall, A. "Holding Fast The Faithful Word" or *Whither are We Drifting?.*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Mauger, E. G., *Correspondence Printed for Private Distribution only to those Interested*, (June 12, 1912).
- McCullum, A., *Fellowship: Its Sighing and Rejoicing* (May 26, 1895).
- McMurdo, R., *The Church of God in Testimony*, Toronto: Haynes, n. d.
- Murdoch, *Life Among the Close Brethren*, London: Hodder and Stroughton (1899), reprinted from *The British Weekly*.
- Nelson, R., *Appeal & Warning to . . . Who are in Mr. J. N. D.'s Connexion*, Bristol: Wright (1874).
- Nelson, R., *Protest Against the Proceedings of Mr. John N. Darby*, Tunbridge Wells: Y app (Feb. 24, 1852).
- Nelson, R., *To certain Brethren . . . Who Have Been Excommunicating . . .*, (Aug. 28, 1849).

- Nelson, R., *To My Brothers & Sisters . . . Meeting in Albion Street* (Feb. 1861).
- Newberry, Thomas, *The Loose Ground of Gathering . . .*, London: Morrish, second edition (1863).
- Oikonomos, *The Good Way*, n. d.
- Oliphant, J. S., *A Letter on Bethesda Fellowship . . .*, London: Morrish, second edition, n. d.
- Oliphant, J. S., *A Letter on the Principles of Gathering & Christian Fellowship*, London: Morrish, revised (Oct. 1894).
- Oliphant, J. S., *Bethesda Fellowship, 1907*, London: Morrish.
- Oliphant, J. S., *The Bethesda Fellowship, 1865*.
- Ord, A. C., *Is There Not a Cause?" . . .*, London: Morrish, n. d.
- P., J. B., *A Few Remarks . . .*, London: Morrish (Nov. 22, 1861).
- P., W. L., *A Review of Remarks in the Bible Treasury on The Call of 1905*, n. d.
- Palmer, W. L., *An Open Letter to a Brother Beloved on Removing Existing Stumbling Blocks*, second edition, n. d.
- Penstone, J. J., *Caution to the Readers of "A Caution Against the Darbyites,"* London: Morrish, n.d.
- Philadelphos, *The Basis of Peace . . .*, n. d.
- Pilson, L., *A Vindication of the Separation from Plymouth & Bethesda . . .*, Dublin: Wright (1868).
- Rickard, W., *Bethesda in 1892*, (Nov. 19, 1892).
- Ruse, T., *An Open Letter Respecting a Pamphlet "The Local Assembly,"* n. d.
- Rymer, G., *Another Appeal to the Brethren Meeting in Bar St. Scarborough*, London: Morrish (Aug. 6, 1860).
- Scarborough Statement, Jan. 26, 1849*.
- Shaw, W., *Fellowship Among Saints*, Belfast, n. d.
- Short, A. R., *The Principles of Open-Brethren*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis (1913).
- Short, E. R., *The Story of "Bristol Bethesda" 1832- 1932*, n. d.
- Smith, H., *Open Brethren, Their Origin Principles and Practices* (1948).
- Smith, H., *The Facts Restated* (1930).
- Soltau, H. W., *"The Brethren." Who are They? What are Their Doctrines?*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Stanley, C., *An Allegory: Things Supposed to Illustrate Things that Are*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, n. d.
- Stewart, A., *The Fellowship of the Saints of God*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis (1877).
- Stewart, G. J., *Hindrances to Fellowship . . .*, Melbourne: Seelenmeyer (1880).
- Stoney, J. B., *Exclusiveness: Its Ground and History*, Kingston-on-Thames, Stow Hill, n. d.
- Taunton Statement, April 15, 1849*.
- Torquay Statement (Christian Fellowship, or, the Statement, etc., Torquay, , Oct. 28, 1849.*
- Tottenham Statement, March 4, 1849.*
- Tregelles, S. P., *Five Letters . . . on Recent Denials of Our Lord's Vicarious Life*, second edition, (1910/1863).
- Tregelles, S. P., *Three Letters to the Author of "A Retrospect of Events . . ."* London: Houlston, sec. edition, (1894/1849).

- Trotter, W., *Bethesda in September 1857 . . .*, London: Morrish, n. d.
- Trotter, W., *The Whole case of Plymouth and Bethesda*, London: Morrish (1877/1849).
- Trotter, W., *What are Mr. Newton's Present Doctrines . . .*, London: Nisbet, (1850).
- Veitch, T. S., *The Story of the Brethren Movement*, London: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Vindex, *Shibboleth, or, the New Test of Communion . . .*, London: Houlston, n. d.
- Von Poseck, J. A., "Open Brethrenism," *Bible Treasury* 14:64.
- W., *A Word on the Fellowship of Saints . . .*, Nelson, N. Z. (Sept. 24, 1874).
- W., T. R., *Bethesda's Principles of Christian Fellowship . . .*, n. d.
- Weston, T., *A letter* (April 7, 1897).
- Weston, T., *How the Leaven Has Wrought* (Aug. 1894).
- Weston, T., *Bethesda's Principles of Christian Fellowship . . .*," Bristol: Haddrell, n. d.
- Weston, T., *To the Brethren in the Lord Whom it Concerns*, n. d.
- Wigram, G. V., "The Disciple and the Assembly: A Letter to Mr . J. G. Deck," 1874, *Bible Treasury* 10:123-127.
- Wigram, G. V., *A Letter to Mr. J. G. Deck from G. V. W.*, London: Broom (1874).
- Wigram, G. V., *An Appeal to Saints that Remain Still in Bethesda & Salem . . .*, London: Campbell (1848).
- Wigram, G. V., *An Answer of G. V. W. to "Mr. Craik's Letter Dated Nov. 15, 1848*, London: Campbell (Dec. 1848)
- Wigram, G. V., *Marks Whereby the Assembly of God . . . Are to be Known*, London: Horner, n.d.
- Wigram, G. V., *The Present Question; 1848 -1849*, London: Campbell, n. d.
- Wigram, G. V., *To The Christians in New Zealand*, Christchurch: Press Office (March 14, 1874).
- Woodfall, Henry, *Letter to B. W. Newton, Dec. 15, 1847* (available from the Christian Brethren Archive, John Rylands University of Manchester, England).
- Yapp, W., *Christian Unity: Contrasted with its Counterfeits*, London: Yapp, n. d.
- Yapp, W., *Receive Ye One Another*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, revised edition, n. d.

Other

- Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, article "Kenosis," Grand Rapids: Baker, 1960.
- Barker, H. P., *Why I Abandoned Exclusivism*, London: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- Bass, C. B., *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960.
- Broadbent, E. H., *The Pilgrim Church*, London: Pickering and Inglis, 1955.
- Brookes, J. H., *The Truth* 20:204 (1894).
- Bruce, F. F., "The Humanity of Jesus Christ," *The Journal of the Christian Br ethren Research Fellowship*, #24, p. 5, Sept. 1973.
- Bruce, F. F., in Forward to G. H. Fromow, *Teachers of the Faith and Future*, London: Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, n. d.
- Caldwell, J. R., *The Charter of the Church*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, vol. 1, n. d.
- Cameron, R., *Scriptural Truth About the Lord's Return*, New York: Revell, 1922.
- Cameron, R., cited in "The Niagara Bible Conference and American Fundamentalism Part IV," *Central Bible Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 3, Fall 1977, p. 55, note 214.
- Campbell, Charles, *The Scripture Testimony*, Philadelphia: Repository of Scripture Testimony.

- Clarke, A. G., *New Testament Church Principles*, New York: Loizeaux, 1962.
- Cousins, Peter, *The Harvester*, Sept. or Oct. 1986.
- Davies, J. M., *Letters to the Corinthians*, Bombay: Gospel Literature Service, 1982.
- Gibbs, Alfred, P., *An Introduction to a Study of Church Truth*, Kansas City: Walterick, n. d.
- Harlow, R. E., *1 Corinthians The Imperfect Church*, Scarborough: Everyday Publications, p. 41, 1982.
- Harlow, R. E., *Weeds, Leaven, and the Brethren Movement*, Kansas City: Believer's Bible Lessons, 1992.
- Heading, John, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, 1965.
- Heading, John, *What the Bible Teaches, Matthew*, Kilmarnock: Ritchie, 1984.
- Hoste, W. *Rejudging the Question*, London: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.
- House, Wayne, *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
- Huebner, R. A., *Could Christ Sin?*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers, 1993.
- Hunter, J., *What the Bible Teaches*, vol. 4, *1 Corinthians*, Kilmarnock: John Ritchie, 1986.
- Frank, D. W., *Less than Conquerors: How Evangelicals Entered the Twentieth Century*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.
- Koivisto, Rex A., *One Lord, One Faith: a Theology for Cross-Denominational Renewal*, Wheaton: Victor Books, 1993.
- Lang, G. H., *Departure, A Warning and Appeal Addressed by One of Them to Christians Known as Open Brethren*, Miami Springs: Conley and Schoettle, 1985.
- Lang, G. H., *The Local Assembly*.
- McDowell, Ian, *A Brief History of the Brethren*, Sidney: Victory Books, 1968.
- MacDonald, William, *Believer's Bible Commentary, New Testament*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1990.
- MacDonald, William, *Christ Loved the Church*, Oak Park: Midwest Christian Publishers, 1960.
- Murray, W., *The Corporate Christian Testimony of Believers in the Assemblies of North America*, Papers presented at the Annual Workers' Conference Loch Hill Chapel Baltimore, Maryland, 1958.
- Newberry, Thomas, *The Parables of the Lord Jesus Christ Analyzed and Explained*, Glasgow: Pickering and Inglis, n. d.).
- Stanley, Charles, *An Allegory*, Morganville: Present Truth Publishers.
- Stenhouse, A, *The Sin of Sectarianism*.
- The Bible Treasury*, Winschoten: Heijkoop, third edition, 1969, various volumes.
- The Northern Witness* 12:155 (1882).
- The Witness* 60:61 (1930).
- Tregelles, S. P., Letter CBA 7181 (28) in the Christian Brethren's Archive.
- Watson, J. B., ed., *The Church a Symposium*, London: Pickering and Inglis, 1951.
- Vine, W. E., *First Corinthians*, London: Oliphants, 1951.
- Vine, W. E., *The Church and the Churches*, Kilmarnock: Ritchie, n. d.

*Items Related to this Book
Wanted by the Writer*

If the reader can supply a copy of any of the following to me, please contact me.

- A DROP OF OIL ON TROUBLED WATERS
- A RETROSPECT OF EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE
AMONG THE BRETHREN
- AN APPENDIX TO A RETROSPECT OF EVENTS
- AN ADMONITION TO MR. J. N. DARBY ON HIS CHARGE
OF HORRIBLE DOCTRINE AGAINST MR. J. L. HARRIS,
OF PLYMOUTH, WITH A PREFATORY NOTE TO MR. G.
V. WIGRAM (1847/1849)
- A STATEMENT FROM CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLING IN
THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS IN EBRINGTON ST.
- BETHESDA, ARE ITS PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES
THOSE OF TRUTH AND HOLINESS?
- MANUSCRIPT NOTES BY MISS STONEY REGARDING
PLYMOUTH
- NOTICE OF THE STATEMENT AND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ERROR, CIRCULATED BY
MR. NEWTON (1850?)
- PROVE ALL THINGS (LONDON, 1850)
- REPORT OF A MEETING AT LIVERPOOL (1843, and any
others)
- TRUTH AND OPINION, A LETTER TO J. E. HOWARD
- REPLY TO "THE WRECK AND THE ROCK" [CW 15:113]
- BATTEN, J. E. his confession
- BELLETT, J. G. LETTER TO HARRIS
- BELLETT, J. G. LETTER TO M^A, DEC. 26, 1849
- CARR, JOHN EDMUND A LETTER TO THE REV. DR. TREGELLES WITH
REFERENCE TO CERTAIN STATEMENTS MADE BY HIM
AND PUBLISHED IN THE RECORD (1863)
- CARR, JOHN EDMUND THE THEOLOGY OF DR. TREGELLES IN RELATION TO
OUR LORD'S VICARIOUS LIFE . . . IN TWO LETTERS TO
THE EDITOR OF THE CLERICAL JOURNAL (1864)
- HARGROVE, CHARLES THOUGHTS ON MINISTRY IN CONNECTION WITH GIFT
AND WITHOUT IT
- CODE, J. M. any papers regarding Plymouth/Bethesda
- CRAIK, HENRY NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH ORDER
- CRONIN, E. LETTER TO A. N. GROVES, JUNE 1849
- D. SIGNS OF THE COMING OF THE LORD. FOR WHOM ARE
THEY GIVEN? (1844/1845) [CW 20:127, 130]
- D. a paper on Darby's remarks on the tract, SIGNS OF THE

- COMING OF THE LORD
- DARBY, J. N. alleged letter to the dying H. Craik
- DYER, H. his confession
- DINGLE, EDWARD AN EXAMINATION OF A RECENTLY PUBLISHED
PAMPHLET ENTITLED: ANCIENT TRUTHS RESPECTING
THE DEITY AND TRUE HUMANITY OF THE LORD
JESUS. 1847, BY B. W. NEWTON.
- GROVES, H. A REVIEW OF THE BETHESDA QUESTION
- GROVES, H. OUR SCHISM AND ITS CURE
- HAFFNER, T. P. his confession [SPT, Three Letters, 30]
- HILL, R. REMARKS ON A PORTION OF A LETTER WRITTEN BY
H. SOLTAU
- HILL, R. SOME REMARKS UPON THE CIRCULAR LETTER
- HOWARD, J. LETTER TO G. V. WIGRAM
- HOWARD, J. CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND CHRISTIAN CHARITY IN
THEIR RELATION TO SUPPOSED ERROR (1866?)
- HOWARD, R. any papers regarding Plymouth/Bethesda
- JUKES, A. LETTER TO LEEDS AND OTLEY (1849)
- MORRIS, RICHARD IN MEMORIAM: A MEMORIAL OF THE REV. HENRY
CRAIK
- MURLEY, GEO. LETTER TO B. W. NEWTON
- NEWTON, B. W. ARE WE WRONG IN EXPECTING EVENTS BETWEEN
THE PRESENT TIME AND THE COMING OF THE LORD
(1845)
- NEWTON, B. W. LETTER TO CLULOW (APRIL 18, 1846)
- NEWTON, B. W. LETTER TO MR I. ARNOLD LAKE, JUNE 1, 1865 [overview
of his relationship to the brethren]
- NEWTON, B. W. LETTER TO GEO. MURLY, JAN. 26, 1845.
- NEWTON, B. W. THE ETERNAL SONSHIP
- NEWTON, B. W. SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST (compiled from Notes and
Addresses by BWN)
- NEWTON, B. W. A LETTER ON SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE
LORD'S HUMANITY (1848)
- NEWTON, B. W. A PAPER OR LETTER WRITTEN NOV. 14 1866 ON
CHRIST AND HIS SUFFERINGS - OR ON ATONEMENT
- NEWTON, B. W. A LETTER TO BRETHREN . . . IN EBRINGT ON ST. . .
COMMENTING ON THOUGHTS
- NEWTON, B. W. THE WRECK AND THE ROCK, 1843 ED.
- PHILADELPHUS WHY THIS NEW SCHISM? (1861) [BL]
- STOKES a circular, Jan. 17, 1868 (Pilson, 5)
- STOKES REMONSTRANCE ADDRESSED TO THE SEPARATING
BROTHER IN THE YEAR 1847 (Pilson, 61)
- SOLTAU, H. W. CONFESSION OF ERROR (DEC. 22, 1847)
- TAYLOR, W. ELFE PASSAGES FROM THE DIARY & LETTERS OF HENRY

- CRAIK OF BRISTOL (ca 1866)
- TREGELLES, S. P. A LETTER FROM MR TREGELLES TO MR. GOUGH ON THE EXCLUSION OF MR. B. W. NEWTON FROM THE LORD'S TABLE IN RAWSTORNE ST. (1847)
- TREGELLES, S. P. LETTER TO GOUGH
- S., C. ACTS XXIII (re Newton)
- WALKER, G. J. A CONFESSION AND RETRACTION OF TWO DOCTRINAL ERRORS
- WIGRAM, G. V. TO THE SAINTS MEETING TO BREAK BREAD IN RAWSTORNE ST., CAMDEN TOWN, ORCHARD ST., ETC.
- WIGRAM, G. V. A LETTER TO LORD CONGLETON
- W. SOME REMARKS ON A RECENT LETTER FROM PLYMOUTH
- WIGRAM, G. V. A REASON FOR WITHDRAWING FROM EBRINGTON ST., PLYMOUTH (1846)
- WIGRAM, G. V. PLAIN EVIDENCE CONCERNING EBRINGTON ST; AS TO THE NATURE OF THE SYSTEM NOW PURSUED THEREBY
- WIGRAM, G. V. REMARKS ON A PAMPHLET ENTITLED "A STATEMENT FROM CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLING IN THE NAME OF THE LORD IN EBRINGTON ST., PLYMOUTH
- WIGRAM, G. V. TO THOSE WHO HAVE READ LORD CONGLETON'S TRACT ENTITLED, "REASONS FOR LEAVING RAWSTORNE ST. MEETING, LONDON"
- WIGRAM, G. V. letter of Oct. 1848 (4 pages)
- YAPP, W. any papers regarding Plymouth/Bethesda but not Christian Unity

Acknowledgement	5, 8, 40, 42, 43, 46, 47, 51-54, 56-58, 60, 61, 65, 71, 76, 77
Acknowledgement arrangement about Mr. Newton's	75
Acknowledgement, confession thus concocted was at last produced and I can truly	77
Acknowledgement, drawing up of Mr. N's retraction by Dr. Tregelles	76, 77
Acknowledgement, see Newton and Soltau and Retraction	
Aitchison, Robert (sometimes Aitchison)	72
Alexander, G.	48
B.	24
Bass, C. B.	38
Bath	71, 72
Bath meeting	50
Batten, J. E.	14, 19, 25, 33, 45, 59, 73, 74, 76-78
Bethesda	xxi, xxii, 4, 13, 26, 45, 48, 51, 52, 71
Bethesda Letter of the Ten	41
Beverly, R. M.	66
<i>Bible Witness and Review, The</i>	67
Bla***, Mr. and Mrs.	72
Brady, David	xix, 71
Brethrenism	xxiii
Brown, Mrs., (sometimes Browne)	72
Bruce, F. F.	xxii, 62
C---	74
C---w [Clulow]	20, 24
C.,	26
C., J. M. [Code?]	53
Caleb	73
Campbell, A. T. C., (the Sir A. C.)	26
Canada	28
Capt. H.	26
Carolyn Ryan	xix
<i>Christian Witness</i>	3, 7-9, 15, 21, 39, 40, 42, 51, 52, 64, 72-75
<i>Christian Witness</i> , a second edition, changed	8, 73
Clerical system	17
Clerisy	2, 11, 13, 30, 33, 77
Clifton meeting	13
Clulow, J.	14, 25, 33, 73, 78
Clulow, letter to	29
Coad alleges docetic tendencies among "exclusives"	xxiii, 60, 67
Coad, F. R.	xix, xxii, xxiii, 13, 22, 50, 60-62
Collingwood's, W., "The Brethren." A Historical Sketch.	3
Compton St., Plymouth	43, 46
Confession	45
Confessions	44
Congleton, Lord	13, 24-26, 32, 37
Congleton, Lord, had views like A. N. Groves	24
Cooke, Wm., Hereford	71
Cox, John, Jr.	56, 57
Craik, Henry	37, 48, 58
Cronin, Edward	32
D----n [Dorman]	24
D.	24, 31
Darby	xx, 73
Darby bashing	62
Darby Bethesda Circular	41
Darby ceased ministering at Ebrington Street	21
Darby I began to break bread, and the first Sunday there were not si	26
Darby I shall be considered relentless	47
Darby Lord's table, no second	
Darby <i>Narrative of Facts</i>	11, 13, 26, 32, 49
Darby on prophecy	3
Darby sudden arrival	18
Darby whom did JND excommunicate?	23
Darby withdrawal	22
Deck had used the word mortal in a hymn	59
Deck, J. G.	40, 42, 74
Devonshire and Somersetshire	20
Docetic, B. W. Newton called J. G. Bellett docetic	67
Docetic tendencies (alleged by www.cressenttruthpublishers.com)	xxiii, 60, 67
Doctrine	78
<i>Doctrines of the Church in Newman Street, Considered</i>	7
Dorman, W. H.	11, 12, 13, 15, 21, 32, 66

Dyer, W. B.	14, 25, 45, 73-75
Dyer, W. who was living at Yeovil	74
E.	73
E. C. at Yeovil	73
Earle, A.	12
Ebrington Street, Plymouth	xx, 4, 12-14, 17, 23-29, 32, 35, 42-46, 59, 71, 78
Ebrington Street, Plymouth, standing of	23
Edward W -- d [Wakefield] of Kendal	10
Europe	17
Exclusives	xxi, xxiii, 48, 52, 60, 63, 67
Exclusives, Raven-Taylor groups; these are Apollinarians	xx1
Exeter	40, 72, 74
Friday night meeting for oversight, suppression of	20, 21
Fromow, G. H.	52, 55
G---h [Gough?].	13
Groves, A. N.	13, 24, 26, 51, 62
Groves Congleton had similar views	24
Groves, E. K.	51
Groves, Henry	26
H	18, 73
H., G.	74
Hall	35
Harris at Exeter had got hold of some of Mr. Newton's notes	24
Harris had gone to Ireland	21
Harris, J. L.	xx, 2, 7, 8, 15, 17, 19-21, 23, 24, 37-41, 43, 5172, 73
Harris reasons stated for declining to minister at Plymouth	23
Harris separated on Nov. 14, 1845	24
Hawker	64
Haydon, W.	72, 74, 76-78
Heavenly calling	16
Hill, Mrs.	73
Howard, J. E.	13
Howard, Robert	29, 49
Hughes	72
India	28
Integrity	75
<i>Investigator, The</i>	67
Irish brethren	21
Irving, Edward/Irvingism	3, 7, 21, 51, 63, 68
Jeremie, Miss	28
Johnson, R. C.	14
Judaising	3
Juffry	72
Jukes, Andrew	49, 66
K.	73
Kelly review of W. Collingwood	3
Kelly, W.	3, 4, 12, 13, 46, 58, 63, 66, 67, 69
Kelly wrote: . . . the blinded author of this fundamental h	62
Kenoticism	xxiii
Koivisto, Rex A.	62
Lang, G. H.	3, 11
Lean	35
Leaven	xxii
Letter of the Ten	41
Letter to Clulow	29
London	71, 72
London, Rawstorne St.	13, 26, 27, 29, 32-34, 72
Lord's table, no second	28
Marotta, F.	xix, 67
McAdam, C.	18, 26, 35, 38, 40, 41, 72

Mechanic's Institute	25
Meeting of brothers in London	35
Meeting of the fifteen in April 1845	17, 19, 24, 31
Meetings at Bath, May 1848	49
Ministerialism	3
Modified Presbyterianism	2, 4, 7, 11, 14, 17
<i>Morning Advertiser, The</i>	65
Mortal	57, 59
Mortal, J. G. Deck had used the word in a hymn	
Mortality -- necessity of dying	43, 59
Muller declared that J. L. Harris had done a work of darkness	41
Muller, G.	4, 41, 48
Muller posttribulationist, was a	4
Murley former letter of Geo. Murly from his pocket and read it to con	75
Murly, G.	73, 75, 77
N ---	76
N -- r	26
N. being seriously troubled	74
Naylor	13
Neatby, W. B.	41, 50
Nelson, R.	9, 17
Newman, F. W.	1
Newton accused, to state it in few words, of clericalism, s	34
Newton Acknowledgement and Retraction, see	
Newton acquitted by Open Brethren	60
Newton agreed to retract as erroneous	74
Newton all Mr. N. meant by the Lord being born under the infliction w	79
Newton another edition of the Tract Mr. Newton appended the passages	75
Newton argued that he never had deduced any results from this erro	75
Newton arrangement about Mr. Newton's retractation	75
Newton, B. W.	xx, xxii, xxiii, 1, 17, 20, 39, 62
Newton blasphemies	66
Newton called J. G. Bellett docetic	67
Newton Christ came under the imputation of guilt because he was born	72
Newton Christ freed himself from all the consequences of Adam's imput	75
Newton Christ kept the Law, and proved Himself holy and thereby earne	72
Newton Christ's "unspeakable circumstantial distance from God"	52, 54, 57, 60, 66, 68
Newton Christ's experiences of wrath from God	72
Newton circumstantial distance in reality does entail moral distance	56
Newton circumstantially at a distance from God	46
Newton damnatory wrath	65
Newton deification of the saints	10
Newton deified the saints	67
Newton doctrine that the blessed Lord being born into Israel	76
Newton five manuscript letters, written in 1840	28
Newton five manuscript letters	29
Newton <i>Five Letters</i>	28, 31
Newton fundamental error	72
Newton God treated Him with His chastening rod of displeasure	72
Newton heresy	41, 46, 63, 66
Newton heretical tracts	47
Newton heterodoxy was discovered secretly at work	3
Newton honesty, usual lack of plain	66
Newton icy mountain and the Lord going up	73
Newton last words . . . to his circle of Christian friends not	52
Newton <i>Letter on Subjects Connected with the Lor d's Humanity</i>	77
Newton memoirs	xix
Newton principles, had changed	10
Newton prophetic system received by direct inspiration of Satan	68
Newton secretly circulating horrible doctrine concernin	37

Newton shiftiness	64
Newton sisters flattered him, said he was ill-used	77
Newton slipperiness	55
Newton suffering penally before the cross	64
Newton this only made him angry	75
Newton tracts of Mr. Newton	73
Newton tracts were infected with the error, but he would not Newton Inconceivable distance	55
Newton trickiness and deceit	29
Newton trickiness of Newton	8
Newton untruthfulness	9
Newton untruthfulness	33
Newton would stand in full by his tracts	76
Newton writing to Geo. Murly dated Jan. 26, 1845	75
Newtonism	xxi, 7, 8, 41, 45
Newtonism brought into the Light	37
Newtonism, germing of	7
Newtonism Satan, positive work of (see Satan)	34
Newtonism unspeakable circumstantial distance from God	55
Niblock, Joseph White	16
Noel, N.	48, 58
<i>Observations</i>	73, 76
<i>Old Truths</i>	65
Oliphant, J. S.	13
Open brethren	xxi, 4, 60, 63
Ord, A. C.	58, 60, 64
P -- r	26
<i>Perilous Times</i>	65
Pettegrew, L. D.	23
Philaletes (A. C. Ord)	64
Pilson, L.	10, 13, 20, 30, 45, 48
Plymouth	xx, 1, 9, 13, 17, 32, 72, 73, 76
Plymouth, Compton St.	43, 46
Plymouth denouncing of godly brethren	23
Plymouth dishonesty of the system at work	33
Plymouth, Ebrington St.	zz, 4, 12-14, 17, 23-29, 32, 35, 42-46, 59, 71, 78
Plymouth, Enrington St., standing of	23
Plymouth evil and demoralizing system	35
Plymouth evil system	9
Plymouth Friday night meeting for oversight, suppression of	20, 21
Plymouth letters sent to India, Canada, Ireland	23
Plymouth meeting of the fifteen in April 1845	17, 19, 24, 31
Plymouth modified Presbyterianism	2, 4, 7, 11, 14, 17
Plymouth Monday evening Dec. 13th	78
Plymouth, Raleigh chapel	xx
Plymouth, Raleigh St.	27, 43
Plymouth rupture at	4
Plymouth system of independency, ministerialism, and	4
Plymouth system of spiritual and immoral evil	50
Plymouth teaching at	21
Plymouth views	17
Powerscourt conferences	21
Powerscourt meeting, 1834	67
Presidency	13
Psa. VI, manuscript of Newton 's lecture on Psalm 6	38
Psa. VI. Lecture on	72
Psalm VI	20, 38-40, 41, 47, 53-55, 65, 72-74
Psalms	44
<i>Quarterly Journal of Prophecy</i>	65
R.	26
R. her husband	74

Raleigh chapel	xx
Raleigh Street	27, 43
Raven-Taylor groups; these are Apollinarians	xxi
Rawstorne St.	13, 26, 27, 29, 32-34, 72
Reception	xxi
<i>Record, The</i>	65
Reid, Wm.	67
Resurrection-life	16
Retraction, see Acknowledgement	74-77
Rive	75, 76
Rivel	77
Romans 5	72, 73
Rowdon, H. H.	xix, xxii, 20, 21, 25, 32, 33, 40, 47, 62
Ryan, Dennis	xix, 71
S.	24
Satan at work in Newton 's evil doctrines	48
Satan direct work of the enemy	9
Satan father of deceits	25
Satan really being the one who is using Mr. Newton to blasphem	48
Satan seducing spirit at work	68
Satan work of	35, 48, 50, 66
Satanic	47, 48
Scrivener, F. H. A.	12
Sectarianism and morals of the system of Ebrington St	20
Sinless penalties	58, 59
Sisters at Plymouth	77
Sisters got round him, flattered him, said he was an ill-used man	77
Socinian	72
Soltau brethren met at my house to draw up Mr. Newton's retraction	76
Soltau Ebrington St. acts of collusion in which I have been guilty	77
Soltau, H. W.	13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 25, 29, 30, 32, 42-44
Soltau I began to perceive that the whole matter was only one of exe	77
Soltau I felt like one that had been duped, and taken in by a friend	75
Soltau I had no option but to withdraw if an attempt were made to con	78
Soltau I stated the doctrines which I had helped to up	78
Soltau I told him we had withdrawn the T racts, and had acknowledged t	76
Soltau it had been agreed that I should present the paper to him	76
Soltau London University College Lectures	72
Soltau my confidence shaken in Mr. Newton's openness	75
Soltau my confidence in his integrity was gone	75
Soltau she told me that she was sure that Mr. N. did not hold Christ	73
Soltau so little did I think of the weight of error	74
Soltau two errors which I had been instrumental in circulating	78
Soltau what have you been about in delaying Mr. Newton's retr	75
Soltau's, <i>Account of What Happened at Plymouth</i>	71
Stacey, Miss	72
Sufferings of Christ	66
Sui generis	58
Summer of 1847	71
Sunday 12th after communion	78
Switzerland	xx, 4, 17
T., Miss, added that they were her notes	72
Teulon's history	4, 13
<i>Thoughts on the Apocalypse</i>	xx, 10, 67
Toulmin, A., from Bath	72, 73
Tract	75
Tract Depot	73
Tracts	73, 74, 76-78
Tregelles also stood by him and he cast me (Soltau) of f	77
Tregelles are you mad? How could you think of putting such	77

Tregelles drew up Neton's Acknowledgement	76, 77
Tregelles into his counsel, whom he found to be a more agreeab	77
Tregelles married a cousin of Newton	11
Tregelles, S. P.	2-4, 11, 12, 20-22, 24, 31, 43-44, 52, 59, 62, 67, 72, 74, 76-79
Tregelles said he could clear up all if he were allowed to rea	78
Trotter, W.	9, 11, 13, 27, 32-35, 37, 39, 41, 45-50, 58, 60, 64, 67
Unity and holiness of the church of God	22
Unity of the church	21
Vicarious	39, 40, 48, 64, 63-66
W -- r	26
W.	26
Walker, G.	73, 76
Welbeck Street	13
Western England	4
Wigram Dec. 24, 1845, withdrawal	25
Wigram, G. V.	xx, xxii, 2, 3, 8, 13, 15, 17, 25-27, 32, 37, 41, 43, 48, 50, 58, 60, 72
Wilson, Brian R.	xix
Witsius	64
Woodfall, H.	76-78
Woodfall, H., asked me if I could not put the two into one, and	78
Woodfall, H., now seemed to think that the Tracts were comparati	77
Woodfalls	74
Woolston	72
Wyatt, F. W.	xix
Y., H.	18
Young	35