

## LETTERS OF WILLIAM TIPTAFT (1831)

January 8, 1831

My dear Brother,

I am very anxious to hear how the work of grace is going on in your hearts, whether you prove all things and hold fast that which is good. The way to heaven is strait and narrow, and Satan is an unwearied adversary, in disputing every inch of the way. You will be much despised and cast out for Christ's sake, and nothing will offend more than separating yourselves as much as possible from carnal people. It is the life which condemns the professing world. When the world sees you unmoved by the riches and the pleasures which it so much adores; when you are led by the Spirit "to count all things but rubbish for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord"; when you prove the light which you have to be from above, by giving you a single eye to God's glory, you must expect then to bear reproaches from the Hagar race.

I hope and trust you study much the word of God. When you read that, you know that you are on safe ground, and you can say to Satan and his allies, "It is written." There is but very little true religion anywhere. Our hearts are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, and the Scripture, which cannot be broken, tells us that the righteous scarcely are saved. It is a very narrow way to heaven, and if we enter in, it will be entirely by the grace of God. You will be led to see how vain the doctrines of the Arminians are.

It is very plain that the world is too much in the hearts of Christians, and Satan covers over covetousness under the name of prudence. How Christians compare themselves one with another, instead of with the word of God; but God has a people, whom He will separate from the world. He will show them, by His blessed Spirit, what He has done for them through our Lord Jesus Christ, as Paul says, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Happy and blessed are they who have not the spirit of the world ruling in their hearts, but the Spirit of God, so that they may understand the things which are freely given to them, such as justification through the blood of Christ, pardon of our every sin, promises of help, support, and strength to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, and a certainty of our being more than conquerors through him who died that we might live, who was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

I am very anxious to hear from you, and to know whether the word comes to you with power, and with the Holy Spirit, and with much assurance. It must be a great source of joy and delight that you and your wife think alike, that you are both agreed that salvation is of grace, and grace alone, that you can provoke one another unto love and good works, and cheer one another under the temptations of Satan and the persecution of a wicked world. You must be partakers of the sufferings of your great Master, so shall you also of His consolations, and He will never leave you nor forsake you.

I have spent this winter very pleasantly, being blessed with such a valuable friend as Philpot for my companion. He is a very highly gifted man, but he desires to present his body a living sacrifice unto Christ. He is delicate in health, and is affected with a pain in his chest. He will continue with me during the winter, I hope, for his conversations are very profitable to me, and we see eye to eye in almost every point; so there is no jarring and arguments.

I have had as yet this winter my church very crowded. Some leave, and fresh ones come; some say I am a good man, and others say I deceive the people.

**I am not heaping up treasures upon earth for moth and rust to corrupt.** I feel thankful to the Lord I am so provided with every comfort in this world. I hope that He will teach me self-denial, that I may more liberally assist others who lack even the necessaries of life—poor and afflicted brethren in Christ. It is more blessed to give than to receive. It is a hard saying, "Sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasures in heaven." When great grace was upon the primitive Christians, they had all things common. As a Christian, your mind will be much more easy the less you have to do with the world. Having food and clothing, be therewith content. Riches and cares choke the seed, and keep you from communion with God through Christ. Those who will be rich fall into many snares, etc. (1 Tim. 6:9.) **Your kingdom is not of this world.**

Believe me, yours affectionately,  
W. Tiptaft.

March 14th, 1831

My dear Brother,  
I feel much obliged to you for your last letter, and am rejoiced to find that you are desirous of knowing more of Christ. **You have much to contend**

with in various ways from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Satan is a very subtle enemy, and never spreads his snare in your sight. I hope you will not be induced to value any knowledge which does not cause you to love Christ more, and to live more decidedly as a member of His kingdom. Satan does not care how much knowledge you have in your head, so long as he can keep possession of the citadel of your heart. Consequently, he will change his position a thousand times, before he will surrender his hold. But God's grace must and will dethrone him, and set up the kingdom of Christ in your heart, so that you will serve a new Master, and for very different wages. All that Satan can boast of, or tempt us with, are perishable things of time, that will soon vanish away. But though we profess to despise the riches and honors of this life, none but those who have the light of God's countenance shining upon them will view them in their proper light. Satan is the god of this world, and he blinds the minds of those who believe not. If one device will not succeed, he will try another; and every unregenerate man will be led captive by him, in some way or other. Many may think they have outwitted him by a knowledge of great truths in the head, while their heart is devoid of grace.

You may, perhaps, think these remarks may not be profitable to you; but I believe we think and speak a great deal too seldom of the greatest of all enemies, and I feel this is his most subtle device. Old disciples of Christ can say, "We are not ignorant of his devices." But young converts will be entangled, more or less. Consequently, it becomes ministers of Christ to show forth particularly what little they may know of them, so that the word of God "may be a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths." Though we are not *of* his kingdom, we live *in* his kingdom; and we must pass through it to our eternal rest. We must, therefore, watch and pray that we enter not into temptation. You will find "take heed" very frequently in the Bible, and as such words are there we may be sure they are necessary. "Exhort one another while it is called To-day"; "Take heed, lest your heart be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Now, no Christian will grow in grace who has not a single eye to God's glory; for if the eye be not single, the body is full of darkness.

It matters little what a man knows, if Christ be not to him the pearl of great price. Is Jesus Christ precious to you? Do you love Him so that you would die for Him? Do you count all you lose for His sake gain? Are you willing to make great sacrifices sooner than deny Him? Untried faith is uncertain faith. When you are cast out, and have many trials and difficulties to contend with, you will rejoice, I trust, that you are counted not only worthy to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.

You will not be persecuted for holding gospel truths in the head, but for having grace in your heart; for the former will not cause you to differ from the world. When the fruits of the Spirit manifest themselves in your life; when you are blind to your own interest in this world; when you are deaf to the advice of the worldly-wise, then it will be said of you, "He is a changed man; he is a fool!" Now, my dear brother, be assured of this, as God works in your dark soul, such changes as these will be caused; so that instead of panting after the riches of this world, you will pant after the unsearchable riches of Christ.

'Human nature' cannot and will not make great sacrifices; but as you have a knowledge given to you by the Spirit of the exceeding great and precious promises laid up in Christ for God's chosen few, you will be led to see the nothingness and vanity of all things here below, and you will with joy cry out, "We have a kingdom which cannot be moved!" God, by His Spirit, quickens, and He alone can enable you to separate from your old companions and the world, and so make great sacrifices for Christ's sake, who has died that you might live; who became poor that you through His poverty might be made rich. Your conscience will become more tender, and you will be better able to discern between good and evil.

At this present time my conscience is not very easy about the Church Establishment. I neither like the system, nor the forms and ceremonies, particularly the baptismal service and catechism. God forbid that my conscience should be hardened through a strong inclination of the flesh to cleave to its respectability and riches. I am not fully satisfied what I shall do; but I pray that God may guide me, and that I may not take such an important step hastily and unadvisedly.

You will, perhaps, be surprised to hear these objections against an Establishment which is admired so much by the world at large, especially by the rich and great. I was perfectly satisfied with it, until the Lord was pleased to open my eyes to discern its inconsistencies. A letter would not, if entirely on the subject, afford me room to say all I could say.

In the baptismal service we thank God for 'regenerating children', and then put on the black gown, go into the pulpit, and tell them in plain terms that they were not born again. Our Liturgy makes every baptized person a member of the true Church, and we have to address them as such, when we know to the contrary by their fruits. And the catechism is so full of errors that I am sure no one with a glimmering of spiritual light will teach it to children.

Philpot is still with me, and a very sincere Christian he is; he will leave shortly. He thinks about leaving the Church, though he would give up his Fellowship, and would not be worth a groat. Would not the world call him a great fool? You and I have much to learn. **We are very carnal and worldly-minded; we have but little grace. What have we sacrificed for Christ?**

Yours in the bonds of the everlasting gospel,  
W. Tiptaft.

May 2nd, 1831

My dear Brother,

I was very glad to hear by your last letter that your wife has safely delivered another son; and I hope that he will prove a blessing to you both. God's mercies have been great and manifold towards you in this life, and I pray that they may not prove snares. **The children of God almost always flourish more in trials and difficulties than in the sunshine of health and prosperity.** The promise is, "As your days, so shall your strength be"; consequently, if there are not trials within from Satan's temptations, or afflictions and persecutions from without, we would not call upon God heartily for help. So when we pray for grace, we at the same time ask for trials. In the case when Paul prayed that the messenger of Satan might depart from him, the Lord said to him, "My grace is sufficient for you; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." "Most gladly, therefore," he adds, "will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." So the Lord answered his prayer, not as Paul asked; but he was content that it should be so, that he might enjoy more of the power of Christ in his own soul.

Your last letter was very short, and you never gave your opinion respecting the important change I contemplate about leaving the Establishment. My mind is perplexed upon the subject, which I believe will end in my leaving. "But he who believes shall not make haste." I trust that God will direct me. I can assure you that the more I reflect upon the state of our Establishment, the more I am persuaded it becomes me, as a consistent minister of God's word, to leave it. I consider the riches of the national Church are a great cause of her corruptions. Take them away, and then who would belong to her? Would the 'blind guides' work for nothing? Would the spiritually minded go through forms which they must condemn in their own consciences?

**Pride and covetousness cleave very close to us, and they influence us more than we imagine.** How very different are the ministers of the present day from those in Paul's day! He says, "We are the filth of the earth, and the offscouring of all things"; "Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that are with me." Ministers of Christ are now called gentlemen—"Reverend", "Right Reverend", "Most Reverend Father in God." They are bowed down to and worshiped. Will God be mocked? Will He not be avenged on such a professing Church? "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and the people love to have it so. But what will they do in the end thereof?" What does Christ say? "He who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger" (Luke 22:26). It is plain they differ widely in these respects, but by no means less in their doctrine. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant (slave)." The power of godliness is but little known.

What is the Church of England? Of what characters does it consist? Is the system altogether pleasing in God's sight, or is it hateful? I will not say any more on the subject; for perhaps you may think I am prejudiced, and do not state things fairly.

Bulteel and myself intend to go for two months to preach the gospel in the dark parts of the West of England. We shall go the middle of this month (D.V.). We shall preach in churches, chapels, barns, rooms, or in the open air. We shall, if the Lord strengthens us for the work, give great offence. But it is a glorious work to preach the everlasting gospel. It is the very purpose for which I was ordained. Christ will not turn us out of His Church for following His steps in preaching the gospel in every city and village. I would not be surprised if the Bishop withdraw Bulteel's licence, as he is only a curate. My vicarage is a freehold, and I know not what authority the Bishop has over me. He would not turn me out if I went to Melton to 'hunt and gamble'. But preaching the gospel in dark villages is a 'dire and heinous offence', being *so very contrary* to the word of God. Such a charge, that even the very apostles never heard of, and whoever commits it is worthy of bonds and imprisonment, or even death itself!

I am anxious to hear how you are going on in spiritual things at Oakham. You must remember that **everything is opposed to the work of Christ; but in this respect His power is made more fully manifest.** God's grace is visible when we see it affect the hearts of the most determined sinners, and cause them to stand up boldly for His worthy name, which they formerly used to blaspheme. You will find great difficulties to walk and act like a Christian in your profession. Even the very beginnings of a Christian life in such a dark place as Oakham will be hated. If you have but little light, you

cannot sit under such dark ministers. You would rather dig for your bread, than act so contrary to Christ's express commands—"Take heed what you hear"; "Beware of false prophets." You will cause the weak brethren to stumble by inconsistency. **If you sit under a blind guide, you confirm him in his ministry, and bolster up his pride.** You may profess what you please if you will hold with the world, and sit under the same minister, however dark, with the world. You may boast of your knowledge, for that is all you can boast of; for living sheep must have living shepherds, and dead people dead shepherds.

You will find the most spiritual of God's people among the poor. I observe so much pride and conformity to the world among the rich, that I stand in doubt of many who are considered to be spiritual people. James 2 condemns most of them.

They have a fear of God, but it is to be feared it "is taught by the precept of men" (Isaiah 29:13). That you may differ widely from such professing Christians among those of your rank and condition is the sincere prayer of,

Yours in the bonds of the everlasting gospel,  
William Tiptaft.

June 11th, 1831

My dear Brother, You will not be surprised at the proceedings of Bulteel and myself, as I informed you in my last what our intentions were. We arrived in Somerset on the 16th of May, and have almost every evening since been preaching, one or both of us, in church, chapel, or the open air. We have, almost in every instance, asked for the church, and if refused, preached in the chapel or open air. We have preached in dissenting chapels, in Wells, Glastonbury, Somerton, Langport, Castle Cary, Bruton, Wincanton, &c., sometimes in a church and sometimes in a chapel. We last Sunday had four churches, near Hindon, in Wilts. We are now visiting Mr. Dampier, near Bruton. We are to preach each once in both the churches tomorrow, and, between the two services, I am to preach in Wincanton large Independent chapel. Mr. Rogers, of Yarlinton, came here yesterday, to offer me his church for Tuesday evening. He is a man of large fortune, and went last evening, with Mr. Dampier and family, to hear Bulteel preach at Bruton, in the Dissenters' chapel; and I preached at Wanstrow, near Frome.

I need not say that our conduct excited surprise. We have many hearers. The places of worship are generally much crowded; people come from far to

hear us, and invite us to come and preach to them; so we may truly say, "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few." Many think we have no right to preach in dissenting chapels; but it is not forbidden, either by the canons or the word of God, for the latter is altogether in our favor. I believe the Lord is with us, and makes us instruments in exciting a great inquiry into spiritual things. Mr. Dampier has a wife and nine children, and a large estate; his house and establishment on a superior scale. I expounded to the family this morning. His family, domestics, and friends formed by no means a small congregation. Mr. D. is much reviled and hated; he preaches faithfully, and gives us the right hand of fellowship with cordiality and with great pleasure; assists us in our proceedings, in lending us his carriages, horses, and servants. Of course, the orthodox clergy are very angry with him, and us, and all that lend us their churches, or come to hear us.

We have preached to some thousands in the various places, and not without profit; for I believe the Lord is with us. We bring, I am glad to say, a reproach upon all who receive us, particularly those who open their churches to us after having preached in the chapels in the neighborhood. Some say we are mad; some, that we are beside ourselves; some cry out, "My Lord Bishop, restrain them," and some wish us God speed; but the generality wonder at our conduct. We are both willing to be turned out of the Establishment for preaching the gospel. One of our Articles says, "Whatever is not read in the Scriptures, nor can be proved thereby, is not required of any man." Many seemed opposed to us at first, who afterwards support us, acknowledging they cannot say a word against us, for the work may be of God.

I now call to mind a remark which Deborah made to me, about three years ago, coming out of Oakham church—"You will soon be like Rowland Hill, and preach here and there." Little did I think then those words would prove true. I hope that God will daily give me a greater desire to glorify Him, so that I may serve Him more truly with a single eye. Mrs. Bulteel and son have joined us this week and we are going, the latter end of next week, to Plymouth. We hope to be there about the 18th. Bulteel's friends live at Plymouth, and there are several in that neighborhood anxious to see us. Bulteel's name is extremely well known, on account of his sermon; so, whoever opens their pulpit doors is aware of what doctrines we preach.

I cannot enter into particulars about the opposition we met with, and the various effects caused by our preaching. But I can assure you there is no small stir and they are almost ready to say, "These men, who have turned the world upside down, have come here also." We must remember, Satan is not dead; we may expect that he is laying snares for us in every way. It is easy for him to flatter and puff us up with pride, and make us believe we are

doing a great work. He is an old deceiver, and we are young Christians. I hope and pray that God will humble us, and show us more of our nothingness, that we may glory in Christ and in Christ alone. Why we give so much offence is, because so many follow us, and some ministers of the Establishment support us and encourage us; and, by going into dark villages, we expose the ignorance of blind guides.

All these circumstances, you may imagine, give much offence to the 'chief priests and Pharisees'. The world is not changed, nor the gospel. As it was in former days, so it is now. I am grieved to say, I meet with very little of the power of godliness. I have great opportunities of seeing the state of religion, and find my journey very profitable in that respect. We meet with professors of all denominations, but a different name does not make a different man. It is only the grace of God in the heart that makes men manifestly new creatures in Christ Jesus. **The world, in its various shapes, is Christ's great enemy**; and Satan is very busy in blinding the eyes of men, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." I would think that you find it difficult to overcome the world. Worldly wisdom reigns much. We act much like the Gentiles in making provision for the flesh. **When the world sees you so taken up with Christ, from the beauty and glory you see in Him, that you become crucified to the world and the world to you, they will hate you the more.**

Thank Deborah for her very kind letter; and, I can assure you, I am pleased to hear that \_\_\_\_\_ is persecuted for Christ's sake; I hope to hear of his suffering much more. We have much cause to leap for joy on such occasions, if we be assured it is for righteousness' sake that we suffer. If he is faithful, they will treat him as they treated his great Master. If we were of the world, the world would speak well of us. Tell me, in your next, what you have suffered for Christ. **Satan is well pleased with the state of religion in our day, or he would roar a little more loudly.**

We are now at Colinshays, near Bruton, where we have engagements until Wednesday; we shall then go to Kingweston, near Glastonbury, until Tuesday, D.V. We hope to reach Plymouth that evening; we may remain there a fortnight, or longer. Give me a full account of spiritual things in your neighborhood, and give my love to all who love the Lord Christ in sincerity.

Yours affectionately, in the best of bonds,  
W. Tiptaft.

July 27th, 1831

My dear Brother,

Through the mercy and goodness of God, I am again quietly settled at Sutton after my two months' tour in the West of England. I arrived on Friday, July 15th, and left Bulteel with his wife and child in Devon, for I could not conscientiously leave my own flock any longer; for during my absence they were left almost without food, as I could not get a minister of Christ for love or money.

Soon after I wrote to you we left Somerset for Bellevue, near Plymouth, and began to preach in that neighborhood. We stopped about ten days in the vicinity of Plymouth. Bulteel preached in the large church at Plymouth, which was also offered to me; and I would have accepted it, had I remained another Sunday. When Bulteel preached there, it was crowded to excess. We preached also in the open air, and in what churches we could obtain, to the great annoyance of the Church clergy. They consulted together whether they could not put us into the stocks. Of course they called upon my Lord Bishop to restrain us. We were the more offensive to them, because multitudes would flock together to hear us.

After we left Plymouth, we traveled along the southern coast of Devon, and preached in several of the principal towns. We both preached. Consequently *we kept our hearers standing nearly two hours, and sometimes longer*. We preached fifteen nights out of eighteen in the open air, and the numbers that gathered together surprised us; but the novelty of it, and the size of the towns were much the cause. I will mention a few of the towns—Modbury, Kingsbridge, Dartmouth, Brixham, Torquay, Teignmouth, Totnes, Exmouth, &c., etc. We had generally a table to stand upon. I preached upon the docks, as many of the places were by the sea, or had a large river running by them. We were not much molested, considering the offensive truths we preached, and the numbers of the vilest characters among our hearers. *But we were called every name that was applied to Christ and the first preachers of the gospel, and we were pelted with a few stones and dirt, etc.* But, upon the whole, we had but little to bear for our great and gracious Master. We preached twice at Teignmouth, and twice at Exeter, in the open air. A constable and a magistrate came the second night at Exeter, but we regarded them not, and they dared not touch us, nor could they prevent us, for we had a message for thousands.

Our flesh rebelled much against the work; but I am sure nothing would excite a neighborhood more than faithful preachers standing up in that way. But they must preach the finished work of Christ, or little effect in any way will be manifested. We were followed from place to place by several, and

they who were taught of God knew 'the sound'. We were much refreshed by conversations with God's dear people, who were chiefly among the poor, and they, alas! poor creatures, were almost without shepherds. Great darkness prevails, and very few preach the fullness of the gospel.

That part of Devon in which we were, is as dark as Rutland, and almost as void of true ministers. Many of God's dear people showed us great kindness, and those who received us we called Jasons; for they certainly had to bear a cross. Mr. Syngé, of Buckeridge House, near Teignmouth, was very kind to us. He stood by us twice in the open air at Teignmouth. We took up our abode with him, and he sent us in his carriage to Totnes, and met us again at Exeter, and stood by us again. May the Lord reward him! He is a man of property, and cousin to your curate.

I could not, in one or two letters, say all that you might desire to know about our journey. But the great question is, Who were converted; and who were comforted? We heard of convictions which were very striking. If no blossom there will be no fruit, but of course we knew but little of the effect of our preaching, as we left immediately, and went immediately to another place. But many could testify of our preaching, that it was good for them to be there. We had a very great number of ministers of all sorts to hear us. Some said we were mad, some said that we were good men, some said that we deceived the people, some mocked, and others said that they would like to hear us again. Very many, both rich and poor, wondered how we dared preach everywhere and anywhere, and they wanted to know what our bishops will say. I have heard nothing from mine, although I am sure he knows of it. Bulteel is to return for Sunday next. I do not think that he has heard from his bishop. We are both indifferent how they will act. If they turn us out of the Church of England, we shall see our way clear; for we both think, that if a mother ever had a daughter, our Established Church is one of Rome's. Bulteel can easily be removed, but they will find difficulty in removing me, as I am an incumbent. I think they will be afraid of interfering with Bulteel, as his name is so well known, and the poor Establishment is tottering to its very basis. As I mentioned before, the canons cannot prove us guilty, and the Scriptures are on our side. My desire is to do the Lord's work, and I shall not stop (D.V.) in bearing a testimony for Jesus, concerning those precious truths I know for my own comfort, whenever I have an opportunity.

O, my dear brother, may God open your eyes. I trust the Lord has begun the work in you and your wife, but it is a day of small things. To have the least spark of grace in our souls is a cause of unutterable thankfulness. It is a mercy beyond expression. Your views are changed; you like to talk with God's people; you stand and plead the cause of such; you believe in the

truth. All this is promising; but remember, it is through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. **There is a daily cross, and you must bear it, or there will be no crown.**

Be pleased to let me know whether I can have £20 or £30 soon, as my conscience is not comfortable to have so many hundreds, and poor brethren in Christ lacking bread. I do not like to give money away to support pride and idleness; nor do I like to keep it in store when Christ's dear friends and people need it. We are told not to lay up treasures upon earth. I can say—the Lord be praised—I care less about money, and could live in a plain way. **A little plain food and plain clothing are quite good enough for our vile bodies.** We visited an admiral who has not even a silver teaspoon, and he gives all away (nearly) to the poor for Christ's sake. We dined with him, and he showed us the power of Christianity, while we preached it. **What is this vain world?** "And this world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever."

Write me a very long letter, and give me a full account of the Lord's work in your neighborhood. With every good wish, believe me to be

Yours affectionately, in the best of bonds,  
W. Tiptaft.

September 5th, 1831

My dear Brother,

I was delighted with your letter which I received last Saturday, as it gave me good reason to believe the Lord has begun a good work in another of our relatives. **Time will make it manifest.** I would be sorry to discourage it in the least, "but by their fruits you shall know them."

Though it is not convenient for me to visit Rutland this autumn, nevertheless, as I am anxious to see you, I intend, God willing, to be with you next month. Bulteel is kind enough to say that he will serve my church; but he will not perform any of the 'stated ceremonies'; and, as my parish is large, it is rather inconvenient. He slept at my house on Saturday night, and preached in Abingdon market-place on Sunday morning to two or three thousand people, and on next Sunday he will preach in my church, and after the sermon a collection will be made towards building a chapel for him at Oxford. He has bought a piece of ground at Oxford, and hopes to raise subscriptions sufficient to build a chapel. His hearers, of course, are chiefly poor; consequently, the chief part of the money must be raised elsewhere.

Since his dismissal from St. Ebbe's, he has preached once a Lord's day in his own garden to a very large congregation. I have not heard from my bishop directly or indirectly; so when I come to see you I shall not be particular about 'Gothic arches', for the people form the church, and not mud and stone. If the Lord is with me I must give offence, for many of the sleepy orthodox cannot cordially bid me God speed in breaking down their walls of bigotry and prejudice.

We have very pleasing accounts of the usefulness of our labors during our travels. Some, I trust, will prove seals to our ministry. They are living testimonies that we were not acting contrary to the will of God, however man might scoff at and condemn us. I go on here much as usual, but not so comfortable in my mind, as my objections against the Church of England grow stronger and stronger, so that if I am not turned out, I must resign. I believe it is pride and covetousness that keep me in.

My church is still crowded. Some professors fall away, and others rise up; and so in one respect I am discouraged, and in the other encouraged. But things go on here much as they do where there are other preachers of the gospel. As it was in the early days, so it is now. I feel assured that if you and Deborah are faithful, you must bear a heavy cross in such a place as Oakham. He is not a Christian who differs only in 'sentiment' from the world, but in 'practice'. Faith without works is dead. You compare yourselves with others, therefore you are not wise. People in your rich circumstances will find it next to an impossibility to enter into heaven; and I feel more assured daily that God's people are very scattered in the present day.

Many are deceived and deceiving others, but God is not deceived. I shall rejoice to find you in a very spiritual state, for I need rousing and stirring up, for I am very carnal and dead; my heart is too much cleaving to the dust. Make no engagements for me in a worldly way; for I trust, through the grace of God, I shall be more decided than I was when I was with you last time. I hope that Christ will be exalted, and we shall experience more of His Spirit in our hearts. Satan is an astonishing enemy, and is endeavoring to rob us of all comfort, if he cannot keep us under his dominion.

I shall hope to find you all rejoicing in Christ Jesus, fighting bravely in His name; and that the Lord may direct you to act to His glory and praise is the sincere prayer of

Yours most affectionately in Christ,  
W. Tiptaft.

October 25th, 1831

My dear Brother,

I am very much obliged to you and Deborah for your joint letter; it rejoiced my heart to hear that some found it good to their souls to hear me; and those poor creatures that rebelled against it were also confirming the truth; for though Christ is precious to some, He is a stone of stumbling unto others. It is a very high honor to be an ambassador for Christ, when we can truly say, "For we speak as messengers who have been approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel. Our purpose is to please God, not people. He is the one who examines the motives of our hearts. Never once did we try to win you with flattery, as you very well know. And God is our witness that we were not just pretending to be your friends so you would give us money!"<sup>1</sup> Thes. 2:4-5

Faithfulness is much needed in the present day. We are too inclined to prophesy smooth things, and we are constrained to do so in some measure, for we would otherwise too glaringly condemn ourselves. Before a man can preach the spirit of the gospel, his life and conduct must be according to it; and most gospel preachers fall short in this respect. It is the cross we are inclined to shun. But we shall bear it, if we are Christ's ministers, and then our walk will be quite contrary to the world.

The professing church is too much like the Gentiles of old, saying, "What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or with what shall we be clothed?" While we honor the 'god of this world' in such a manner we expect little opposition from him, for he cares not about 'head-notions', as they make little or no encroachments upon his territories. I feel assured that neither you, your wife, nor myself have sacrificed much for the Lord yet, and our evil nature will contend most strongly that there is no need. But I trust that the Holy Spirit has taught us the contrary; for, if not, I may truly say, "We do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

I must now tell you that I am harassed in my mind about leaving the Church of England, for I find that I cannot hold my living and a good conscience too. Every reason which is urged on me to continue, savors of the things which are of man, and not of God. I believe it to be an unholy system, from an undergraduate in preparation at Cambridge, to the Archbishop of Canterbury. I cannot read the Baptismal and Burial Services; and I am inclined to think that pride and covetousness have caused me to continue in

it to the present moment. What I shall do if I leave it, I know not. God will direct me. I am willing to labor in His service, and I shall rejoice to be free from such shackles as I now labor in. I find that all who recommend me to keep my living have no grace in their hearts, or so little that I can scarcely perceive it. Out of the camp there is reproach; but, by the grace of God, I have learned to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than my living.

**We know but little of the deceit and wickedness of our own hearts; and that detestable pride is interwoven with every fiber of them.** We must suffer with Christ before we reign with Him; and if grace enters the heart, the world must be turned out, and then a man will act in a manner which surprises the world. "No man can serve two masters." "If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

I consider the 'genteel Christians of the present day' very much like Gentile Christians. **When the Lord opens your eyes wider, you will see how much worldly-mindedness there is, in one shape or other, among the professors around you; and when you reprove them for it they are almost ready to turn back and say, "I desire not the knowledge of your ways."** True knowledge of Christ alone will avail; they must be taught of God what riches they have in Christ, to make them despise the world and all its wealth and honors.

I am convinced that with most, grace is only in the bud, and will not grow if a person acts contrary to the word of God. There is a cross to bear; and if a person does not take it up, what will be the consequence? The conscience will be hardened, and Satan prevail. When people profess to have received the truth, by their life and conversation they influence others; and consequently, by doing that which is wrong, they cause the weak to stumble. **You will find many who will talk to you upon the Calvinistic points, who know nothing of the vital power of them in their souls.** "The kingdom of God is within you;" it is "not in word, but in power." We must know ourselves sinners before we shall value the blood and righteousness of Christ. We must be under the teachings and operations of the Spirit for some time before the heart is fully established with grace, which is a good thing. The more tried and tempted we are, the nearer we shall be brought to God, and see the suitability of Christ in all His glorious characters. Few have the true light in their heart; so that they can see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ but as we receive the power of religion, it will be made manifest in our lives.

It is surprising how Satan helps many to reconcile difficult passages in Scripture with their manner of life. But why are they difficult? Because our eye is not single. Christ made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him

the form of a servant. Let this mind be in you. Ask each of the professors around you what they have suffered for Christ.

Remember, the children of God are soldiers, chosen by Christ to endure hardness. Satan is not much opposed in the present day; it seems that we are in the Laodicean state, for many talk about schools, and societies, and evangelical preachers; but let them read, "You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Rev. 3:17

I hope the Lord will give you a spirit of prayer at Oakham, that the true work of the Lord may be revived among you. The power of the gospel is sure to be followed by the cross. **We are too much liked by the world, and too well spoken of; it would not be so, if we lived godly in Christ Jesus. God forbid that we should rest in a form of godliness.** I hope God will search and prove us, and empty us from vessel to vessel, so that we may not be at ease in Zion. I hope and trust that the Lord's people will remember me at Oakham in their prayers. I much need them, for I begin to be more harassed; for, as yet, I believe I have been borne upon the sides and dandled upon the knees of Zion. But it is a blessed promise, that my strength shall be according to my day; and again, the Lord says, "My grace is sufficient for you."

That the Lord may establish your heart with grace, is the sincere prayer of

Yours affectionately in the Lord,  
William Tiptaft.

November 16th, 1831

My dear Brother,

I am rather disappointed at not having received a letter in answer to my last. As I have now been led to act in that which I have long talked about, I feel assured you will be glad to hear some of the particulars. My former letter, however, will prevent any surprise at the important step I have taken.

After frequent prayer to God and deep consideration, I sent a long Letter to the bishop of Sarum, declaring my intention of resigning my living last Thursday, and received an answer yesterday, saying he accepted it. You are aware that flesh is not favored in this transaction, but a burdened conscience. The performance of the 'ministerial services' constrained me to resign my living. I feel assured that only pride and covetousness have

caused me to continue in it so long. I shall not enter into any particular reasons for resigning, as I intend to publish them, and then you can consider them at your leisure.

I do not expect to escape difficulties by giving up my living. They may be said now to begin; but the grace of God is sufficient for me. The great question is, What shall I do? If I am the Lord's laborer, which I trust I am, He will find me work in His large vineyard. The most of my hearers are poor people, and they are very desirous for me to continue among them. They who are enlightened rejoice at the thought of my leaving the Church of England, for I have not a single hearer who is evidently a child of God that does not testify against the National Establishment.

I have been induced, from various reasons, to think about settling at Abingdon. Some poor friends thought a small piece of ground might be purchased to build a chapel on, and there was a probability of my having it; but last night I had an answer sent me in the negative. Though Abingdon contains 5,000 or 6,000 people, I scarcely think it possible to get a piece of ground to build a chapel upon. Abingdon is by far the most suitable situation, and very many of my present hearers could go there as conveniently, or more so, than come to Sutton.

The chapel would be the very plainest building, with all open seats; and as those who desire the gospel in these parts are obliged to eat their bread by the sweat of their brow, of course I could not ask them for sixpence, while I have so much of my own. But our souls are so wrapped up in thick clay, and earthbound, that when an opportunity offers of making a little sacrifice of our abundance for Christ's sake, we are almost ready to make an excuse. If we were called upon to sell our houses and lands, and share them with the poor children of God, we would have something of the spirit of Ananias and Sapphira, in desiring to keep back part of the price. But as God opens our eyes by His blessed Spirit, to see more of the wondrous sacrifice that has been made for us, we shall more willingly offer body, soul and estate to His service. "If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." How awful! The generality of professors are endeavoring to serve two masters; for when they have an opportunity of serving Christ, they are inclined to count their money, for fear they shall give too much. "Where the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

If a chapel be built at Abingdon, or elsewhere, a few will contribute who have the means, if not resident in this neighborhood; but, if not, I trust my heart will not prove so devoid of grace as not willingly to build it myself. A day will soon arrive when it will be made known how much we have spent in the gratification of our own lusts, and how little for Christ.

When He lived in this world self was out of the question. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant."

Pray for me that I may have more grace and be more spiritually minded, and manifest more of a single eye to God's glory. Religion is not in word but in power. We are so inclined "to walk according to the course of this world." My flesh does not like giving up a very comfortable home, and a living altogether worth £140. My flesh would make excuses, and has done so. But neither you, nor I, nor any other interested person, as a member of the Church of England, can give an opinion on the subject. "A gift even blinds the eyes of the wise." I think many are harassed about continuing in her, but it is the Lord's time when they shall come out, so that they may not "be partakers of her plagues."

I intend to go to London next week to resign, it being necessary to go before a notary; consequently, next Sunday will be my last. I do not at present see what I shall do, but I think of continuing in my vicarage a few weeks longer, and then I think of taking lodgings in Abingdon.

My congregations do not diminish, for last Sunday I think I scarcely ever saw more in my church. Several chapels will be open to me occasionally; but, of course, my chief interest is with those whom the Lord has called by my ministry, and those who are spiritual among my hearers.

As my 'letter of resignation' will be printed in London, I shall order about 200 to be sent to you from thence, and I will thank you to send Markham fifty, and tell him he is welcome to them, to sell them and keep the money, for he sent me as a present twenty-five of my sermons. You may give all my relatives two each; that is, to a family; and what you have left out of fifty, you may give to poor people, or whomsoever you please; and then there will be a hundred left to sell. The price will be about threepence each. As many will wonder why I have left the Church, I think it well to let them know my reasons.

The times seem very momentous, considering the very disturbed state of the country, and a daily expectation of the spreading of the cholera. Men's hearts may be said to be failing them, for fear of what is coming upon the earth. But God's people are safe; I trust that through the grace of God we shall find many led by the Spirit to seek the Lord.

I am anxious to know how you are going on at Oakham in religion. **It is uphill work to contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil.**

How is the Lord dealing with your soul? Is He letting His light shine more fully into your heart? Are you more dead to the world? Do you heartily desire to have more of a work of grace upon your heart? The head travels much faster than the heart. **Self-denial, taking up a daily cross, and following of Christ, are but little understood in the present day.** But we are to walk in His steps. We have so much pride; until grace brings that down, we shall not suffer much for Christ. Have you ever felt a deep sense of your sinfulness, and a powerful testimony of God's Spirit showing you your completeness through the righteousness of Jesus Christ? Does your Father purge you, that you should bring forth more fruit? You will find the way to heaven is through much tribulation. Do you read your Bible much? Can you say that you do not walk according to the course of this world? Many such-like questions, if applied with power, might be profitable in humbling us, which we much need.

Yours in the bonds of the everlasting covenant,  
William Tiptaft.

November 29th, 1831

My dear Brother,

I went to London last week, and resigned my living; and I hope that my 'letter of resignation' containing my reasons will be published tomorrow.

I have bought a small piece of land at Abingdon to build a chapel on, for I feel constrained to remain in this neighborhood, as nearly all my hearers are very poor, and would not be able to pay a minister if one could be had for money. So you may send word to Mr. W., that I cannot accept his kind offer and invitation to go to N., as I am about building a chapel at Abingdon, in this neighborhood, where but very little knowledge of Christ is manifested. I have a chapel lent to me, until mine is built, where I preached last Sunday. It will hold, when full, about three or four hundred; but it will not at present contain all my hearers. On next Sunday I am to preach twice at Wallingford, to an established church, which invited me to become their pastor.

It has made rather a sensation in this neighborhood, particularly as I am about to remain. Many were hoping that I should no longer be a troubler of Israel in these parts; and on last Saturday a paragraph was in the Oxford paper about me. I feel much comfort in my mind now that I am free from the Church of England, and I think that the Lord never gave me so much liberty and power as He did last Sunday evening. But already I perceive that I and my hearers will be more hated and persecuted.

I had much difficulty in obtaining a piece of freehold land in Abingdon; but now I have succeeded in obtaining a piece, in frontage 30 feet, and 48 feet 8 in. deep, for which I am to give £105, which is £3 10s. a foot. It is about the same price as Bulteel gave for his. There are 20,000 bricks to be taken up on the land, at £2 per 1,000, which the vendor intended to build with. I have no money to pay for them, and so must consult with you what I am to do. As I said in my last, my hearers could not build the chapel, if they were sold up; and Paul says, "Let not one be eased and another burdened," therefore I shall have the pleasure to make the sacrifice in Christ's cause. I have the part, and best part, of my furniture to sell, if not all; for, perhaps, I may take lodgings at Abingdon, unfurnished. My chapel is to be 48 feet long, and 30 feet wide. It will at first, I think, be built without a gallery, and will hold about 400 to sit down in, and galleries might be made, to hold 200 more. Now I know not who will give me a few pounds towards it.

If we are brought to consider what Christ sacrificed for us, and how little we sacrifice for Him, we might blush. And how soon persecution may arise to strip us of every farthing, so that we might be obliged to wander, "destitute, afflicted, and tormented," or how soon a revolution or famine might sweep us away. **If I love my money more than Christ, woe is me!**

Conscience tells me I ought rather to stay here than go to where they are so well able to pay a minister. I cannot think my plain kind of preaching would long be received among them, for they are too much of this world.

I dare say I shall be accounted a fool for spending my money and time for nothing. The worldlings around here begin to think there is something particular in my religion that induces me to give up my comfortable house and living, and share the burdens of the poor. **Religion is worth nothing, if there be not a power in it.**

I shall send you the 'letters of resignation' according to promise, but I dare not wait to send this letter with them on account of the delay, as two important things are at stake. I know not when a vicar will be appointed. Some one is coming tomorrow to look at the house. I probably may continue two or three weeks longer there. I shall go to Abingdon to live.

Yours most affectionately,  
William Tiptaft.

P.S.—Give my love to all God's people. I rejoice exceedingly that more seem to be seeking. I trust that it will prove to be the Lord's work.

December 30th, 1831

My dear Brother,

I trust that I shall not covet a single farthing from a poor laborer, so that his children would be deprived of bread. Much covetousness lurks in our evil nature. From the prophet to the priest they all went after it in former days; and as it was then, so it is now.

I have taken possession of my lodgings. I slept there last night for the first time. They were unfurnished, and so I have brought part of my furniture with me. They are consistent with my preaching, and I trust Christ is saying to me—"Zaccheus, make haste and come down." If we were called upon to sell all that we have—houses, land, etc., to be one common stock, we would find how hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. We have so little faith, we would rather trust to our funds, than to God's promises. If we make a little sacrifice, we are ready to say, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord." **Pride must come down.** I acknowledge that I have much to come down, and there is much to be brought down at Oakham before great grace will be manifest. We want things to go on well with both body and soul, but it never was so, and never will be so. **Those who are seeking 'creature comforts' will not at the same time find 'spiritual consolations'.**

I trust that the Lord will keep us from a desire of pleasing men. Remember, if any man loves the world, the love of God is not in him. The rich children of God can see only one side of God's countenance, and they have but an obscure view of that; precious faith they know little of. Now, suppose you were not called by grace to walk in a strait and narrow way, and to be a peculiar person, "zealous for good works," how would your mode of living differ from your present? Are you walking in tribulation's path? Do you understand self-denial, and enduring hardness for Christ's sake?

Since I published my Letter, a friend of mine has left the Church of England, by name Brenton, the only son of Sir Jahleel Brenton, Governor of Greenwich Hospital. I am blamed as the cause, he being intimate with me. His father, I trust, is a good man; for the sermon which Brenton preached on the occasion he sent to his father, and he returned an answer, saying that he would rather see him act in that conscientious manner than attain the highest preferment. His father could have soon procured a good living for him. The cause of his leaving so abruptly as he did was the objection to bury a very wicked man, who died without the slightest penitence. He has published the sermon on the occasion, and advertised it in the "Record." I have a neighboring clergyman who cannot conscientiously go on in the

present church system; and he is going to endeavor to leave; but he knows not the difficulties.

If the Lord separates the faithful ministers from the Establishment, it will then fall without doubt. Light makes darkness manifest. Before any one ought to condemn me, they ought to prove my objections to be of no weight.

Let me hear from you soon, and let me know how the work of the Lord is going on among you. **We can spend everything upon that vile monster, self; but when we are called on to give anything for Christ, we hold our money back.** A day of reckoning will come for all this. Christ has said, "Occupy until I come," and He will say, "Give an account of your stewardship." Pray for me that the Lord may open my covetous and selfish heart, and cause me to give freely for His sake; for "there is one who scatters, and yet increases." If we spent as much every year for Christ as we do to feed our pride, our light would shine more than it does.

If I had a wife, with a family, perhaps I would not so willingly build a chapel and preach for nothing. Take my advice and have as little to do with the world as you can help. Desire not to be a collector of 'thick clay'. I very likely may, if the Lord will, pay you a visit this spring, before my chapel is completed; but I have plenty of preaching. **There is but little vital godliness anywhere, and very few ministers are led into the great mysteries of the gospel. So few know the power of godliness, or the preciousness of Christ's blood, or the love of God shed abroad in the heart.** If there be no root to a man's religion, it soon withers and dies. None can keep alive his own soul. When you talk with professors upon the subject of religion, ask them what they know of these things experimentally.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,  
William Tiptaft