

August, 1910

To the Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus:

Beloved Brethren:

Our cry is heard, the Shepherd's voice is sounding out. Many simple souls have been in a maze of confusion, not knowing what to do. Our blessed Lord is still the Head, the wheel is still in the hand of our trusted Pilot.

The course He has laid out for us for many years is still the same for us to take. We do not want a new course. This trouble is altogether different from any that has beset us before. We have had to take a stand against evil doctrine time after time. Terrible divisions have severed the beloved assemblies before and great dishonor has been done to His name. But there was ground for division. Those were not local cases. They affected the whole church of God. This is a different case: all honest souls realize this. This is a local case only.

If Mr. Strange at Tunbridge Wells was a wicked person, or became a wicked person by his course they should have put him out. They only could put him out. If he were a wandering sheep then they were responsible to discipline him for *the purpose of his RESTORATION* as prescribed plainly in the Word for such. The other eight likewise. If they had become leprous they should have been *put out* after a fair trial. This was their own responsibility and no assembly can insist on other assemblies doing it for them. If T. W. separated themselves from all the others because they did not do this for them, it was no reason for them to leave the ground we have been on with them so long. There was

no ground for this separation and division. Why have they left us? Are we wicked? We have been all together up to this time. Why not stay together as we have for many years? There is no ground for division. We all honestly do not want a division for it is a fruit of the flesh (Gal. 5.20, "schools of opinion").

We intend to take no step *in this direction* nor ever change our ground. We have been on the same ground with you, even the ground of the one body for many years. There is no reason now to make a change. If the Lord has gathered us together by the Holy Spirit it is *His* work, if you separate from it, it is *your* work not His work, and then you are on human ground. That the Lord Jesus is in our midst *now* we thoroughly believe. If you will also now separate from us we will beg of you to return, for the sake of Him who wants you around Himself alone. Before taking this step you were on the same ground with us and where we intend to remain. Are you not satisfied with the *old* ground? Why step on to this *new* one? Has the Rock become sand? If it is the same Rock still then all other ground is sinking sand. We are not wicked people. We hold no evil doctrine. We have personally failed we own and have owned with tears, but we *do* love the Lord. He is in our midst still. He has not left us, why need you? He has not lost patience with us on account of our many shortcomings, nor given us up. We want *Him* only. We want no party. We will not tolerate neutrality. We refuse to unite with any group of men. "Christ is all" and all we want. "Jesus only" is our rallying cry. We do not want a change to something *new*. We do not want new ground. The old ground is good enough for us and why should you want to make a change? There are some things that we want new. We want *new* grace. We want to sing the new song. We want "a new name engraven" by His hand at that day. We want nothing newer than the New Testament. Anything more recent and modern we refuse. We want those compassions of

His which are "new every morning." (Lam. 3.23). But" as to our ground and where we now stand, we do not want to make a change, nor do we intend to follow any assembly into any separation. If the decisions of any number of assemblies come to us endeavoring to cause us to leave the ground we have been on so long we must refuse them with all our hearts.

We know where we are *now*. We are satisfied with being now truly gathered to His name and have been so for a great many years. We see no reason to make a change. We intend to stay just where we have been. If any in our meetings want to leave us so as to take a stand elsewhere, we beg them to remain. We do not want them to go as there is no godly cause for separating in that way. Why do you want to divide? Would *this* be "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace"? (Eph. 4:3). Have we not had divisions enough? In other times there *was* ground. *Then* they were not merely local cases. Every sincere saint owns that this case is entirely different and that THERE SHOULD BE NO DIVISION. Then why not remain—all who have not decided to go out—we earnestly, lovingly beg of you to hear the blessed Shepherd's voice and stay. There is an epidemic of division on and many seem to want to make a change and go like a lot of sheep, taking a leap into a chasm. Why should you need to leap? Are you dissatisfied with the old ground? "Weep not for the dead * * * * * but weep sore for him THAT GOETH AWAY" (Jer. 22. 10) When there is a ground for division it is right to separate from wickedness and evil doctrine proven and adhered to. But when there is no ground, then separating ourselves is sternly rebuked in Jude 19. "Abide," is God's word then to all. "Hold that fast which thou hast that no man take thy crown." Rev. 3. 11. *Hold fast* what you have. Do not give up "that which thou hast." What have you had these long years? The true ground and the Lord in the midst. Then do not make an exchange for something else. Let

no man take your crown. Do not encourage division. Do not divide from us. We still have the Lord Jesus with us and we delight in His presence. Do you so easily leave what the Lord gave you just because a meeting says "We separate ourselves from the rest," and calls upon you to follow? For you know plainly who is taking this step from the rest of us. We intend to stay upon the same ground where we have been put by God's grace. Why should *you* be moved away? If we have been till now on this true ground, why should we make a change, no matter who calls on us to do so.

Of course some may say: "We leave you because you have Mr. S. with you." If he was a wicked person and proven so T. W. ought to have put him out from us; *they alone* had jurisdiction. No other assembly could do it for them. T. W. left him among us in other meetings. We do not want any wicked person with us nor any doctrine subversive of Christianity. We have been exclusive and severe on such cases all these years and intend to be so in the future, by God's grace.

We want to show no partiality, be one a gift or not, rich or poor, great or small. Everything must be in agreement with that name, that precious name. We want no other and will accept no other.

The simple saints must be considered. They are dear to God and precious to Christ. Many hardly "know the right hand from the left" in this matter. Yet they do know the Shepherd's voice when they hear it. John 10.3. It is to them we earnestly, lovingly, yet solemnly say: This is a local case; there is no ground for a separation from us. You are on the true ground do not change.

We remain your brethren in the Lord, greeting:

Signed: { Samuel J. Rutherford
H. B. Whelpley
Chas. F. Guntner

and many others.