

—ever the congregation and of the Presbyterian church in this town and neighborhood, which made me, thirty-five years ago, undertake the charge of the congregation, made me willing to resign it, if my resignation were to be the means of benefitting the congregation, of consolidating the church, and of preventing the further division and disunion which, I was also given to understand, was contemplated if I did not retire.

I did feel that, in these very peculiar circumstances in which we were placed, in the Providence of God—for whoever may be the direct instrumental agents, and whatever may be the secondary causes, let us ever remember and rejoice that God is over all—I did feel in these circumstances, I say, that if a harmonious, cordial union, such as was intimated, would take place, and if harmonious co-operation would afterwards continue, my resignation would probably be in the interests of the congregation and the church.

But these were questions which, I felt, I neither had the ability to decide, nor the right to decide. The right of deciding upon them belonged to the congregation and the Presbytery more than to me, and the congregation and Presbytery were more competent to decide them than I was.

Fully resolved, however, to be no obstacle in the way of advancing the interests of the congregation and the church, and shrinking from the responsibility of being, in any measure, the cause of producing in the Presbyterian church here any further division and disunion, with all their bitter and unpleasures in Christian fruits, I determined to place my resignation, conditionally, in the hands of the Presbytery, so that the congregation and the Presbytery might have it in their power to do, in the matter what, in their wisdom, they considered best for the interests of the congregation and the church.

The congregation and the Presbytery have judged that, in the circumstances, my resignation is likely to be in those interests, and I have dutifully accepted their judgment, and I do it in all good faith and good spirit, trusting and praying fervently that it may be for the best interests of the congregation and the church.

In separating myself, however, from my people and congregation—a congregation which, in its many deceased members, as well as in its living members, I have loved so much, and preached and prayed and labored for so much, and of whose members I have baptized and married so many, and in whose deceased members as well as in its living members I have, and shall have, I trust, many, many seals of my ministry—many who are my hope and joy now, and shall be my crown of rejoicing through eternity—unworthy as I am—a congregation, also, from the families and members of which I have, during so many years, received so many tokens of love and Christian regard—I am separating myself from this congregation I am making a sacrifice, greater perhaps, than any of you are able to understand, and I am also, I feel, placing myself in a position before the church and the country which those, who do not know my motives or the circumstances of our present position in Perth, will regard as anything but an honorable one.

Painful as it is, and painful as it shall be probably to me through the remainder of my life, to think of my separation from this congregation, and to experience and behold its effects upon myself and family, yet, in the hope that