

To the Methodist Preachers assembled in Conference at Manchester, July 1795.

Honoured Fathers and Brethren,

It being unnecessary to express our views at large, and (as far as we are conscious of our own motives) moved only by a desire to promote the spread of pure religion; we think it our duty to state in the most respectful and affectionate manner,

That we attended at Manchester, *not with an intent to claim any power as Trustees, but solely as Delegates of the Brethren*, who in this hour of danger ought in love to meet each other, and with the utmost calmness and tenderness compare their different views, in order to promote Peace and Truth amongst our Societies.

That we should be ungrateful to our Preachers, as a body, if we now omitted testifying, in the most serious manner, that we believe them watching over our souls as Men "*who must give an account.*"

That the insinuations, either of Societies or Individuals, which represent them as *designing and oppressive men*, are not only contradicted by the experience of many years, but are highly injurious to the prosperity of the work of God amongst us.

We consider that the great object of the Methodist Body, whether it relates to Preachers, People, or Rules, is to promote the knowledge and love of God.

These Principles engaged us to attend a meeting of the Delegates, &c. at Manchester (the *Authority of which, and their Impartiality*, we say nothing of).

As we could not acquiesce in every part with the sentiments and resolutions of that meeting, we state our thoughts on such parts of the subjects in question, as appear connected with the Promotion of Peace.

It may be necessary to observe, that the representation in their Address is not sufficiently explicit. As 1st, It can only relate to those places, from whence their information was received. 2d, That information must be very imperfect, as it is chiefly received from one party. 3d, It does not appear to us *sufficiently to state, that a majority are willing to accommodate their Brethren*, though a few seem determined on resistance, and many have no inclination to change.

We are decidedly of opinion, that no just view of the sentiments of the *whole* people can be formed from their letters, as numerous letters sent to the Conference, with the Manchester Address, would lead us to a conclusion directly opposite.

We do not wish to state our sentiments "*as resolutions,*" but purely to recommend what appears likely to promote Peace. 1st, We think christian love will endeavour to provide for each other, whether as to the Sacraments, or any other subject; which spirit of moderation, the sentiments of Methodism have always inculcated. 2d, We hope the Preachers will be kept, as much as possible, out of all disputes about these things, that they may be men of peace and love, and that being engaged in debates with no party; but considered as the Friends of all, their word may have free course, and be made a blessing. 3d, That no injustice should be done to any description of persons among us, but let the Preachers assembled in Conference, the Trustees of our Chapels, the Leaders and Stewards of our Societies, and all the People stand in their proper places, and have their due share of power and regard. 4th, That the appointment of Preachers rests solely in the Conference. 5th, That the authority of Conference, *as ministers of Jesus Christ, consists in the WHOLE body.* 6th, That the Sacrament should not be admitted into the Chapels, without the consent, in writing, of a majority of Trustees, Stewards, and Leaders, *collectively.* 7th, Provided that the determination of Trustees, Leaders, and Stewards, be controverted by the People, we think the signatures of each class should be faithfully produced by each Class-Leader at the Leader's meeting. 8. Whenever a class has to determine in this manner, it should only be done at the request of a majority of Class Leaders in a regular Leader's meeting. 9th, We apprehend that the minority in a Society, (on the Principles of Methodism and the Bible) ought to communicate wherever and in whatever manner they please, provided they do not designedly promote strife in the Societies, that they ought not to contend for receiving it in their own Preaching-houses, contrary to the judgment of the major part of their Brethren. 10th, We think Preachers should not attempt to change or appoint Leaders and Stewards, in opposition to the general judgment of the rest of their Brethren. 11th, It is our opinion, that the Pulpit should no more be made a vehicle of *abuse* than of *profaneness*, but we observe that hearers should be as cautious that they do not mistake faithful representations of sin or danger for personal reflections; as Preachers should be to avoid making an unmanly declamation from the Pulpit a substitute for christian reproof.

We are firmly determined not to separate from the Conference on the subjects in question, if they continue unanimous; we therefore entreat our Brethren to observe, that we wish to live and die with them, meeting on the plain rules of the Society and the Bible.

As we wish to avoid forming a Party, we shall no further call upon our Brethren who concur with us, than appears to be strictly necessary to preserve the great object we have in view, the Peace of the Societies and Prosperity of the Gospel; this may account for our not collecting a number of names, or forming a permanent Committee.

That as the union of the body is of so much importance, and various circumstances create mutual jealousies, with the utmost respect we suggest, that it may be necessary for Conference, to determine on the most probable means of strengthening the executive power of District Meetings, by admitting Delegates, or such other means as appear most agreeable to themselves.

Praying that the Lord may direct and abundantly bless your deliberations, we remain your affectionate Brethren in the Gospel,

Michael Longridge, Sunderland.  
James Gregory, Prescott.  
Thomas Lomas, Manchester.  
Joseph Hague, ditto.  
Thomas Pendleton, Liverpool.  
William Sagar, Colne.

Henry Collings, Bristol.  
Edmund Whitehead, Oldham.  
J. Harrop, Ashton-under-line.  
John Howard, Mossley.  
James Parry, Chester.

James Davis, Bristol.  
James Ewer, ditto.  
Thomas Heamer, Manchester.  
Samuel Heginbottom, ditto.  
Robert Thorneley, Red-hall.

P. S. Since the above was sent to the press, the friends from BRISTOL have thought it necessary to add the following note.

N. B. The personal reflections cast on the characters of Dr. Coke, Messrs. Moore, Bradburn, Rutherford, Crowther, and Grant, (in the Address signed by Mr. Mayer and Mr. Pine) are very unjust; we totally deny the charge brought against the said Preachers. On the contrary it must be manifest to every impartial person, that the division was occasioned by the Trustees of Broad Mead Chapel, and by none else. The expulsion of Mr. Moore, by the Attorney's arbitrary letter, was the sole cause of what they term "*the shameful division,*" and which influenced thirteen hundred people to acknowledge *the authority of Conference in preference to that of the Trustees.*

Had the Trustees permitted Mr. Moore to have preached at the Room in Broad Mead, as appointed by the Conference, there would have been no division in the Society at Bristol.

James Ewer.  
Henry Collings,  
James Davis.