

Christ All-Sufficient

London, Aug. 19, 1775.

You see I am mindful of my promise; and glad should I be to write something that the Lord may be pleased to make a word in season. I went yesterday into the pulpit very dry and heartless. I seemed to have fixed upon a text, but when I came to the pinch, it was so shut up that I could not preach from it. I had hardly a minute to choose, and therefore was forced to snatch at that which came first upon my mind, which proved 2 Tim. i. 12. Thus I set off at a venture, having no resource but in the Lord's mercy and faithfulness; and, indeed, what other can we wish for? Presently my subject opened; and I know not when I have been favoured with more liberty. Why do I tell you this? Only as an instance of His goodness, to encourage you to put your strength in Him, and not to be afraid even when you feel your own weakness and insufficiency most sensibly. We are never more safe, never have more reason to expect the Lord's help, than when we are most sensible that we can do nothing without Him. This was the lesson Paul learnt, to rejoice in His own poverty and emptiness, that the power of Christ might rest upon Him. Could Paul have done anything, Jesus would not have had the honour of doing all. This way of being saved entirely by grace, from first to last, is contrary to our natural wills; it mortifies self, leaving it nothing to boast of, and through the remains of an unbelieving, legal spirit, it often seems discouraging. When we think ourselves so utterly helpless and worthless, we are too ready to fear that the Lord will therefore reject us; whereas, in truth, such a poverty of spirit is the best mark we can have of an interest in His promises and care.

How often have I longed to be an instrument of establishing you in the peace and hope of the Gospel! And I have but one way of attempting it, by telling you over and over of the power and grace of Jesus. You want nothing to make you happy, but to have the eyes of your understanding more fixed upon the Redeemer, and more enlightened by the Holy Spirit to behold His glory. O! He is a suitable Saviour! He has power, authority, and compassion, to save to the uttermost. He has given His word of promise, to engage our confidence, and He is able and faithful to make good the expectations and desires He has raised in us. Put your trust in Him; believe (as we say) through thick and thin, in defiance of all objections from within and without. For this, Abraham is recommended as a pattern to us. He overlooked all difficulties; he ventured and hoped even against hope, in a case which to appearance was desperate; because he knew that He who had promised was also able to perform.

Your sister is much upon my mind. Her illness grieves me; were it in my power, I would quickly remove it. The Lord can, and I hope will, when it has answered the end for which He sent it. I trust He has brought her to us for good, and that she is chastised by Him that she may not be condemned with the world. I hope, though she says little, she lifts up her heart to Him for a blessing. I wish you may be enabled to leave her and yourself, and all your concerns, in His hands. He has a sovereign right to do with us as He pleases; and if we consider what we are, surely we shall confess we have no reason to complain; and to those who seek Him, His sovereignty is exercised in a way of grace. All shall work together for good; everything is needful that He sends; nothing can be needful that He withholds. Be content to bear the cross; others have borne it before you. You have need of patience; and if you ask, the Lord will give it: but there can be no settled peace till our will is in a measure subdued. Hide yourself under the shadow of His wings; rely upon His care and power; look upon Him as a physician who has graciously undertaken to

heal your soul of the worst of sicknesses, sin. Yield to His prescriptions, and fight against every thought that would represent it as desirable to be permitted to choose for yourself. When you cannot see your way, be satisfied that He is your leader. When your spirit is overwhelmed within you, He knows your path; He will not leave you to sink. He has appointed seasons of refreshment, and you shall find He does not forget you. Above all, keep close to the throne of grace. If we seem to get no good by attempting to draw near Him we may be sure we shall get none by keeping away from Him.

I am, &c.



John Newton

John Newton (1725 – 1807) was a sailor, preacher, and hymnwriter who was a leader of the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century. He is known for his conversion to Christ after a career in the slave trade and the hymn 'Amazing Grace'.

[Suffering, John Newton](#)