

# Broadmead's Call to Robert Hall.

FOUR LETTERS FROM THE ARCHIVES.

The Church of Christ of the Baptist Denomination meeting in Broadmead in the City of Bristol to the Rev. Robert Hall, A.M. sends Christian salutations.

REVD. AND DEAR SIR.—We are called together by that dispensation of Divine Providence which has removed our late dear and venerated pastor, Dr. Ryland. We review with gratitude to God the distinguished care and goodness with which He has watched over our Church from the time of its formation—amidst persecution, when a few servants of the Lord received the word with much affliction and joy in the Holy Ghost, throughout a long series of years, which have all been marked by the conversion of some to God and by the entrance of others into the everlasting rest.

Our Church has long had reason to bless God for a succession of pastors, pure in their doctrine, holy in conduct, and faithful in exertions; and more especially do we, who have personally known and loved our late Pastor, remember with thanksgiving his exemplary purity of life, his instructions and his most earnest prayers. We are met to consider our state and the supply of our need. It has been intimated to us that the Committee of the Baptist Academy consider it not desirable that the office of the President of that Institution should be united with the pastoral office in our church, and they have resolved to recommend to the Annual Meeting our dear and very highly respected minister, Mr. Crisp as the President, and we understand that he is writing to accede to the proposal. We have now to present to you our most sincere and earnest request that you will consent to take the pastoral office over us. We feel particularly urged to this measure by the recollection of our early union, by attachments both ministerial and personal which have been formed during your visits to us, by the intimacy and endeared Christian friendship which many of us have long enjoyed with you, by the affection which always subsisted between our late pastor and yourself and your honoured father, especially by a conviction that in giving this invitation we are seeking a Union which under the Divine blessing may greatly conduce to the spiritual prosperity of our own society and the cause of religion in our city.

We do not, nor probably do you, approve of inviting a

settled pastor to leave his station for another, if there be no other motive than inclination. But we think we can give this call and not violate the principle (we have heard that there have been some particulars which have rendered your connection with the Church at Leicester not so indissoluble as it might have been at some distance of time, and in addition to this) we could, as one consideration, suggest that Bristol may be regarded as a more enlarged field of usefulness than your present situation.

If the connection we now propose should be effected, we trust you will find in us every disposition to accommodate your convenience and comfort, and we shall wait with an anxious hope of your assent, for which we shall return our thanks to Him whose assistance and direction we have sought and have, we trust, received.

We remain, Rev. and dear Sir, yours very affectionately,  
(Signed by 183 members, another 84 adherents).

*3rd October, 1825.*

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND.—I am as much ashamed as any of my friends can be, to keep them so long in suspense respecting my determination in regard to removing to Bristol. I feel it to be of so much importance to my own happiness, and in the relation it bears to the spiritual interests of a large body of people, both here and at Bristol, that I tremble at the thought of coming to a final decision. My inclination, I confess, stands towards Bristol, the reasons are obvious; two sisters justly dear to me residing there; a place dear to me from ancient recollections [and from the most entrancing scenery;] access to books, a want of which I most grievously feel here; many old friends or the families of old friends, who I much love and esteem; [a superior description of society,] and I may add, equal if not superior prospects of usefulness. These, it must be acknowledged, are weighty considerations, and I feel them in their full force, insomuch that I feel myself incapable of relinquishing the thought of Bristol without a pang.

On the other hand, I most sensibly feel the difficulty of leaving a people who are most affectionately attached, and a congregation which I have, through mercy, been the instrument of raising from a very low to a very flourishing state. The certainty of giving great uneasiness to many excellent and worthy friends, and of being accessory to the injury of an interest which ought ever to be dear to me, presses much upon my mind; it is indeed the grand difficulty I feel in the way of leaving Leicester. I tremble at the thought of destroying what I have been the means of building up. I tremble at the thought of rushing into a sphere of action to which I am not called, and, it may be, of

offending God, by deserting my proper post. As it is the *last* remove, in all probability I shall ever be tempted to make before I am conveyed to the "house appointed for all the living," I feel extremely anxious that it may be made with the Divine Approbation. Conscious that my times are in the Lord's Hands I desire most sincerely to acknowledge Him in all my ways. Oh, that I might hear a voice behind me saying, "This is the way, walk *thou* in it." My mind is much perplexed, my resolution not decided. I feel a conflict between opposite motives and am drawn by contrary attractions: though, were I to consult my inclinations alone, I should certainly decide for Bristol. My advanced period of life, and the apprehension of its possible, if not probable effects on the interest of religion, form the grand objections.

[One thing I must beg leave to mention, that were I to settle with you, I should decline taking any share in the monthly lectures. In the prayer-meeting (the united) I should engage with pleasure. I have but little opinion of the utility of the first of these meetings.]

On the whole, I must request one month more, and at the end of that time (if my life is spared) you may reckon upon my giving you a decisive answer. During that interval I will again seek the Divine Guidance, and I humbly hope I shall receive it. At all events, I will not keep you longer in suspense, and am truly concerned at having exercised your patience so long. [I beg to be most affectionately remembered to Mr. Holden, and thank him sincerely for his kind letter. My best regards await all enquiring friends. My love to my dear Mr. Thos. James and my sister.]

I remain, my dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

To Mr. A. Tozer.

R. HALL.

*Bristol.*

*Postmark, Worcester, Dec. 7, 1825.*

WORCESTER, WEDNESDAY,

One o'clock.

DEAR SIR.—I hasten to inform you that Mr. Hall has accepted the invitation. I am the bearer of a letter to Mr. Tozer announcing it, which letter he read to me. I felt a great preference to this mode of communication for many evident reasons, especially as it is something to read to the Church, till his formal answer to their invitation comes, which he promises in a few days. I shall feel great pleasure in communicating to my brethren the particulars when I return.

I hope the impressions in my mind occasioned by the visit will never be forgotten by me. In spite of all that slanderous

tongues may say, we have him *in the right way*, and I hope and believe it will be with the divine approbation and blessing.

Such a day I never spent before, from the Monday morning, 9 o'clock to past 9 in the evening, I did not leave his house. We began smoking our pipes immediately after breakfast and did not put them down till dinner was on the table, when they were resumed and so on to the end of the chapter. I made 2 or 3 attempts to leave and call again, but he would not let me go. Please to say I shall come home Thursday evening (to-morrow).

Your sincere brother,

JOHN DANIELL.

*Andrew Levett, Esq., Solicitor, Bristol.*

*December 21st, 1825.*

*To the Church of Christ assembling in Broadmead, Bristol.*

MY DEAR BRETHREN.—After long and mature deliberation and earnest prayer I write these lines to inform you that I accept the invitation you have been pleased to give me to the pastoral office. That it may become a mutual blessing, and that you and myself may reap the fruit of it, in the glory of God, the spiritual improvement of each other, and the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways will I trust, continue to be as it

[four illegible lines]

inability for the adequate discharge of the weighty duties which will devolve upon me, and particularly my unfitness to walk in the steps of your late venerable pastor. My only hope, amidst the discouragement arising from this quarter is placed “in your prayers and the supply of the spirit of Christ Jesus.” Conscious as I am of innumerable imperfections I must rely on your candour for a favourable construction of my conduct and reception of my labours. Permit me, my dear brethren, to conclude by “recommending you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

I remain, dear brethren,

Your friend and brother,

ROBERT HALL.