

# LETTERS

FROM THE

Rev. SAMUEL DAVIES,  
and Others;

SHEWING,

The State of RELIGION in  
*Virginia, South Carolina, &c.*

PARTICULARLY  
Among the NEGROES.

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PROV. XXV. 25.

*As cold Water to a thirsty Soul, so is good News  
from a far Country.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed by J. and W. OLIVER, in  
*Bartholomew-Close.*

M DCC LXI.

[Price 3d. or 2s. 6d. per Dozen.]

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Wright*,  
of *Cumberland County, Virginia*, to  
Messrs *J. and B. F.* Dated *January*  
*6, 1761.*

WHEN I came here at first, six years ago last *November*, there were not above four or five apparent Christians among the people. In *July* following I received about an *hundred* to the Lord's Table, who never sat there before. Thirteen months after *ninety* more were added to that happy number. Every year since I have had two sacraments, and I never missed receiving *thirty* or *forty* new communicants at each season, to this day. And though I have been often ready to fear the harvest is past, yet, blessed be his holy name, GOD hath hitherto been better to me than my fears; but what seems to crown all the rest of the work of grace in these parts is, that *Ethiopia* hath stretched out her hands to GOD beyond my most sanguine expectations: And I dare say it was owing to the great number of Books sent from *England*, by the unparalleled charity of the good people there, with their prayers attending them. Verily, my dear friends, you shall have your reward.

And now I can tell you, to the joy of all the upright in heart; that I have baptized, as near as I can guess, between *sixty* and *seventy*\*, old and young. And received from first to  
B 2 last

\* *Negroes* we suppose he means.

last between *thirty* and *forty* to the Lord's Table; and I think I have now *fifteen* or *twenty* catecumens and candidates for the Sacrament. — There are between thirty and forty of Colonel *Cary's* Negroes under religious impressions. It would charm your hearts to behold their seriousness and behaviour; but especially to hear their religious experience of God's grace upon their minds: their abasing sense of the vileness of their hearts; their deep humility, and strenuous endeavours after holiness, are very surprising; and indeed beyond the Whites who are truly godly, as far as I can judge.

There is something providentially gracious in their situation. Their Steward, two Overseers and their wives are hopefully pious; and the Colonel himself conceives a good opinion of us, and therefore affords them greater privileges and indulgencies. — This Gentleman's brother in law, Captain *Bell*, thanked me the other day for the good I had done his *Negroes*, by my Preaching, Books, &c. saying, They were more dutiful and diligent than they used to be. These slaves have seventeen miles to come to my nearest place of worship.

My landlord tells me, when he waited on the Colonel at his country-seat two or three days, they heard the *Slaves* at worship in their lodge, singing Psalms and Hymns in the evening, and again in the morning, long before break of day. They are excellent singers, and long to get some of Dr *Watts's Psalms* and

and *Hymns*, which I encouraged them to hope for.

Thus I have given you a general idea of Religion here, and was I to tell you of my baptizing four or five *Quakers*, and the religious experiences and exercises of multitudes, it would edify and surprize you. Together with the alteration made in families and neighbourhoods, and the spread of Religion into neighbouring counties; I am persuaded future generations, as well as this, will look upon it to be matter of wonder and praise to the Lord JESUS! especially if they knew the mean and wretched instrument he made use of to carry on this blessed, this everlasting work.

But I must mention to you one thing which perplexes me, that is the great *poverty* of my people. To tell you truly I was afraid to keep an account how little I received from them, lest my own heart should feel any discontent; but being obliged to post my books last *September*, to my surprize I found that I had received but 24*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* in *two* years past. — I feel cordially willing to continue here as long as I can be serviceable to the cause of Religion and the good of souls, but you see it is impossible unless the finger of GOD opens the hearts of the good people of *England* to contribute to the support of a *Minister*, as well as providing *Books* for the Poor. I am indeed ashamed to mention these things, but thought it my duty to do it freely, to see if the Lord should thereby incline

30    L E T T E R S    from    the

the hearts of the merciful to shew mercy to this dear and valuable part of the church militant. — What affects me most is, that my Elders tell me they shall never have another Pastor if I leave them; this affecting thought made me desist from my intended removal to *England*.

I am, &c.

Your brother in tribulation, and the  
kingdom and patience of the  
Lord JESUS,

JOHN WRIGHT.

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A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Richardson* at *South Carolina*, to Mr *J. F.*  
Dated *May 21, 1761*.

I Received a letter and some books from you, which I found in *Virginia* when I was there last *October*. In the place where I am now settled we have been very much exposed to the *Cherokees*, who have killed and captivated several of my dear people: but through the divine goodness, the greatest part of our congregation have not fled from their habitations, and we are in hopes to continue.

As to the state of Religion I must not complain, having received upwards of an *hundred* into full communion with our church, in less than *two* years, and we are strict in our admission.