

87 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 18 October 1790

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 175-176

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ADDRESS: The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

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Dear friend

The parcell about which you express some concern arrived very safe presently after I had dispatched my last, and much am I obliged by the contents, which shall all be disposed of according to your directions. I hope you will ~~still~~ make a //still// more liberal use of my two Histories.<sup>1</sup> Now is the time to make an impression, and nothing should be spared that tends to confirm it. Your last work<sup>2</sup> cannot but do the greatest good; it contains so masterly and scholar like a proof of Justin Martyr being the very first who started the idea of Christ being the Logos, which is the corner stone of the trinitarian system. I had only surmised it, but you have proved it.

On sunday next I preach the first part of my discourse on the resurrection,<sup>3</sup> which I composed and delivered at Buxton, the sunday following I shall deliver the remainder, and then I shall forward it to you, to be communicated to Mr Belsham.<sup>4</sup> But do not expect too much from it. Observations that are quite common and familiar to those who study these subjects, appear extraordinary to those who do not. My intention is to preach the same at your place, if all be well, and then I shall dispose of them as you //shall// think proper.<sup>5</sup>

Yesterday we did, at a full meeting of the subscribers to our sunday school, what may surprize, but I hope will please you. We gave a hearty and unanimous invitation to Mr Berington<sup>6</sup> to preach ~~to~~ our annual sermon on the subject. I was directed to write to him in the most respectful manner, expressing our approbation of his liberal treatise on the subject, and the pleasure it would give //us// to set an example of persons of different persuasions meeting on the common ground of christianity and benevolence.

I expect this will make some noise, but I hope it ~~to~~ will have a good effect. It is a thing that I had talked of rather lightly some time ago, and was surprized when Mr Russell<sup>7</sup> proposed it to me quite seriously, as the real wish of all that he had conversed with on the subject. Mr Blythe<sup>8</sup> expressed his most hearty concurrence.

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<sup>1</sup> Probably Priestley's *An History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1782) and *An History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ*, 4 vols. (Birmingham, 1786).

<sup>2</sup> Theophilus Lindsey, *A Second Address to the Students of Oxford and Cambridge, relating to Jesus Christ, and the Origin of the Great Errors concerning Him* (London, 1790).

<sup>3</sup> Priestley, *The Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus considered, in a Discourse first delivered in the Assembly-Room, at Buxton, on Sunday, September 19, 1790* (Birmingham, 1791).

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), see 3 Apr 1789.

<sup>5</sup> This paragraph is omitted from Rutt's edition.

<sup>6</sup> Joseph Berington (1743-1827), see 29 Jun 1788.

<sup>7</sup> William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

<sup>8</sup> Samuel Blyth (1718/19-1796), see 29 Mar 1790.

Since Mr Magellan's<sup>9</sup> death I am [at] a loss for a person to take up, and transmit to me, the volume of the Philosophical Transactions. I wish you would get Mr Johnson,<sup>10</sup> or any body else, to call this once (as the volume has been published some time) and take it of the librarian, signing the book in my name. For the future I will continue to get it along with others of the society in this town.<sup>11</sup>

I have told Mr Belsham that I now, since I have been acquainted with Mr Wakefield,<sup>12</sup> ~~feel~~ //feel// a little awkwardly to leave him out of the number of translators. See what I have written to him, and give us your opinion. Yours sincerely J Priestley.

P.[[S.]] I have written to Mr B. Vaughan<sup>13</sup> to take my son W<sup>m</sup><sup>14</sup> into his country house for some time. I must then find some employ<sup>t</sup> for him, as his uncle<sup>15</sup> expresses an unwillingness to take him. What he finally proposes to <sup>?</sup> for Joseph<sup>16</sup> is so little, that it is not worth his while to accept. He must ~~?~~ //leave// [ ] him at [ ]. But more of this in my next.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> John Hyacinth de Magellan, a Portuguese Jesuit whom Priestley had met in Paris in 1774 [Rutt I, i, 198].

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Johnson (1738-1809), see 18 Jan 1770.

<sup>11</sup> This sentence is omitted from Rutt's edition.

<sup>12</sup> Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801), see 3 Apr 1789.

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin Vaughan (1751-1835), see 14 May 1789.

<sup>14</sup> William Priestley (b. 1771), see 22 Jul 1789.

<sup>15</sup> John Wilkinson (1728-1808), see 17 May 1786.

<sup>16</sup> Joseph Priestley jnr. (1768-1863), see 12 Oct 1789.

<sup>17</sup> The postscript is omitted from Rutt's edition.