

Copy of a Letter Addressed by Miss Ivy Frost to Brethren Meeting at Turner Street  
and Elsewhere in Birmingham      Date:-      January 1961

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I am writing this letter after months of prayerful consideration, heart-searching, and waiting on the Lord, and feel that I can no longer continue in a system led by a man whose instructions vary with such frequency, causing confusion and dismay amongst the brethren, making matters tests of fellowship which are not in the Scriptures.

Looking for the fruits of the Spirit:- "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, self-control" (Gal. 5-22), as a result of what is considered further light, I see around only mental cruelty, discourtesy, harshness, slander, immorality, religious fanaticism and persecution, the characteristics of the Pharisee, incitement of hatred of parents, the breakup of the family unit, homes, and friendships in the Lord. When I search the Scriptures for the features of Christ and His teaching, I find none of these things. With the grace of God I seek, in my limited way, to keep my eye on the Lord, and follow in His footsteps as laid down plainly in the Scriptures, which never fail - for He is the Word, and He changes not. I seek no other leader. He never misquoted or manipulated the Scripture. It was Satan who did that.

For many years I have been profoundly disturbed by the way many of the Exclusive Brethren have spoken of other Christians in a derogatory way, implying that they are lost, and that we are the ONLY people - the others counting for nothing in God's sight as they seem to in ours. It is my considered opinion that the present disintegration of the Exclusive Brethren is a direct result of this. If this attitude of professing Christian people, who glibly speak of brotherly love, causes me distress, what must it be to the heart of God, to whom all His sons are equally precious? I feel that God, in anger, is breaking us up because of this, and will continue to do so, scattering us abroad to shew us that there are others serving Him more faithfully, using to the full the talents committed to them, and shepherding the sheep and lambs, and feeding them, according to His request (John XXI: 16-17), not scattering and ravaging them.

I am appalled by the inhumanity, selfishness, self-righteousness, and apathy amongst us; a disinclination to get down to things, to examine where we have gone wrong and displeased God. Those who confess to having had a message from the Lord, are brushed aside and ignored, while we wait for instructions from New York, or told it is of the Devil, instead of their being listened to and the position examined. It might be another case of the "still small voice". I am reminded of what was said of John the Baptist, - "he hath a devil".

I cannot feel that in these last days the salvation of sinners is standing still, or decreasing. But where is it taking place? And it is - but certainly not amongst us - and why not? The day of grace has not ceased, and the Lord died to this end. It would appear that through our failure and incompetence He has conferred this privilege of seeking and saving the lost on others.

Thinking back over the years, one realizes that for a very long time, brothers have not been free to ask questions of a nature which would result in the building up of a healthy spiritual constitution. The lack of this has been manifest. Some I have asked why they have not challenged certain remarks have replied that they dare not!, or that it would not do! These brothers have been in bondage - in fear of each other - not of the Lord, and because of this have been forced to become "Yes Men", all saying the same things, not daring to cut across anything set out in the ministry of one self-appointed leader, whose opinion now changes under the name of clarification, according to the degree of havoc he finds his ministry is causing.

Yes, I think, as is said, we are being sifted, refined and purified for the Rapture, but surely the Lord is doing this by calling us out of the Romish system which has evolved amongst us under the name of Exclusive Brethrenism. The fruits of this system I see in the production of a spirit which has recently manifested itself amongst us in those who have shut their doors against the children of a godly man, saying their father is unholy. They would do well to take account of the Lord's own evaluation of such:- "Those who shall offend one of these little ones who believe in Me", etc. (Matt. V: 5-6).

On many occasions recently I have been arrested by the Lord's specific command - "Love thy neighbour as thyself", and have felt how little room the current ministry allows for the practice of this, and how lamentably we fail in fulfilling His request and command. (Matt. V: 43).

I am encouraged to find that there are many others all over the country, of much greater spiritual stature than myself, who have similar exercises to mine, but have not dared to voice them. I believe some 2,000 have come out, and I wish to identify myself with them and not with Mr. Jim Taylor. Are the brethren aware that we are not known as Christians by other brethren, but as "Taylorites"?

I love my brethren and shall continue to do so, but I do not love some of their actions, and so long as they accept unquestioningly this iniquitous system established amongst us I can't continue to walk with them. In its features it savours too much of the Church of Rome, with its confessions, authoritative ministry ritual, new dogmas, compulsions, etc., and complete isolation from all other christians. What is more, by remaining in fellowship with those supporting it, I sit in judgment on those who have been excommunicated and debarred from remembering the Lord in the breaking of bread, for reasons not supported by Scripture. It makes me feel a hypocrite.

I am satisfied that the step I am taking is with the Lord's approval, as I have prayed much about this and fervently sought His guidance, asking Him to remove the desire in my heart to remain in fellowship for the sake of friends I should lose by withdrawal; a reason which I know is holding many. He has shown me that it is wrong and has removed this sense of pull, showing me too that I must come out to Him, knowing not where I should go, but trusting Him for further guidance.

I am adamant in my decision, and therefore visits from brothers or sisters would avail nothing, as I do not wish my emotions to be played upon, thus spoiling the impression I have received from the Lord as to what I should do. My decision is unalterable.

To leave the brethren is not an easy step after years of close association, but it has had to be a choice between them and the Lord. I thank them for all their love and kindness in the past, particularly at times when I have been ill. It is my affection for them and my desire not to be severed from them, which has made me slow to move in response to the Lord's call.

Your affectionate sister in the Lord Jesus Christ.

(signed)

The above letter was read out at the City reading on 11/1/1961. One present said that it put all the brothers into a silence of deep shame, and it was a long time before this silence was broken. Eventually one brother, Mr. Waterfall, said that some things in the letter were wrong, but several others immediately declared that it was too true! One brother actually got up and defended the writer of the letter.