

**THE LIGHT OF CHRIST
EXALTED: OR THE
MORE EXCELLENT WAY
BRIEFLY SET FORTH**

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The Light of Christ Exalted: Or the More Excellent Way Briefly Set Forth by J. S.

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J. S.

**THE LIGHT OF CHRIST
EXALTED: OR THE
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of Isaac Jacob - Clarke

THE

LIGHT OF CHRIST EXALTED:

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MORE EXCELLENT WAY

BRIEFLY SET FORTH.

BRING

AN APOLOGY FOR LEAVING THE METHODISTS, AND
JOINING THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

ADDRESSED TO THE SINCERE AND DEVOUT AMONGST

THE METHODISTS.

By J. S.

"BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU
A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU WITH MEENESS AND FEAR."

1 Pet. iii. 15.

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CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

To the sincere and devout amongst the people called Methodists.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Having been induced to leave your Society, from motives which I will endeavour to explain, and being now precluded the opportunity I once had of making known to you the sentiments and feelings of my heart, upon subjects of the highest importance, I take the liberty of addressing you in this manner, for the purpose of laying before you some of those things which are the result of my private reflections, and the secret convictions of my mind, and which must constitute my apology for the step I have taken.

When I consider the number of years spent in your Community—the friendly intimacy enjoyed with some of you—and, more than all, that my religious experience commenced whilst I was amongst you—I cannot but feel a warm attachment to you—an attachment which I believe will endure to the end of my days.

In early life my views were associated with yours, and I think I can truly say that you have been to me,

in kindness, as my kindred, my friends, and my home ; and, in that light, I believe I shall always look back to you, as an emigrant looks towards the land of his nativity, with feelings of affectionate regard.

I verily believe that many amongst the Methodists have, under divine influence, been zealous and active in promoting good works ; and when I look to the rise, at the rapid progress, and great extension of Methodism ; at the change in the moral conduct, and growth of religious experience apparently manifested in a vast number of the poor and middle classes of society, I am ready to conclude *that they were a people brought forth by the power of God.* Again, when I contemplate the chief instrument made use of in its formation—his strictly moral conduct and indefatigable labours, as he went forth without any preconcerted plan, led by a way which he knew not—his naturally strong prejudices often brought down, and his will subdued by the Spirit of power, demonstrations of which seemed to accompany him in his work :—when I contemplate these things, I am ready to say, Surely he was at times moved by the divine influence. And I do believe that not only are individuals raised up from time to time for *particular services in the Church*, but that whole bodies are likewise called, in an especial degree, *to bear certain testimonies to the world.* Of the former, John Wesley may be considered an instance. His character and works are before the public ; from which we may infer that he appears to have had but one leading object in view, which he pursued to the end of his life ; and according

to his own declaration that object was *to revive the religion of the Bible*.^{*} And with regard to the people called "Methodists," I believe they have, in a measure, *borne faithful testimony to the experimental religion of the heart*. The first preachers, especially, were plain men, frequently taught of God; and such as were converted themselves, could say to the people, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you:"[†] and whilst their ministry was kept under the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, it produced a living effect upon the hearers. But a dead ministry—that which is unaccompanied by the power and quickening influence of the Spirit—whatever be the form, can never reach the heart, nor convert the soul. I am, however, willing to believe that, in many instances, the preaching of the Methodists has really, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, reached the heart, and converted the soul; and therefore it has, on those occasions, been under Divine Influence.

That the Methodists have been instrumental in the revival of religion, not only in this nation but also in America and other parts, must be admitted by all seriously thinking persons. They held up, as a leading doctrine, "The knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins,"[‡] and the sound of this hath rapidly spread, especially through Great Britain; for there is scarcely a town or village wherein this doctrine has not been taught. To many it appeared new, and at first met with no little opposition: but though the truly qualified

^{*} I understand by this the religion of Christ.

(†) † John i. 3. (‡) Luke i. 77.