

A LETTER

TO

THE REVEREND JOHN TAYLOR, D.D.

HARTLEPOOL, July 3, 1759.

REVEREND SIR,

I ESTEEM you, as a person of uncommon sense and learning; but your doctrine I cannot esteem: And, some time since, I believed it to be my duty to speak my sentiments at large concerning your doctrine of Original Sin. When Mr. Newton mentioned this, and asked whether you designed to answer, you said you thought not; for it would only be a personal controversy between John Wesley and John Taylor.—How gladly, if I durst, would I accept of this discharge! But, certainly, it is a controversy of the highest importance; nay, of all those things that concern our eternal peace. It is Christianity, or Heathenism. For, take away the scriptural doctrine of redemption, justification, and the new birth, the beginning of sanctification; or, which amounts to the same, explain them as you do,—and in what is Christianity better than Heathenism? Wherein (save in rectifying some of our notions) has the religion of St. Paul any pre-eminence over that of Socrates or Epictetus? The point is, therefore, Are those things that have been believed for so many ages, throughout the Christian world, real, solid truths, or monkish dreams and vain imaginations?

Either you or I mistake the whole of Christianity, from the beginning to the end! Either my scheme or yours is as contrary to the scriptural, as the Koran is. Is it mine or yours? Yours has gone through all England, and made numerous converts. I attack it from end to end: Let all England judge whether it can be defended or not.

Earnestly praying that God may give you and me a right understanding in all things,

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake,
JOHN WESLEY.