

May 1850

I add to my note an account of a case with which we have been concerned here  
A sister known to us at Raleigh Street, and in fellowship there  
had gone away for some weeks months, and last of all, visited London & connected  
herself there with the gathering in Orchard Street.

On my knowing this, I sought an interview, and pointed out to her the connection existing between Orchard Street and Bethesda; viz. that those that went from thence to Bristol selected Bethesda as the place of their fellowship & rejected those saints meeting elsewhere in Bristol; - i.e. York Street. This was not denied; she herself said, She should have gone there if she had had occasion to tarry in Bristol. When told her that we at Raleigh Street were on no such ground of intercourse, with Bethesda for the following reasons: - that Mr Craik was himself charged with stating - "that had the Lord Jesus lived, he would have borne the marks of old age, and have died a natural death" - that Mr Craik had likewise been told by a brother respected by all of us that "he had himself read expressions of Mr Craik's in a late correspondence of Mr C's upon this evil doctrine which quite covered any <sup>thing</sup> charged by other brethren upon Mr C. - That the first of these was well known to saints every where, or might be, because pointed in a tract dated October 1848 entitled "an appeal to saints in Bethesda" - I then asked this sister, what, in her conscience, such charges amounted to, and whether the statement about the blessed Son of God was not most revolting? And how such things would affect her own conduct and relation towards Bethesda? She said in reply, that she should not break bread there, even though she should go there. I then asked her how the knowledge of such things would affect her conduct and relation to Orchard Street? She said in reply, that certainly she would not break off from going there, because there were none there charged with holding the doctrine. I told her I was very glad to know this; not from her assurance so much, as from my own personal knowledge of many dear brethren there; - but this was not our question with Orchard Street, but rather, is Orchard Street by selecting Bethesda (and that too by the refusal of others meeting at York Street) connected with the heresy? and if so - in what way? and to what extent? This sister then said she would ask me a question; - Did I not think it was more grievous to the Holy Ghost, to be making these inroads upon brotherly love, than to be found remotely connected with a heresy concerning Christ, though unwillingly? I begged she would excuse my replying to such a shocking question. I would rather ask her if she thought so? She said she meant it; and I then told her I had no alternative, but to put it before her soul as a very great sin. Could she connect the Holy Ghost, however remotely, with a heresy concerning Christ? And if she could not what is the brotherhood worth which has not the true Christ for its basis, and the Holy Ghost for its bond where is sin? if to avow such a principle, and to act, in outward conduct, according to it is less grievous to the Holy Ghost than to stand apart from it, or make inroads upon brotherly love so formed? Dear brother! this is what I am against wherever it exists - I cannot stand by and see Christ sacrificed for the maintenance of a brotherhood. After all the Lord's controversy with us at Plymouth, on this very sin, is it not to be that any saint coming from elsewhere is to be received at Raleigh Street on such avowed laxity and ungodliness in conduct? And maintaining such a shameful principle in the Church of God? If so -

whether at Raleigh Street or any other place, where the Lord's people meet, and so meet, I separate  
to the last degree: for all such separation is unto the true Christ and to God, in fellowship of  
the Holy Ghost. — Let this infraction of the blessed Trinity be suffered, — not as a doctrine  
I do not mean, but in its known, living reality, in our souls individually, and then in our  
gatherings throughout the land, and all is gone that once stood in some power of life and  
godliness, as an answer to the affections of Christ, our risen and exalted Head and to the  
Holiness of God. Dear brother! — dear brethren, I would add, every where! — do let us see  
what is at stake, and how we are acting in relation to what is at stake! How do such  
documents as the Taunton, Tottenham, or Torquay papers meet what is at issue? What  
are their wings spread out over? and why? What is it they seek to protect? I repeat — is it  
the maintenance of a fraternity upon ever so ~~widely~~ <sup>loose</sup> a connection with a heresy concerning  
Christ, and however unwillingly pleaded by those who have no better plea? Then let it  
be so stated; — openly and avowedly — as this sister did — and my path as an individual  
is plain indeed; and I doubt not, many, many more would be aroused to a sense of what  
is involved. Will anyone ask for Scripture on such a question when the real question is  
uncovered and brought to light? — Scripture to show the evil of a brotherhood formed upon a  
remote connection with a heresy? What then; was there need of Scripture to teach &  
to sanction such alliances? Scripture, to show the evil of a principle of moral action which  
affirms it to be more grievous to the Holy Ghost to make inroads upon such compacts, than  
to stand connected with them upon such a heresy!! Only add one thing more, which  
I ask your forgiveness for adding, if it be needed. (Once will I trust be enough for me,  
to have stood in this connection with a heresy concerning Christ; Once I have maintained  
brotherhood, in spite of all remonstrances from others, but that once, with all that it involved  
is too present to my soul to allow me to be dragged by others into the same road again!  
No! I will do all I can, with the Lord's help, to pull others out, and prevent others going in  
to such a snare of Satan: — but if any will persist, let them go — but as for myself I  
utterly refuse to be drawn through every ditch, wherever there is a gathering of saints, and  
because it may happen to be new and untried by them! Let them take warning or they  
will learn as others here! I have purposely written very plain, beloved brother, and  
having added this very long note to your own I shall be glad if you will give my very  
kind love to our brother Glabworthy and say, that as I wish him to see this, I shall  
not write now, as I intended. Pray make any and all manner of use of this you  
think proper for the Lord's honour. (signed) J. E. Tatten.

P.S. We brethren at Raleigh Street should have willingly received this sister if she  
would have repudiated this principle, and all conduct in relation to other gatherings  
which hangs upon her espousal of this principle, — but she will not. The Lord  
I trust, will however appear in this case.

I have read this report to the sister in  
question; she made no objection to anything stated; — if needed I purpose  
reading it on Lord's day morning to all the saints at Raleigh Street.