

Bristol

Oct 20/837

My Dear Brother

Your kind communication  
has been left without an earlier  
acknowledgment, partly through my  
wanting for an opportunity to send  
it to my fellow-labourers, partly  
through other engagements de-  
manding my attention & partly  
on account of the nature of  
the subject.

When good men differ in judgment,  
the reason will generally be  
found either in their starting  
from different premises, or in

Then disagreement about the legiti-  
minacy of the influences deducible  
from premises admitted by both.

Supposing we were all satisfied  
that Mr. Newton was one who  
had renounced the faith of Christ  
and denied the essential truths  
on which our salvation rests, your  
remarks would be just; such  
persons and all who follow them  
ought to be avoided & set aside  
from the fellowship of the church  
of God. But you must be  
aware that, with the exception  
of the extreme party who  
follow the decisions of Presby. Duty

and Wigram, few Christian men  
would dare to assert that Mr Weston's  
speculations, however objectionable,  
are of such a character as  
that they would consider the  
pages of Scripture\* to which you  
refer applicable to him. I am  
not aware of any amongst us  
who would regard him in the  
light of a "heretic" in the sense  
in which you use that term; while

you must know that some of  
the most instructed & consistent dissenters  
deny that the Tracts of Mr Weston  
were ever designed to teach the  
error which his opponents allege  
against them. The <sup>introducing</sup> statements  
given ~~at~~ in the title of the ten  
(\* 2 Ino. 10, 11. & Ps. letter)

would be most fully recognized & maintained  
by many who are not able  
conscientiously to say that the books  
~~concerning~~ teach any thing contrary to such  
statements. The controversy thus

arouses the question - but is  
such a one bound in the faith?  
let it be willing to take the  
same view of the writings of  
Mr. Webster with that held  
by Mr. H. Opposer? Inasmuch as  
when the matter is in its own nature  
so obvious and the sectarian bias  
with which it has been ~~usually~~ treated  
is so manifest, the reasons given  
in the letter of the ten for not  
committing the church at Bethesda  
to any formal decision seem to me  
only change with the lapse of years.  
Yours affectionately Henry Cook.