

FAREWELL LETTER

OF

REV. WM. S. PLUMER, D. D.

TO THE

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH,

ALLEGHENY, PA.

Read September 28, 1862.

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FAREWELL LETTER.

The following Farewell Letter of Rev. Dr. Plumer, to the Central Presbyterian Church of Allegheny, Penna., having been read from the Pulpit on Sabbath, September 28th, 1862, is printed for the use of the congregation, at their special request, by

THE SESSION.

BURLINGTON, N. J., September 24, 1862.

To the Central Presbyterian Churchy Allegheny, Pa.

DEAR, DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN: Many among you have expressed a desire to hear from me. I do not regard such wish as unreasonable. Oh, that I could say something that would edify and comfort you all. God is my record how I long for you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. I often, in the dead hours of the night, carry your case to a throne of grace. I never loved any charge more than I have loved you. I could have freely laid down my life for you, if it would have done you any good. I know you love me and confide in me. As it may be some time before I shall see many of you, I venture, with the approval of the Session of your Church, to address to you some friendly, farewell counsels and salutations. I do this specially because I had no opportunity of doing so before leaving you.

1. I beseech you to see to it that ye be real, genuine Christians. Dig deep, and lay your sure foundations on the Rock, Christ. Make Him all in all. The longer I live the more I marvel at the greatness of Christ's love to us and the feebleness of our love to him. Without Christ you can do nothing.

2. Try to be not only real but eminent Christians. "Herein is my father glorified that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my Disciples." In order to *enjoy* religion, we must be truly engaged and zealous. God can cause you to abound more and more in all that is lovely and gracious. Look to Him. Walk with Him. Trust Him in the darkest hour. Obey Him in all things.

3. I specially urge you to guard against all malicious feelings. Bear no grudges. Indulge no hatred. Be truly kind and pitiful. Forgive as you hope to be forgiven. Bless and curse not. Let all men see that you have a Christ-like temper. Try to be more and more gentle. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Malevolent feelings are a great torment. They are a great hindrance to a close and comfortable walking with God. They are a great sin.

4. I earnestly advise you to cling together. Be united. Be of one mind. Let no root of bitterness spring up among you and trouble you. Do not forsake the dear Church, where we have so happily worshipped God. The Lord will bless you richly, I doubt not. You must not be discouraged by any thing. Faithful

is He that has promised a rich blessing to all that call upon Him.

5. I wish to thank you for all the love and confidence you have shown me. I beg a continued remembrance in your prayers. But I request that you do not allow your hearts to be crushed with care for me. I am indeed desolate, distressed, perplexed. I am without home or field of labor, or usual means of comfort. But I have learned in whatsoever state I am, to be therewith content. I am happy, very happy, in Jesus. My cup overflows. All is well. Jesus reigns. I fare better than my Master did when on earth. True, I have no certain dwelling-place, but neither had thousands of primitive Christians and preachers. Do not brood over my trials. I have not yet resisted unto blood.

6. I beg you to love and care for all the little children of the congregation. I love them. I know they love me. Ask them sometimes to pray for me. Do not let them forget me. But, above all, teach them to love the Saviour. He is the friend, the best friend, the almighty friend, the unchanging friend, of all little boys and girls who put their trust in Him. He says, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early will find me."

7. Among you are some who are peculiarly children of sorrow, and all of you are liable to become so at any time. To all such let me say, the promises of God are sure and ample. Never distrust God's goodness. I will venture to ask you to read a little Tract

of mine called "Comforts and counsels for the afflicted." It may be had at the Presbyterian Book Rooms.

8. To such of the congregation as do not yet love the Lord Jesus Christ, I wish to say a few words: Dear friends, forgive me that I spoke to you so coldly of the love of Christ; so languidly of the bliss of Heaven; so tamely of the horrors of an undone eternity. I beg you now to give your hearts to Christ. Oh! that you would at once repent and believe the Gospel. With many tears falling, I beseech you to be reconciled to God. Oh! flee to Jesus.

9. As I had no opportunity of saying any parting words to the congregation, I say them now. I choose the words of Scripture. [Here read Psalm 37, 3-7.] The hardest word I ever said was *Farewell*. I never said it on a sadder occasion, or with a tenderer heart than I do now. Farewell, you dear little boys and girls. Farewell, you honored fathers and mothers in the congregation. Farewell, ye young men and maidens, who have been so pleasant to me. Farewell, ye honored elders and deacons. Farewell, my dear spiritual children, whom I have begotten in the Gospel. Farewell, old and young, rich and poor. I expect to pray for you with my dying breath. Once your pastor, I love you still.

Ever and affectionately yours,

WM. S. PLUMER.