
A LETTER OF CAUTION ON DISCORD.

To the brethren in Groeningen, and the country thereabout, copied and sent by the faithful brother John Aertsen. Receive it in love.

Grace and Peace: Since, beloved brethren, it is known to all churches, that in the southern countries, great trouble exists in regard to the divinity of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, whereby much unbelief, discord and division have been caused in some bodies, to the great affliction of all the saints; and, since it sometimes happens that this one or that one, who comes from those countries, is affected thereby and causes trouble with some—therefore love

has constrained me to write the following to the churches, and for these reasons:

First, that the unaffected and sound hearts may beware of such frightful disputations and incomprehensible murmurings, lest their hearts, to their eternal loss, drown in such bottomless profoundness, and become forever ashamed before their God.

Secondly, that all those who ignorantly and unwittingly err and are bound in their consciences, and yet fear God, and walk

under the cross, may be saved and freed, through this our service and christian warning, to the eternal praise and glory of God, and to the joy of all the saints. I have written it to all my beloved brethren and fellows out of sincere love and compassion. If but one afflicted, wavering, doubting soul could be helped thereby, I would esteem it the dearest thing under heaven. My children, beware of all discord and division, that ye may thrive and multiply in Christ Jesus. Avoid all those who disturb you and excite you to disunion; all those who

would institute something novel and peculiar whereby they might weaken and destroy the christian, evangelical love, peace and unity. O, my sincerely beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord! Consider diligently that which I write to you, that God the heavenly Father with his blessed Son Christ Jesus, and with his Holy Spirit, may retain their divine honor. Peace be with you.

Note. To write with my own hand such long writings and send them to each particular church, I can not do.
MENNO SIMON.

ANOTHER LETTER.

My very faithful brother in Christ, grace and peace with thee.

Chosen brethren in the Lord, I have nothing particular to write to you, but that I wish you would write to me how far the choosing of the brethren in Waterhorne and of Lebe Pieters has progressed. Not that I desire to impede the choosing of Lebe; but I would have been glad to have had a conversation with him, before his entering upon the office of bishop; for my soul is troubled about that which passed between us last year.

O, brother Rein, that I could speak with you half a day, and make known to you a little of my affliction, sorrow and sadness, and also of my great solicitude which I yet bear for the future of the church; what an ameliorating, pleasing application that would be to my sorrowful soul! As it is I must bear it all myself. If the omnipotent God had not preserved me last year, as well as now, I would already have been deprived of my mind; for there is nothing upon earth which my heart loves more than it does the church; and yet I must live to see this sad affliction upon her. I think much, yet I write and say but little. Help me pray that I may find refreshment, and may yet see a gracious result, with all afflicted souls.

Brethren, beware of discord; foster love and unity with sincerity; accompany the peaceful; make use of few words, and in

every respect show yourselves to be children of God. O, chosen brethren! Come and unite your ardent prayers for me in my great affliction. I pray you for Jesus' sake, let my affliction be buried with you; but if you should speak about it to any one, then know with whom you speak. If all hearts were pure, all tongues seasoned with salt, and all the mistakes of last year were honestly and truly acknowledged, how soon would I be found a cheerful man. Now, now the Lord will be my Comforter. May the poor church be saved! O brethren, let us pray! I trust that you will not be offended at the writing in my last, to a private brother, concerning the sixty dollars annually. I took the liberty of so writing, for I do need it annually. The merciful Lord will send them to me. He knows where. Greet the pious with the peace of the Lord. My daughters greet you. The God of all grace be with you most beloved brother, and with all the pious, forever, Amen.

If something should be sent to my assistance, send it the first opportunity; for slaughtering time will soon be at hand and I have little wherewith to buy. O, brethren, do not think hard of it; it is necessity which compels me to do so.

Your unworthy and affectionate brother,
MENNO SIMON.

September 1st.