

Date sent: 6/16 March 1557¹

Date received:

From [person]: English exile congregation at Geneva

To [person]: Frankfurt congregation

From [place]: Geneva

To [place]: Frankfurt

Original language: English

Transcript of Original

Ref: Bodleian Library, Oxford, Rawlinson D 857 fo. 122r & D 923 fo. 189v²

Other Versions: None

A L[ett]er sent from the Englishe co[n]gregation at Geneva
to their brethern at Francfort the 6 of Marche 1557
to move them to concorde brokin thugh Mr Ashleie etc³

Grace be to you & peace from God o[u]r Father
& from the Lord Jesus Christ.

If nature binde us to wishe well to o[u]r selves; if dutie constreine us to favour o[u]r friendes;
if God co[m]manunde us to love o[u]r neighbours howe can we but wishe well unto you
w[hi]ch are our owne fleshe, excepte we wolde rebell against nature. Howe can we[?]

¹ Both dates given in text of the letter. 6 March in the heading and 16 March in the valediction.

² Draft written on the back of Robert Beaumont's book list [Rawl. D 923 fo. 189r]. Rawl. D 857 fo. 122r torn down right-hand side and wearing and some slight tears on D 923v. Original line lengths retained in transcription

³ The dispute was known as the Stir and Strife and was the subject of a section of the *Troubles*.

but favo[u]r you, w[hi]ch are moste deare unto us in the lord, except we wolde cast [?aside]
all dutie. Howe can[n] we but love & embrace you w[hi]ch are citizens together w[i]th
us of one citie, children of one father, membres of one bodie, except we wold through[?]
disobedience transgresse o[u]r fathers will, through ingratitude co[n]temne it or through [?]
malice impugne against it. In yo[u]r ioye we reioise: in your hevines we lament,
we love whome ye love & praye for whom ye praye: the same spirite of [?]
o[u]r Lord Jesus dwelleth in all o[u]r hartes by whom we are regenerat to sal[vation?]
in whome we are ioyned in the fellowship of peace, & w[i]thowt whom we ...
see God nor call upon him. We beseche you therefore bretheren to walk...
ding to the spirit, in humblenes of mynde, forbearing one another, draw[?].
waye, having one love, being of one accorde: w[i]thowt grudging & myrm[uring]...
ye maye not be an offense to this crooked genertion, but shine as ...
the worlde y[a]t our father w[hi]ch is in heaven maye be glorified. In the Ch...
Christe disagreeing in words is reprehensible: dissension of myndes is n...
rable, but breach of peace is condemnable. He that hath offended let him s[ubmit?]
himselpe to Godds worde: for the trespasser maye not be maynteyned...
infect others, and he y[a]t correcteth let him not be severe for mercie forg...
ofte[n]tymes more profit the Church of Christ then severe punishme[nt]...
Yea if unitie maye not be kepte, I will submit my selfe to e?...
if unitie maye not be kepte, I will omit discipline for above al ...
co[n]corde be it never so deare bought, must be had. It is the bon?...
bindeth us together: it s the sinewes w[hi]ch knitt us the membres
heade Christe. It is the bodye of o[u]r Christianytie: it is that invinc..

tresse w[hi]che preservethe us against all ennemies. Brieflie it is the ...
 stone to trye our religion. Agayne discorde amonge bretheren
 the papist aainst God, confirmeth the Anabaptist in his error bold....
 the libertine in his impietie and as a sworde cutteth of the weak...
 bres from the body. Will we then overcome the papist, wyne...
 Anabaptist, convince the libertine, strengthen the weake brether[en] ...
 Let us chase away discorde & embrace concorde for there is ...
 sworde so sharpe, no pike so daungerous, no artilerie so fearece...
 wounde, to pearce & kill Satan as brotherlye love and amity...
 Nowe bretheren to all our shames we heare y[a]t dissension grow[eth?] ..
 plainly y[a]t the anger of God is more kindled. We condemn nether[?] ..
 as they w[hi]ch p[er]fitilie knowe niether partie bot wolde to God th...
 no parties but one body & one spirite, even as ye are called in...
 [MS 923 fo 189v] hope. The [sain?]cts here much lament this evill, & w[i]thout cease...
 to God for yo[u]r agrement. The godly brother Mr Calvin continually
 travellethe [blot] of sorowe for you. And we alas w[i]th doolfull hartes
 be it spoken [blot] iudge ourselves unworthy to live & enioye the benefits
 of God, for whose synnes Godds vengeance daylie increaseth the towar[ds]
 us. O[u]r humble supplication therefore to you, moste dearly beloved
 is that whatsoever contention is risen, eyther of small occasion or great,
 of righte or of wrong, ye wolde pacifie it & so bring yt in p[er]petu
 all oblivion that peace and unitie maye recover their righte amonge you
 and seinge you agree in doctrine, let not diversitie of maners

separate you. Let the strong sustein the weake, & the weake reveren[ce] [torn]
the strong. Let the flocke love their pasto[u]r & ministers: & let the
pastor & officers tendre their flocke, w[i]th diligence instructe the[m]
with love exhorte them, & w[i]th meeknes correct them. So shall
Gods buylding go forward, o[u]r mutuall co[m]fort increase & the
verye adversaries shalbe compelled to saye, doubtlesse this
is the people of God. The w[hi]ch thing, thou father of mercies
& God of all peace & comfort graunt & confirme for thy deare
sonne Jesus Christes sake o[u]r Lord & Saviour. Amen. From
Geneva the xvith of Marche. We salute you all in the
Lord Jesus whose holy spirit conducte yo[u]r harts in this
affaire & all others. Subscribed in the name of the
Churche by the ministerie therof.

[No names]