

Letters by Charles Fitch From The Midnight Cry, March 14, 1844

Cleveland, Ohio February 24, 1844

Dear Brethren of the Midnight Cry,

Our dear Brother Storrs says that *the Great Head of the Church designed that we should come out of Babylon, and not wait for Babylon to thrust us out.* I believe he is right, and I am therefore determined to come out.

Subsequently to my being separated from the Newark Presbytery, I was induced, at the solicitation of several clergymen, to unite with the New York Congregational Association, and was received by that body, and became a subscriber to its creed: having also been received by the General Association of the Western Reserve.

This is now nearly three years since. I have never met with them since that time, and do not know whether they retain my name among their list of members or not. But I now wish to say through your paper to the world, *that I do from this time regard myself, and hereby proclaim myself to all men, as free and independent of all ecclesiastical domination, as a member of no sect, and a subscriber to no creed.* At the same time, I received the Bible as the Word of the Living God, and am looking for the immediate coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom I must give account.

"Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Timothy 1:2) to all who love Him in sincerity; and love to all who love His appearing.

Yours in the blessed hope,
CHARLES FITCH

Cleveland, Ohio February 24, 1844

Dear Brother,

With regard to the cause of truth in this region, it is progressing

against great opposition. I have just returned from Painsville, where I have had a delightful season. Congregations large and attentive.

I was cheered by being taken by the hand, time after time, and told, "You were the means of leading me to Christ when you were here a year ago." The Lord be praised.

On the last evening I was with them, we celebrated the Lord's Supper. A large number, Congregational, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Disciples, together, remembered the Lord in that blessed ordinance, in obedience to His command. My wife and myself have recently been "buried with Christ by baptism;" having received that precious ordinance at the hands of Brother Cook. I have since baptized about thirty in Cleveland, and eight at Painsville. The most of them have been members of Churches. Brother Pickands and wife, and a large number of his church, have also been baptized. The state of things among his people is truly delightful. They are a happy band, looking without wavering for the coming of the Lord. We have much more opposition to contend with than we had a year ago, but we do not forget that he which endureth unto the end shall be saved, and that opposition is the very thing which we are called upon to endure.

Brother Himes wrote me, some time since, to spend a week at Buffalo, and the brethren at Rochester wish me to attend a conference with them. I intend to do so, as soon as navigation opens on the lake. Till then, the great necessity of making constant efforts here, the urgent calls for labor in the region, and the great difficulty of making a journey of two hundred miles by land just at the breaking up of the roads, will confine me to this state.

In this place I have found the same necessity for constant effort that our brethren have found in the eastern cities. Multitudes stand ready to devour, and wait, eager to find some pretext for saying that the lovers of the Lord's appearing are giving up their faith, and that the cause of the Adventist is going down.

It has, therefore, been necessary that I labor stately at Cleveland, and go abroad when practicable. This I have been endeavoring to do in the midst of sickness and death in my family, and other afflictions, and the determined opposition, contempt,

and scorn of those who hate the truth of the Lord's immediate appearing.

My whole being cries out, "*Come, Lord Jesus*" (Revelation 22:20). Take Thy great power and reign. I tremble in myself, when I think of meeting Him that trieth the reins of the heart. Still I know that I love His appearing, and feel a confidence in His mercy, that He will not cast me out.

Yours in the blessed and glorious hope,

CHARLES FITCH