

(Copy)

Sunder date November 27th 1850

My very Dear Boys

A variety of fears continually perplex me respecting you all; the more, because, I am not with you therefore cannot keep a watchful eye over you. By nature you are prone to evil, and you are placed in the midst of temptations; be beware of the secretfulness of sin. By the first appearance of it, resist the Devil, and he will flee from you; the foundation of this world is vanity with God: "he that deserveth life & death many doubt that he may see good: let him keep his tongue from evil & his lips from speaking guile."

Let honesty & truth be your motto on all occasions; never stumble or equivocate, but give a ready answer to any who may inquire anything from you. Never appear to be what you are not. He is truly great that is little in his own eyes, and is not vainly pleased by the praises of men. Your own shadow & your own pride will deceive you, for as yet you know nothing & wonder; an humble knowledge of yourselves is the sure way to heavenly wisdom. it is the just step. Beware of envy; it is a most insidious vice especially to young persons. Remember how precious time is: it is how easily squandered is it dealt out unto us, by the All-merciful Father of us all. - Therefore take care at all times to be so usefully employed, that you may not feel cause for shame even should you be publicly called to render up your account to your Maker - never do any thing secretly, that you would not do publicly; whatever requires secrecy, has generally, guilt attached to it. I need not remind you my very dear boys, of the honor & respect due to your Father, in this respect, I have not yet heard much complaint of you.

Shun low dissolute company: consort with the wise and conscientious; associate with the humble, the pious, & virtuous; engage willingly & listen with patient silence to the instructions of holy & wise men; - never be proud of your own words, works, or actions; remember the proud in heart are always miserable, being always envious.

If there is any good in you, there is much more in others. You owe respect to all your Brethren, therefore are the more indebted to Him. All that you have in your souls & bodies, all that you possess outwardly or inwardly, naturally or supernaturally, are

Letter by Ann Mather to her sons who were attending James Thompson's school in Melville St. Hobart on present site of "Pressland House."

Reproduced Appendix "A"
"All That We Inherit"

benefits from your bountiful, & most gracious Creator; all things proceed
from him, therefore, for all things He is to be praised, however thankful we may
feel, we shall never be able to give due thanks to the Almighty for the best
of all His mercies. Let your Bible be your chief companion; search
its pages with deep attention; pray sincerely for the influences of the
Holy Spirit to illuminate your dark minds that you may understand
the blessed truths contained therein; and may be enabled to obey
its precepts diligently. Let nothing seem worthy of your estimation,
nothing truly credit-worthy, but the eternal truth of God; His only
word, the Holy Scripture that we can trust just views of the true
nature & character of God. The Holy Bible is called the book of
God, not only because it has God for its Author, but because it is
filled with such revelations of His glorious character as surpass the
powers of human ~~reason~~ reason fully to comprehend. Think on the Omni-
potence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, the infinite holiness, the inviolable
justice, the unerring wisdom, the faithful love, truth, patience, forbearance,
long suffering with impudent sinners. The thought of such a God,
being ^{our} ~~at~~ our bed, at our path, & spying out all our ways, - whose power
can crush in a moment, one would think, would send us from our lairs
invisibility, and effectually deter us from sin; yet, we every day see the
wicked sleep on in dreadful security, as though they were not at all
concerned in the matter. - Whether we are, whatever we are doing, the
eye of God is upon us, taking knowledge of every action, of every word,
year of every thought that rises in our minds. How infinite is that
Omniscient God, who can search the deep recesses of every heart, year of
the hearts of the whole human race at one and the same moment.

When vain, & foolish thoughts, arise in your minds, consider, if you
would like to disclose them even to your dearest friends, nay, my dear,
conscious shame would prevent the disclosure, yet, you dare indulge
yourselves in those ridiculous follies, naked to the eye of the Almighty
which you would feel ashamed of confessing to a fellow worm like
yourself; when there is ~~xxx~~ the fear of God? -

Could you see my heart, you would know my constant, fervent, & most
anxious desires respecting you, are, not how rich, or honourable you may be,
but that you may not forget your Creator, & walk before Him in
uprightness, righteousness & true holiness, & may be, blessing & shining
lights in this dark & benighted land. - I long that my dear children
should know by inward experience the happiness of loving & knowing
God; tis the religion of Jesus that diffuses joy & gladness into the
heart & fits it for every duty - remember the being a member of
the Methodist Society, or of any other class of Christians will never
constitute you righteous before God; your motives must be true, such
as the heart searching God will approve. The real Christian is
little known to the world & is little valued even by professors.

The religion is founded upon the truth of God's Holy Word; it
does not consist in having the name of God before, but, in our own
personal faith in the merits of Christ as our propitiatory sacrifice;
it is the sincere devotion of the heart to God; and when our souls
are renewed by divine grace, the guilt will most certainly
evidence themselves through out the ^{whole of} our outward deportment,
we shall be of a humble, meek & quiet spirit; then will unanimity,
concord & peace reign in every breath; then will the blessing of God
attend all your endeavours to obtain an honest livelihood.

"Take just the Kingdom of God, & His righteousness; and all other
things shall be added unto you;" this is the promise of our true & faithful
Creator to all who serve him in sincerity & truth. - All earthly things
are toys & trifles when compared to eternal things - to remember
your Creator now in the ~~days~~ of your youth, will procure you
present happiness & comfort, & in future life will yield ^{the} most pleasing
reflections, as well as secure to you everlasting joy & felicity.

I fear that you live in ^{the} neglect of private prayer; remember
if you live without prayer, you will most ^{truly} inevitably die without
hope. The Almighty has no where promised to confer favours on
those, who do not, ^{take} them by constant & sincere prayer.