

Bridgeton, New-Jersey, Sept. 21, 1885.

My dear Mr. Cook,

You will be surprised perhaps at receiving a letter from one who has long since passed out of any immediate relations with you. I have a favor to ask of you which may perhaps be even more unusual.

You made a strong & lasting impression upon my mind in the days when I was living in Whippany, by one phrase which you frequently used in your prayer,

prayers in prayer-meeting. You  
used to ask God to "purify  
the motives" of your then min-  
ister. I sent word to you by  
Mr. Gardner the last time I  
saw him — last Fall at Syn-  
od I think — about that  
memory.

I want now to ask you  
to pray that prayer for me  
Every day for a month. My  
congregation here are building for  
my use, a parsonage, into  
which we expect to move  
about the end of October. My  
wife & I regard this as open-  
ing a peculiar & very inter-



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esting field of usefulness  
for us, & we feel very anxious  
to have the right spirit about it.

Bridgeton is a very well-to-do  
city of about 13,000 people, ~~the~~  
~~new parsonage is considered~~  
my church is the wealthiest  
church in it, & they have built  
a parsonage so nearly in keep-  
ing with their costly church ed-  
ifice that many are saying it  
is to be the handsomest house  
in town. (I don't think that.)

Mrs. Belden & I feel that as the  
house is thus conspicuous, our  
way of living and doing, in it,  
is as large a part of my minis-

try, as my sermons. We have  
 plans about entertaining which  
 we think adapted to do good; we  
 shall for example invite at one  
 time all our elders & their fam-  
 ilies to tea; at another a few per-  
 ple in the church who ought  
 to know one another but do  
 not; at another a few persons  
 from each of the several evan-  
 gelical denominations in the  
 city (there is not the acquain-  
 tance ~~between~~ between the  
 denominations that there ought  
 to be); at another time some of  
 the leaders of the Salvation-  
 army here, who are, it is al-  
 most universally agreed, doing



more good here <sup>5</sup> than that  
society often does; &c, &c. &c.

— Now if we carry out these  
plans, & they succeed, I feel that  
they will put us into a posi-  
tion where we shall need a  
good deal of grace. I know that  
God has "purified my motives"  
somewhat since the day, when  
you used to ask Him to, and  
it has occurred to me to ask  
you to take up the same prayer  
for me again. You were very  
kind to me to be so patient  
as you (and your companions)  
were during the time I  
was such an unprofitable  
young minister in Whippam.

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Like many another young minister, I got a great deal more good than I gave, in my ministerial — or ministerial — life among you; & have no more precious memory of that time, than your prayers for me. Very often I have thought of them & wished I could ask you still to pray for me; but I feel an especial want of it at this time.

— I hope you and your family are in good health. It is a long time since I have been even as near as Morristown, to Whippany. I came to Bridgeton in January last year.



You may know<sup>?</sup> that I went  
out to Turkey, as a missionary  
to the Bulgarians, just after  
I was married in 1879, and my  
two girls were born there.

We have now two other children,  
a boy born in New-York city in  
1883, and a girl born here last  
spring. I found the work in  
Turkey too hard for my strength,  
and have not, perhaps, the most  
robust of health; but I am  
still in certain relations  
with my late missionary  
associates, I hope at some  
future time to publish a  
necessary work which they

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have intrusted to my care, a  
concordance of the Bible in the  
Bulgarian language, upon which  
I am now at work, & em-  
ploying a native Bulgarian  
in my own house. Our  
family means are limited, &  
my salary as pastor small, con-  
sidering its necessities.

- With the warmest remem-  
berances to all of my former friends  
in Whippany who still re-  
member me

I am very truly Yours,  
W. H. Belden,  
Bridgeton, N. J.