Letter from Joseph Merrill to T.Z.R. Jones,
September 27, 1850
Letter #94, Kalamazoo College Baptist Collection

Transcribed by Rachel Worrell, Class of 2015

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Rev, and Dear Brother.

after leaving you in Boston I called upon Br Pratt as you desired me and asked him if he thought a little seed sown in Michigan might not be as beneficial as seed sown elsewhere [sic] he said he did not know but it might but still he did not seem to have much faith in the experiment I reminded him of your object occasionally he put me off a number of times I told him I believed [sic] the church ought to have taken up a collection when you were here, then you would have been better satisfied than now, Br Pratt finally told me I had better try to collect some by subscription so I started one directly, and called upon my brother in law Josephus Baldwin he put down five dollars his Br James B Deacon of the church paid me two dollars others one half a piece down to less than nothing because they did not so much as thank me for calling I have collected to the amount of ten dollars and I know of a number of members in that church that might have paid ten a piece and never would have been the poorer for the same in assisting to build up your Theological Institution.

and now as there is a little risk of sending money and as I have a note at hand against Deacon Henry Reading of eleven dollars and a little interest I believe, and I thought if you was willing to call upon him for the same I would be glad to make the exchange I believe Deacon Reading will be ready to pay in good earnest when called upon because Sister Reading set the time to pay to suit themselves, If you cannot get your pay of Br Reading I wish you would call upon Br J Cothren and request him for me to pay you eleven dollars out of money which is due from the church if it is not paid, if you will be kind enough to write me soon and let me know whether Deacon Reading will pay to your satisfaction if he does not I will to the utmost farthing that is due and if Br Monger has paid up the small note I handed you when here. We thought a good deal of your kind invitations to come or go to your Beautiful village to settle, and the Love we feel towards Br and Sister Stone and other Beloved Brethren and Sisters is your vicinity were strong inducements to draw our minds west where perhaps we might do a little good, but after weighing the matter carefully we thought best to tarry here for the present I have bought a small piece of land in this town where I intend to build me a house to live in for the present the church here number about one hundred and forty O I wish we had a few Spirits amongst us like Br William Dutton as he used to be when he resided in K allamazoo [sic] he was worth for labor in the church more than a hundred of some members of the church here, of what use are we in the church if we live like drones, The Word of God Says ye are my Witnesses I suppose a private member of the church may be a witness for the Truth as well as a Minister of the Gospel I do hope the time will soon come when every church member will be a living witness for the Truth and not to Love in word and in tongue [sic] but in Deed and in Truth, pray for me my Brother that I may live so as not to wound the Blessed cause of our Blessed Saviour.

Last year I made myself a life member of the Baptist Union and before the convention meets in Boston another year I hope to be able to pay another hundred for to make Mrs Merrill a Member of the same. We live in our own hired house as good many others have done, we have a pious Holy Lovely Man of God for Our Minister by the name of Joseph Storer.

The Milford association convened at Nashville [sic] oposite [sic] from Nashua this week on Wednesday. thursday the churches were well represented with Ministers and Delagates. I should think, I was much pleased till the last half day when a good Minister by the name of Foss brought forward some anti-Slavery resolutions which gave offence to some pro slavery Spirits and I am sorry to say that my Brother in law M r. Pratt* was one Does not the Bible say Break every yoke and let the oppressed go free, I suppose I have caught [sic] a little of the anti slavery
spirit in attending the associations in Mich and I hope I shall not lose it till every Slave is a free
man. I do hope the time is not far distant when Our Saviour Divine Command will be Obeyed to
the letter When He Said go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every Creature can it
be done so long as Ministers are opposing the Truth I have written two letters to Br Cothren of
Galesburg and have received no answ[e]r in one letter I sent a note of eight dollars against
Dea[con] Bena[?]ah Aldrich for collection if Br Reading does not pay you please ask Br Cothren
to pay you the money on Dea[con] Aldrich’s note if he cannot pay you from what is due me from
the church and Society of fourteen dollars and over, I wish you to keep the note against Br
Reading unless he pays up the same till I or mine call for the same. Please excuse me for
troubling you so much.
Mrs Merrill and myself wishes to be particularly Remembered to Br and Sister Stone Br and
Sister Eaton Br and Sister Miarsh and Br and Sister Ransom and their Beloved Mother and all
the beloved in the Lord, and Especially to Father Taylor whom we love in the Truth. as ever
yours in Sincerity.


PS Please Remember us to Our Afflicted Br Slater and Family yours Truly
J M.

*The brother-in-law may be Dura D. Pratt, a Baptist clergyman in Nashua, New Hampshire.