

Johnson, before accepting the position offered to him, wrote:

The feelings which I had upon receiving this letter and for some time after, are easier felt than described. For several nights and days both my sleep and appetite were in a great measure taken away. I did little else than weep and sigh, whilst I trust both by fervent prayer and fasting. I implored divine direction what to do in an affair of so weighty moment...

On the one hand, the idea of leaving my parents, relations, friends, and the respectful connections which I had formed, the dangers of the sea, the descriptions of people I was going with, the place to which we were going, to the very ends of the earth, to a country wild and uncultivated, to be exposed to savages, and perhaps to various wild beasts of prey; these and such like ideas so impressed my mind with fear and terror that I sometimes was greatly inclined, and almost resolved, to decline the offer...

But then on the other hand, when I considered the propriety, nay the necessity of some person going out in this capacity, how the offer of the appointment was made to me; my situation at that time; having no charge of my own; the hopes and prospects of being rendered useful in the reformation of those poor and abandoned people;

the power and promises of God to protect me in any place or situation wherein, in the line of duty, I followed the leading of providence, and the prospects of a glorious reward hereafter, laid up in heaven for all God's faithful servants and people; these considerations overbalanced and removed all my scruples and fears, and induced me to give my free consent to enter upon this hazardous expedition.

- Richard Johnson