

Letter 107

by James Bourne

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a broken spirit and enduring contradiction in order to achieve spiritual growth and happiness.

Scripture: Psalm 51:17, Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 3:5, Proverbs 27:17, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Spiritual Humility", "Sanctification"

Description

James Bourne addresses the struggle of maintaining a broken and contrite spirit amidst the distractions and temptations of the world, emphasizing the importance of spiritual discernment over natural discretion. He highlights the need for enduring humility and the danger of a light spirit that hinders true growth and transformation. Bourne shares his personal journey of humbling experiences that led to a deeper understanding of spiritual truths and the necessity of being broken before God. He encourages continuous prayer, attentiveness to the Holy Spirit's guidance, and the sanctifying work of God's refining fire to bring true spiritual happiness.

Transcript

[To a Friend.] Tunbridge Wells, 22 July 1836.

My dear Friend,

I have felt from many hints you have lately dropped, that you are not quite satisfied with everything that goes on within. You have sat under a bright ministry, and your head has gone faster than your feet, so that your enlightened under-standing shows you that in the vanity of your mind you walk in many things which cannot consist with a broken and contrite spirit. I think you do well to notice this; and if this caution, at which you so often pause, be attended to, it may be a means of saving you much trouble.

Natural discretion is not spiritual; we may put it for spiritual discretion, but it always falls short when most needed, and a lightness of spirit is discovered, when the contrary is most profitable. A broken spirit will endure contradiction, even from inferiors; perhaps you feel the want of this as an overwhelming evil, which the Lord suffers, to show us that fleshly prudence can do little or nothing in the hour of temptation, especially when he is pleased to expose our weakness.

Some can scarcely bear to be spoken to upon any common subject, they are so quickly offended; but here is the point in question - A BROKEN SPIRIT CANNOT ENDURE THAT IT SHOULD BE THUS. The

profiting which such often speak of is rendered unprofitable by it, and their lightness of spirit causes them to go away and forget "what manner of persons" they ought to be, "in all holy conversation and godliness;" so that their profiting becomes like the early dew, it passes away in the first heat of temptation, and there is nothing left but an unsavoury account of something which, like the Prodigal, they have shamefully wasted.

What shall we say to all this? If I may be allowed to say how it has been with me, I have found the furnace the only means of breaking the neck of that unruly independence and consequence which the flesh assumes, even in a profession. We sit as kings and queens, and so we would sit, and receive much fleshly respect, and call it spiritual union, until the gates of death are opened, and the Lord discovers the cheat. O what work is here! A sealed book, a sealed heart, and all darkness! We have lost our way. We have been in no end of company, and have talked much, and gained much of that honour that cometh from men. But now our lamp seems put out. With shame I write it, but I have often been in this awful despairing place; but after much humbling work, by the kind management of the Lord Jesus Christ, I have eventually found that he has turned my captivity, and has given me some of the brightest evidences I ever knew; and the repetition of this has effectually brought me to the broken heart and contrite spirit of which I speak.

Then let our prayers continually be that the secret hints and whispers of the Spirit may be greatly cherished and daily watched and prayed over, and that we may have a wise and understanding heart given us to put these things in practice.

How hard it is to be nothing, when everybody is telling us we are something! But the sanctified furnace will do this, and must, if we ever come to know what spiritual happiness is.

I have had I trust a godly jealousy at seeing your increase of acquaintance; the profiting does not keep pace with it, nor is there much sympathy with the afflicted. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it"

Yours faithfully, J. B.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-bourne/letter-107/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net