

# Letter 112

by James Bourne

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*The speaker finds comfort and peace in the Lord's love and presence, which exceeds all words and brings eternal life.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 34:8-9, John 20:11, Philipians 4:7, Colossians 1:27

**Topics:** "Gods Love", "Divine Presence"

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## Description

James Bourne shares a personal reflection on experiencing God's love in Christ Jesus, highlighting the profound impact of encountering the voice of love and mercy amidst sorrow and divine adoration. Through the story of Mary at the sepulchre, he emphasizes the closeness of the Lord Jesus Christ to those who seek Him, bringing reconciliation, friendship, and a sense of divine presence. Bourne expresses the inadequacy of words to describe the inestimable benefits of Christ's love and the hope of glory found in His presence, leading to spiritual weeping and the peace that comes with the Lord's visitations.

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## Transcript

[To a Friend.] Tunbridge Wells, 11 September 1836.

Dear Friend,

There is nothing in this life that can equal or be compared to the least and most transient view of God's love in Christ Jesus to a broken-hearted sinner. I was much cast down this afternoon, and saw no end of that melancholy which turns everything into a wrong channel, besides filling the soul with slavish fear, as if God would never be gracious, and his mercies were clean gone for ever. Looking, and almost wearied out with looking, for some portion for my Sunday morning's reading, I quite gave up what I always desire to find, that is, a word that comes first with sweetness and power to my own heart, and makes me feel master of my subject. But in turning over the leaves, my eyes caught these words [John xx.] - "Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping, .... and they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." This suited my case, and moved me more than I can tell. I said, That is indeed the cause of all my sorrow. But my weeping was accompanied with such a divine adoration and sweet sense of his inestimable love, that I could scarcely show myself.

Many things in that chapter show Mary's great anxiety, perplexity, and grief; but presently the Lord Jesus Christ said, "MARY;" and she knew the voice. So did I; it was the voice of love and mercy, of reconciliation

and friendship. No, he is not gone for ever; but very near, if haply we feel after him. How low these things make us fall! How little in our own estimation! How high and holy is the Lord! We know not how to exalt him enough. He is truly what Mary called him, MASTER. We then desire that he should be our Lord and Master, our Priest and King; we seek with all the heart to render to him again for all the benefits received; but alas, how little can be said or done! And this is not all; for her further encouragement and mine, the Lord added, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God." O my dear friend, these inestimable benefits exceed all words; and the very opening or glimpse of his sweet returning presence brought them all in. Eternal life was the beginning, middle, and end; and this is what the Apostle calls "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

All this began with the words "Why weepest thou?" The remembrance is still so sweet that I can scarcely write the account to you. I have wept spiritually much lately, but the Lord's visitations have preserved my spirit. The same evening, we are told, he appeared to his disciples, and as he always did, brought peace along with him. So he does now whenever he comes, as I know full well, and would if I could invent better words to set such heavenly things before you; but what can I say, if the Apostle calls it "passing all understanding," and in another place, "unspeakable"? I must leave it to that experience you have often had. "O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him. O fear the Lord, ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear him."

Yours faithfully, J. B.

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