

Letter 113

by James Bourne

James Bourne's sermon 'Letter 113' encourages believers to rely on God, recognize their spiritual shortcomings, and seek repentance for true mercy.

Scripture: Psalm 32:5, Psalm 51:17, Lamentations 3:25, Matthew 6:26, Hebrews 12:24, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Prayer And Refuge", "Repentance And Mercy"

Description

James Bourne emphasizes the importance of seeking God's provision and refuge in times of despair, cautioning against relying solely on human contrivances. He encourages prevailing with the Lord in prayer, coming to the blood of sprinkling for better things, and acknowledging God's goodness in all circumstances. Bourne highlights various reasons why the Lord may withhold blessings temporarily, urging self-reflection, repentance, and a genuine acknowledgment of sin as the way to receive mercy and salvation.

Transcript

[To -]. Handcross, 22 September 1836.

My dear - ,

I wish particularly to remind you of the beginning of the despair of poor S.; was it not a fear of coming to want? Your letter has much of this in it, and therefore I would caution you. What has been provided hitherto, and who has provided? Are you not at a loss to find your way to the Lord? I continually sink at the prospect of things, but I find God and his Word my refuge, and the little hope I attain to brings along with it a full reliance upon his goodness. Prevail with the Lord in prayer, and come to the blood of sprinkling, and you will find it speaks better things than human contrivances. It will honour God, and acknowledge that he does all things well. Did you ever consider that not a sparrow falls without notice? and for your encouragement and mine it is added, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." This consideration has often humbled me, and made me quite ashamed, and I have earnestly begged that I might in patience possess my soul, and quietly wait for his salvation.

We do well to consider that there may be many causes why the Lord withholds for a time:- a worldly spirit; a seeking too much for worldly accommodation; a repining spirit, overlooking the many mercies we enjoy; a covetous spirit; a careless walk; a fruitless profession; a want of union with the church of God; no grieving for "the affliction of Joseph;" continually walking to the stumbling of those about us; not keeping

our place in subjection to the word of God; hardening ourselves against reproof; living in independence of the people and the ministry; following the fashion of this world and lusting after it; idle hours every day; no heart to wrestle with God; plenty of reading the Scriptures, and grave looks, but no spiritual life; no profit in hearing; no willingness to help in the family worship, in the spirit of it; and let me add one more - no nourishing and cherishing any spark of spiritual life that appears in those with whom we dwell. For these and many more causes the Lord contends; and there is and can be no remedy, no clearing, no way of escape, but by falling down before the Lord and entreating him to give us a hearty acknowledgment of our sin. Here is a promise of mercy and nowhere else. O may the Lord suffer us not to say, This is not true, and that; but, like the Psalmist, "I have sinned."

From yours &c. J. B.

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