

# Letter 126.

by James Bourne

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in the Lord and finding shelter in Christ's wounded side, highlighting the dangers of fearing man and the significance of Scripture as a source of comfort.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 91:4, Proverbs 29:25, Matthew 7:24, Hebrews 13:5, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Faith And Trust", "Spiritual Perseverance"

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## Description

James Bourne shares about his personal afflictions and fears, finding encouragement and trust in the Lord through Scripture and hymns. He reflects on the necessity of trusting in God amidst trials and the comfort found in God's promises. Bourne emphasizes the importance of seeking shelter in Christ's sacrifice and building faith on the Rock of ages to withstand life's storms. He expresses gratitude for God's kindness and provision in times of trouble, urging spiritual fellowship and perseverance in faith.

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## Transcript

[To Mr. Yeomans.] London, 18 May 1837.

My dear Friend,

Since I wrote last I have been in many afflictions, both personal and in the church. In the latter, though not directly concerned, yet I have fallen into much anxiety and some heavy fears. I was one morning reading the word, and this portion first caught my eye, and then entered deeply into my heart, with a sweet persuasion that the Lord had given me power to trust in him - "The fear of man bringeth a snare, but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe" [Prov. xxix. 25]. This greatly encouraged me, and followed me for some days, reminding me of the necessity of that lively trust which would now be called for; and it caused much watchfulness, with fear and trembling. A verse in Hart's hymns was also very sweetly applied when I was cast down

"Thy goodness how immense,

To those that fear thy name!

Thy love surpasses thought or sense,

And always is the same."

It enlarged my contracted heart, and encouraged my faith and hope in the Lord, and I was again brought to the first point, namely, "Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe." I again returned to many fears, but the word of God was often my support, and at times shone like many diamonds. The Lord spoke more kindly to me by it than I can tell you, and gave me such understanding of my personal interest in it, as often to make me like a weaned child. He seemed determined that I should understand he would take care of me and hide me under the shadow of his wings; and if the Lord will enable me, I will tell you how he manifested this kindness. It was by greatly humbling me in my own eyes and causing me to fear always, yet with such a meek spirit of freedom as I cannot express. "Who is offended and I burn not?" Yet I was still kept in the exercise of many conflicts and much threatened danger. I have gone to chapel crying, praying, and entreating that the Lord would be merciful to me, and have been astonished how he has comforted me. The second hymn today quite overpowered me, and set my heart in sweet liberty -

"But they that in the Lord confide,  
And shelter in his wounded side,  
Shall see the danger overpast,  
Stand every storm, and live at last."

The first beauty I found in these words was, that there is no shelter, no rest, no hope, no love, no liberty, but in the blood of Christ cleansing from all sin. The Holy Spirit bore a sweet testimony that this was the ease with me, and I greatly rejoiced in this salvation. Then the next verse

"What Christ has said must be fulfilled,  
On this firm Rock believers build.  
His word shall stand; his truth prevail;  
And not one jot nor tittle fail."

This I saw was the only Rock that would stand the storm, and banish slavish fear; and this Rock of ages must be brought into the heart by a true and living faith wrought by the Holy Ghost. I saw that all religion that stops short of a shelter in Christ's wounded side would prove a house upon the sand. I cannot tell you how much I was comforted and how much at a loss I am to declare sufficiently the goodness of God to me in all my afflictions.

I have read your account of Mrs. Barber, and find her a true yoke-fellow. O that I may finish my course as she did! The Lord has been very kind to me, and I know not how to doubt that he will fulfil that promise upon which he has caused me to hope, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." What you say is true indeed - How few we can find union with, and therefore how ought this sweet spiritual fellowship to be cherished! May the Lord comfort your heart and maintain spiritual vigour, as your natural life decays, and not suffer the giving up of your temporal concerns to bring a flatness upon your spirit (which is so common a case) and to cover your latter days with a cloud. May the Lord abundantly shine upon your heart, and lead you continually to shelter in the Saviour's wounded side.

Yours affectionately, J. B.

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