

Letter 156.

by James Bourne

James Bourne's sermon urges believers to seek genuine spiritual transformation and to recognize the seriousness of their sinfulness in order to experience true salvation.

Scripture: Psalm 51:17

Topics: "True Conversion", "Eternal Salvation"

Description

James Bourne emphasizes the necessity of a deep spiritual work in the heart for salvation, urging Mrs. Morris to go beyond mere profession of faith and truly experience God's convicting presence. He highlights the importance of feeling God's wrath against sin and the desperate need for Christ's intervention for eternal salvation. Bourne encourages Mrs. Morris to seek a genuine, transformative relationship with Christ that will sustain her through life's challenges and lead to true spiritual growth.

Transcript

London, October 1838.

Dear Mrs. Morris,

It gave me pleasure to see you occasionally at my family worship while I was with you at Pulverbach; and also to perceive that you had for many years more or less felt the necessity of a spiritual work upon the heart. I believe I had a witness in your conscience that I spoke the truth, and described the work of God that must be found upon the sinner's heart if ever saved. I also perceived you were quite aware that all are not partakers of the Spirit who are in a profession, nor do all that are found in pulpits, professing to teach the truth, either know it themselves or preach it; and more than this, they often publicly and professedly hate those that can give a reason of their hope with meekness and fear. But, my dear friend, you must go still further if you are saved. Your understanding is in a measure enlightened, but you do not know what it is to be brought to God's bar and feel his wrath against you in a broken law. This brings a man down from all carnal hope, and binds him under the sentence of death, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. The authors of the church prayers knew something of it when they wrote, "tied and bound with the chain of our sins." This indeed will extort a bitter cry for mercy, and set aside all light: trifling religion. The soul in this condition will not wait to inquire who is pleased or displeased, but: out of dire necessity, like a drowning man, will unceasingly cry; knowing that if Christ does not help him he is gone for ever. It is my sincere desire that your religion may be of this sort; then you will know the solid comfort that it will afford in sickness and death, and you will understand what is meant by Christ being in you the hope of glory.

Pray watch if the Lord ever answers any of your prayers, or ever did; and depend upon it, if you clear this point, you will be encouraged to hope that he will withhold no good thing from you.

Do not deceive yourself; it is most awful. Do you really want to know Christ with all his saving benefits If you do, be not surprised if he comes in terrible majesty to shake that earthly mind of yours; but remember, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." Do not sit down in an easy sapless religion, like thousands about you. Death will destroy all such religion. Seek for that which will carry you through all your difficulties, and let me hear that you obtain this grace and grow in it.

Yours &c. J. B.

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