

Letter 160.

by James Bourne

James Bourne's sermon highlights the transformative power of God's grace through trials and the importance of reverence for God.

Scripture: Proverbs 9:10, Isaiah 57:15, Matthew 7:21, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Repentance And Humility", "Gods Faithfulness"

Description

James Bourne emphasizes the importance of experiencing deep humility and repentance before God in times of trouble and affliction, highlighting how God lifts us up and reveals His faithfulness and mercy in Christ Jesus. He challenges the superficiality of modern-day professions of faith, stressing the necessity of going through trials to truly understand and testify to God's grace. Bourne encourages a rich fear of God that leads to tender reverence, obedience, and surrender to His guidance, acknowledging the need for spiritual vigilance and humility in both challenging and joyful times.

Transcript

London, 11 January 1839.

Dear Mrs. Tims,

I often think of the manner of my leaving your kind and hospitable residence, and ought to be ashamed that I have found no time to thank you before this. My exercises have been multiplied and changed into so many shapes and forms that I have scarcely had courage to visit any of the friends here; but I have been taught the meaning of the words, "For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion." Out of these deep and low places it is that the Lord picks us up and exalts us to a place of safety; here we find the reality and stability of God's faithfulness and mercy to us in Christ Jesus. Out of these deep waters spring the brightest evidences as well as the deepest humiliation and self-abasement. When the Saviour comes to us in these extremities, then it is we repent in dust and ashes, and find no place low enough to put ourselves in, and none high enough for the Saviour. We can but weep it out, for the Apostle tells us the truth, and says it is "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The profession of the day is carried on with a light heart, and is as unsavoury as the white of an egg. I have told all of you in my morning readings of the troubles and afflictions that await God's people, and my mournful message has seemed very discouraging to some; but we can only testify of such things as we have tasted and handled of the word of life. I am continually falling into these difficult places, and shall I

not show there is a need for them? I am sure I set forth the power and efficacy of God's grace in bringing me out; and how shall I sufficiently exalt him for this? Some, three parts asleep, will say, All do not go into such troubles; I answer, All do not get to heaven that say, "Lord, Lord." The Lord tells us "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

The fear of God is a rich treasure; how tender it shows itself of God's honour; with what spiritual obedience and reverence it delights in God's service; how watchful it makes us; when he frowns, how we stoop and put our mouths in the dust; and when he smiles, how we draw nigh and give him our best affections, and surrender all things into his hands, and how delighted we are to feel that he will condescend to be our Guardian and Guide. May the Lord increase this more and more in you as the day approaches, is the sincere desire of

Your affectionate friend, J. B.

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