

Letter 200.

by James Bourne

The sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine faith, which is hidden and only manifest in godly fear, and how trials and afflictions can be used by the Lord to check the spirit of the world and bring us to our knees.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 15:33, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:16, James 2:26

Topics: "Genuine Faith", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

James Bourne emphasizes the importance of genuine faith that produces fruit, warning against a superficial profession of religion that lacks substance. He encourages introspection and testing of one's faith, highlighting the value of godly fear and humility in true religion. Bourne prays for spiritual and physical healing, urging the recipient to prioritize their soul's well-being over worldly concerns. He shares that temporal setbacks can lead to a deeper reflection on spiritual matters and a reordering of priorities, ultimately leading to God's blessings and guidance.

Transcript

London, 28 September 1840.

Dear W. B.,

There is nothing more odious than a profession of religion that brings nothing in. I am therefore anxious that every step of your way may be tried, so that the Lord shall bear his testimony to the truth and soundness of it.

One point most of us, and you amongst the rest, are apt to mistake; because things appear small, and our movement slow, we conclude that all is wrong. This is a false aspect; the fear of God may not have so brilliant an appearance as many things that make much outward show. True religion is very hidden, and is called "THE SECRET OF THE LORD" [Psalm xxv. 14]. It is only manifest in godly fear - a plant that bears root downward in humility, and shows itself in all our necessary engagements in the world in great integrity and transparency in all directions.

I sincerely hope the Lord will appear for you in healing both your soul and your body, and that he will sanctify this affliction at the beginning of your life, so that you may never forget it as long as you live; but be truly thankful that he should check the exuberance of a worldly spirit, and convince you that there is another concern of more importance which must FIRST be attended to.

We often find amongst us, that such as seem to have too great a readiness to attend to temporal things are presently laid by, and made deeply to ponder their ways. This checks the spirit of the world, and the Lord in mercy puts temporal matters in their right places, and then blesses their labours. The Lord comfort and instruct you.

Yours &c. J. B.

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