

Letter 22

by James Bourne

The sermon emphasizes the importance of hope, prayer, and patience in maintaining a good spirit and following God's will.

Scripture: 1 Kings 19:12, Psalm 62:5, Matthew 6:13, 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 4:7

Topics: "Spiritual Guidance", "Trusting God"

Description

James Bourne encourages his cousin to trust in the Lord's presence and to seek meekness and discretion through prayer. He reflects on the power of God to deliver from temptation and sin, desiring to maintain the kingdom of God in his heart. Bourne emphasizes the importance of patience and quiet hope in discerning God's will, urging his cousin to listen to the whispers of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

[To M. B] Paper Harrow, Aug. 6, 1826.

Dear Cousin,

It is true I was low and gloomy when I was at your house, yet I felt a cleaving to the Lord, and a measure of hope that he would be with me; and after supper, in returning thanks, I was most sweetly comforted with his presence, with a great sense of my own insufficiency. I had a good journey down, and found my little place retirement itself. Though not much exercised, I have been occupied with prayer, to be kept discreet and sober-minded, and have found much meekness on my spirit; and this sort of communion has, by the great goodness of God, kept me in a good place.

I was much struck with reading these words, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever." It felt to me as if to fall into temptation was to fall into sin, for that I was the most foolish and weak creature possible; and the power to keep me is the Lord's, and the kingdom is his, which I long to have maintained in my heart, but which sin always puts down as to the present enjoyment of it. But when in the enjoyment of it, there is a hearty ascribing the glory to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

I have been sleepless and languid through the heat, but have put up many petitions not to complain, and find my past afflictions have been exceedingly sanctified, by the great goodness of God, in leading me to turn every apparent trifle into prayer.

While you seem so much exercised where to go, I think you are not yet in the spot where God designs you to be. One place I would advise you to lodge in - that is, "Let patience have her perfect work" - patiently wait, and quietly hope, for the salvation of God. Those little whispers that you hint at, I would have you attend to. They will not lead you hither and thither; but they will lead you, like Samuel of old, to attend, and say, " Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

Yours &c. J. B.

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