

Letter 5

by James Bourne

James Bourne reflects on the transformative power of friendship and God's lovingkindness in the face of personal trials and spiritual growth.

Scripture: Psalm 37:4, Psalm 51:17, Proverbs 27:17, Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6

Topics: "Repentance And Faith", "Gods Providence"

Description

James Bourne shares about his journey of rebellion and unbelief turning into repentance and full satisfaction in God's lovingkindness. Through conversations with Mr. Brook, he learns to trust in God's provision for both spiritual and temporal needs, leading to a deep sense of passivity and desire to know God's will. Bourne experiences a transformation in his faith, realizing that God hears his prayers, provides for his needs, and gives him peace that surpasses all understanding.

Transcript

[To Mr. H. B.] - Brighton, 1808.

Dear Sir,

I was very glad to see your letter, it was a word in season; and it really rejoiced my heart to hear that you find a greater earnestness with God. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." We both have felt this.

You saw by my letter the state of my mind when I first arrived here, and the rebellion and unbelief of my heart. But thanks be to God, he does all things well; instead of entering into judgment with me, he poured his lovingkindness into my heart, insomuch that I had not one petition left - my prayers were turned into praises. The grief and joy I felt were beyond all power of words to describe. Indeed I repented in dust and ashes, but found a full and complete satisfaction. He became my all in all, and myself worse and less than nothing.

I had some conversation with Mr. Brook, and I have no doubt the Lord enabled him to open all his heart to me; he told me all his trials and difficulties. I saw so clearly the hand of God in it that my heart was drawn out to believe that he does regard both the spiritual and the temporal wants of his chosen ones, and that I should lack no good thing. This stopped my unbelief, and I was made to be very passive, desirous of knowing God's will toward me, and patiently to wait. I felt myself very sober-minded all Saturday, and on

Sunday walked alone to Lewes, with a spirit of prayer when Mr. Brook preached from these words, "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born to adversity." This really suited my case. I found that my friend, Christ Jesus, had loved me, and that it was from everlasting to everlasting the same; and the latter part of his discourse made the ungodly world retire many miles out of sight. I felt myself a poor, helpless, lost creature, but at the same time found my Elder Brother was "in all points tempted like as we are" and was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" and that every affliction was to try me and prove me, and to do me good in my latter end.

In the evening at Brighton he preached from the words, "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour." I had faith given me to receive every word he said as my own portion. I knew that he had honoured me, and made me his son by adoption. I was fully persuaded of this truth - that where God does not incline the heart to cry to him, he does not design to give. He will make a man feel his wants before he ever supplies them. I cried earnestly to the Lord, and he heard my petitions, and gave me an answer of peace; this is better than ten thousand pounds; and I know all this comes from him by the fruits. It has meekened and humbled me, given me patience and resignation, and destroyed every present anxious care for this life. I supped on Sunday evening with Mr. Brook, and told him of my happy deliverance that day. It seemed greatly to warm his heart, He is very affectionate and kind, and has no reserve, but tells me all his heart. He will take me to see Mr. Jenkins when he returns, if I stay till then.

If I meet with any employment, I continue here some time. I have a garret, and sit occasionally with the old landlady in the kitchen, who provides my breakfast. I look so little like a beggar that few could credit it. I have now one guinea left, and I shall spin it out as far as possible.

Yours faithfully, J. B.

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