

Letter 54

by James Bourne

James Bourne's sermon emphasizes the seriousness of sin, the necessity of watchfulness, and the transformative power of God's salvation through Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Numbers 20:12

Topics: "Sin And Redemption", "Spiritual Vigilance"

Description

James Bourne, in a letter to Mrs. Burrell, shares about the darkness caused by sin and the importance of spiritual vigilance to avoid falling into spiritual sloth. He reflects on the fear of God, the consequences of sin, and the need for absolute submission to God's sovereignty. Bourne emphasizes the salvation found in Jesus Christ, the necessity of patience and hope in waiting for God's deliverance, and the transformation that occurs when one surrenders completely to God's way.

Transcript

[To Mrs. Burrell.] London, March 25, 1834.

Dear Friend,

I have often grieved at the cause of the darkness which covers my friend, which is sin; and have wondered why the Lord should suffer me to be so continually involved in that misery. I now begin to think one cause is that we may warn and caution all about us, lest spiritual sloth and want of watchfulness overtake them before they are aware. I have experienced much of this darkness and sorrow lately, and find few companions that can enter into my case. Death, judgment, holiness, justice, and righteousness, are often my contemplations; and they rouse my fears and discover to me what the prophet saw through the hole in the wall [Ezek. viii.] A light professor is death to me, and disturbs my meditations, which I dare not say are all bondage; for I assure you even in these places, Christ often speaks a word to me from off the mercy-seat. By these my heart is kept out of the world, and the sight of God's greatness in all directions makes me sink into nothing before him. This fear keeps me firm at my post; "knowing the terror of the Lord" I wish to persuade those about me. I perceive it is a fearful thing to sin against God. It is said of Moses that God would not speak to him as to other men - with him he would speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and yet we read, "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring up this congregation into the land which I have given them " [Num. xx. 12].

I am persuaded that Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost; I also perceive that he will take vengeance of our inventions, to keep us in a low place, and make salvation sweet and great and precious; and I think I know what this means, "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea" [Psalm xciii.] These are the fearful and tremendous exercises that I labour under in all directions; being often brought to the bar of God, I sink in fearful apprehensions of his taking vengeance of my inventions. In such a case we have a full sight of our inventions, and are quite sure that sin is exceedingly hateful to God, so that we cannot attend to what is often lightly said, Why don't you roll yourself upon the promises? Alas, alas! "To will is present with me, but how to perform I find not." How deeply we are convinced that we must bow in absolute submission to the sovereignty of God, and have nothing left, within or without, but "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and even here patience must have its perfect work, and we must be brought patiently to wait, and quietly to hope, for his salvation. But we find it does most assuredly come, and is like "new wine put into new bottles," and thus we are preserved unto eternal life.

In such an experience I find all my native comeliness turned into corruption, and all my fair pretensions lose their claims, and I am made willing and glad to be saved in God's way.

This morning I had a sweet season in prayer, and while my heart was melted as wax before the fire, I thought of you, and begged that you might rejoice with me in this great salvation; that the Lord would raise your drooping head, and cause your tongue to say, "He hath done all things well." So prays

Your unworthy servant in the Lord, J. 13.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-bourne/letter-54/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net