

Letter 8

by James Bourne

The speaker reflects on God's merciful forbearance and the benefits of affliction in deepening our relationship with Him.

Scripture: Psalm 27:14, John 8:36, Romans 5:3, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Hebrews 12:6

Topics: "Suffering And Faith", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

James Bourne reflects on the goodness of God amidst afflictions, acknowledging the hard lesson of quietly waiting for God's timing and the struggle of submitting to His chastening hand. He marvels at God's merciful forbearance towards him despite his rebellion, recognizing the sweet moments of intimacy with God that afflictions bring. Bourne finds solace in prayer and the assurance of Christ's presence in the midst of desperation, learning valuable lessons in faith and dependence on God through trials and tribulations.

Transcript

[To the Rev. W. J. Brook.] - 1809.

Dear Sir,

I thank you much for your kind letter. I believe God is doing me good, and in this he is pleased to say he delights. Though we cry hard under his chastening hand, the rod will not be spared. This quietly waiting for God is a hard lesson, and flesh and blood will have a voice here, and say it is cruel. Hence comes the contention; so that when I would quietly submit and patiently wait, this evil is present with me

I often wonder at God's merciful forbearance to such a perverse fool as I am; for surely he shows at times such a tender regard for rue, and gives me such sweet indulgences and familiarities, as to melt my soul into gratitude for his lovingkindness, and cover my face with shame for all my rebellion and hard thoughts towards him. I believe it is good to be afflicted; for I am sure it is the source of a deal of secret intercourse between the soul and God, which they that walk in a clear path know but little of. It causes me to watch every turning of his hand, and many, many times in, the day my heart is lifted up in prayer to him, and I feel at times sweet and speedy answers. When my case appears quite desperate, I am holpen with a little help. It is true I leave thought my troubles great, yet invariably when I feel Christ in my heart, "the hope of glory," then I can rejoice in tribulation, and kiss the rod. Then again the corruption of the heart and unbelief bring a cloud over the mind, and all is fretfulness again. But by all these things I learn that I am in the

footsteps of the flock, and in all these things is the life of my soul. Who teacheth like God?

I have heard much of your persecutions at Brighton; but blessed be God that he has left on record that the trial of faith shall "be found unto praise, and honour, and glory." "Such honour have all his saints."

I do love to watch God in everything, in our going out and in our coming in; for I am sure he is in everything, and is said to be about our path; nor can I see in what other way we can be said to walk with God.

I like your idea of liberty those sons of liberty are slaves to sin, and are the devil's prisoners; none but those whom Christ makes free are free indeed.

Yours faithfully, J. B.

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