

Letter 80

by James Bourne

The sermon emphasizes the importance of a perfect walk in spiritual life, avoiding wicked things and false doctrines, and loving and honoring those who are faithful.

Scripture: Psalm 101

Topics: "Spiritual Guidance", "Faithfulness"

Description

James Bourne writes a letter to J. G. on June 3, 1835, expressing comfort in the mercy of God displayed in J. G.'s life despite ongoing challenges. Bourne encourages J. G. to walk wisely in Christ, being perfect in helplessness and reliance on Him. He warns against wickedness, false doctrines, and deceitful workers, emphasizing the importance of earnest prayer, decisive actions, and faithful companionship in the spiritual journey towards everlasting life.

Transcript

[To J. G.] London, 3 June 1835.

My dear Friend,

Although I have already written to your sister, yet on the receipt of yours I cannot help sending you word how much I am comforted with your simple account, which displays the mercy of God to you in the utmost extremity. You have not much joy, and have many things yet to be cleared up; so have we all; but this which is already past truly manifests that the Lord has put his fear into your heart, and has brought you out of the miry clay of a false profession, where thousands perish, crying, Precious Jesus! having "a name" that they live, and yet being dead [Rev. iii. 1].

You can now "sing of mercy and of judgment" [Ps. ci.]; therefore behave yourself "wisely in a perfect way." Let Christ, the perfect way, be your friend and guide in all things, and let your heart be perfect in your spiritual walk at home; that is, perfectly helpless in yourself, and perfectly at a point in making Christ your help in all your secret difficulties, both as it respects your own calling and election, as well as things you have to contend with in your outward walk. Set no wicked thing before your eyes, as necessary to be done for the sake of peace, but for God's sake hate the works and false doctrines of such as turn aside. A froward heart contends against God, departs from him, and makes the way broader than God's word: and by this means slanders his best neighbour, the Lord Jesus Christ; and they that lightly esteem him, and his choice of his people, and his righteousness, will be cut off. He who cannot keep his mouth in the dust, and

not so much as look at himself, God will not suffer. But if you are enabled to love and honour such as are faithful, and desire to live and die with them, this shall be your token, that you are "passed from death unto life," and shall have his presence watching over you in all your conflicts. Such as profess to know Christ, and yet in doctrine deny him, are called "deceitful workers" [2 Cor. xi. 13], and must not be followed; nor must he that telleth lies be made a spiritual companion. The end of the Psalm shows that earnest prayer and decided measures will alone do in such cases, before the evil gains admittance into our hearts, or we shall be covered with darkness, and know not how to find our way to our stronghold, I could wish you to find the same sweet power and light that I at times find in the word, the savour of which sweetly mixes itself in all my worldly engagements, and affords a comfortable prospect of a good hope in my end. That hope you now have found counteracts the despairing thoughts you once laboured under. You have a measure of hope from what the Lord has already done, that it is not his purpose that you should "dwell with everlasting burnings," but that through grace you shall obtain everlasting life. Deal tenderly with every cheek your conscience gives, and this will keep it tender. Always lay to heart everything that brings on a lowering cloud, and let not your want of memory pass it away, but never rest till it be washed in the blood of the Lamb. We hope to hear of your welfare from time to time.

Your willing servant in the Lord, J. B.

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