

# Travelling--Nonconformists

by John Newton

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and contentment, and warns against the dangers of traveling and the trials of homecoming.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 34:19, Proverbs 17:17, Proverbs 18:24, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Suffering And Trials", "Idolatry And Dependence"

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## Description

John Newton reflects on the various trials and calamities in the world caused by sin, expressing gratitude for God's protection over him and his loved ones. He acknowledges the pain of seeing a loved one suffer and the challenges that come with caring deeply for others. Newton emphasizes the tendency for our most valued comforts to bring about our sharpest trials, highlighting the potential idolatry and dependence that can be present in our relationships. He also touches on the importance of being open-minded and not prejudiced when encountering different perspectives or beliefs.

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## Transcript

My dear Sir,

I was glad to hear that you were again within a few miles of me; and I would praise the Lord, who led you out and brought you home in safety, and preserved all in peace while you were abroad, so that you found nothing very painful to imbitter your return. Many go abroad well, but return no more. The affectionate wife, the prattling children, listen for the well-known sound of papa's foot at the door; but they listen in vain: a fall or a fever has intercepted him, and he is gone far, far away. Some leave all well when they go from home; but how changed, how trying, the scene when they come back! In their absence the Lord has taken away the desire of their eyes with a stroke; or perhaps ruffians have plundered and murdered their family in the dead of the night, or the fire devoured their habitation.

Ah! How large and various is the list of evils and calamities with which sin has filled the world! You and I and ours escape them: we stand, though in a field of battle, where thousands fall around us, because the Lord is pleased to keep us. May He have the praise, and may we only live to love and serve him.

Mrs. \*\*\*\* has been very ill, and my heart often much pained while you have been absent. But the Lord has removed his hand: she is much better, and I hope she will be seen in his house to-morrow. I have few trials in my own person; but when the Lord afflicts her, I feel it. It is a mercy that he has made us one; but it exposes us to many a pain, which we might have missed if we cared but little for each other. Alas! there is

usually an ounce of the golden calf, of idolatry and dependence, in all the warm regard we bear to creatures. *Hinc illae lachrymae!* For this reason, our sharpest trials usually spring from our most valued comforts.

I cannot come to you; therefore you must come hither speedily. Be sure to bring Mr. B\*\*\*\*\* with you. I shall be very glad to see him, and I long to thank him for clothing my book. It looks well on the outside, and I hope to find it sound and savoury. I love the author, and that is a step towards liking the book. For where we love, we are generally tender, and favourably take every thing by the best handle, and are vastly full of candour: but if you are prejudiced against the man, the poor book is half condemned before we open it. It had need be written well; for it will be read with a suspicious eye, as if we wished to find treason in every page.

I am glad I diverted and profited you by calling you a speckled bird. I can tell you, such a bird in this day, that wears the full colour of no sect or party, is *rara avis*; if not quite so scarce as the phoenix, yet to be met with but here and there. It is impossible I should be all of a colour, when I have been a debtor to all sorts; and, like the jay in the fable, have been beholden to most of the birds in the air for a feather or two. Church and Meeting, Methodist and Moravian, may all perceive something in my coat taken from them. None of them are angry with me for borrowing from them; but then, why could I not be content with their colour, without going amongst other flocks and coveys, to make myself such a motley figure? Let them be angry; if I have culled the best feathers from all, then surely I am finer than any.

I am, &c.

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