

Xv to Lady Boyd

by Samuel Rutherford

The speaker reflects on the state of the Church in Aberdeen, his personal struggles with hypocrisy, and the importance of true Christianity, calling believers to strive for more and suffer for Christ.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Matthew 5:6, Philippians 3:12, 1 Peter 1:7, Revelation 3:15

Topics: "True Repentance", "Gods Grace"

Description

Samuel Rutherford preaches about the importance of true sincerity in one's faith, highlighting the dangers of hypocrisy and self-deception. He reflects on his own struggles and shortcomings, realizing the need for genuine repentance and humility before God. Rutherford acknowledges the refining process of suffering for Christ, leading to a deeper understanding of one's own weaknesses and the necessity of relying solely on God's grace. He emphasizes the need to diligently pursue the kingdom of heaven and not settle for superficial markers of faith, urging believers to maintain zeal and care in their spiritual journey. Ultimately, Rutherford finds solace in the love and comfort of Christ, despite the challenges and doubts he faces.

Transcript

Lady Boyd, whose maiden name was Christian Hamilton, was the daughter of a distinguished lawyer and inherited his abilities and strength of character. She was a trusted friend of many of the leading ministers of the Church of Scotland in her day. When she died the whole Scottish Parliament suspended its sitting to attend her funeral. See also letters LVII, LXII and LXV.

MADAM, -- Grace, mercy and peace be unto you. The Lord has brought me to Aberdeen, where I see God in few. This town has been advised upon of purpose for me; it consisteth either of Papists, or men of Gallio's naughty faith. It is counted wisdom, in the most, not to countenance a

confined minister; but I find Christ neither strange nor unkind; for I have found many faces smile upon me since I came hither. I am heavy and sad, considering what is betwixt the Lord and my soul, which none seeth but He. I find men have mistaken me; it would be no art (as I now see) to spin small and make hypocrisy a goodly web, and to go through the market as a saint among men, and yet steal quietly to hell, without observation: so easy is it to deceive men. I have disputed whether or no I ever knew anything of Christianity, save the letters of that name. Men see but as men, and they call ten twenty and twenty an hundred; but O! to be approved of God in the heart and in sincerity is not an ordinary mercy. My neglects while I had a pulpit, and other things whereof I am ashamed to speak, meet me now, so as God maketh an honest cross my daily sorrow. Like a fool, I believed, under suffering for Christ, that I myself should keep the key of Christ's treasures, and take out comforts when I listed, and eat and be fat: but I see now a sufferer for Christ will be made to know himself, and will be holden at the door as well as another poor sinner, and will be fain to eat with the bairns, and to take the by-board, and glad to do so. My blessing on the cross of Christ that has made me see this! Oh! if we could take pains for the kingdom of heaven! But we sit down upon some ordinary marks of God's children, thinking we have as much as will separate us from a reprobate; and thereupon we take the play and cry, 'Holiday!' and thus the devil casteth water on our fire, and blunteth our zeal and care. But I see heaven is not at the door; and I see, howbeit my challenges be many, I suffer for Christ, and dare hazard my salvation upon it; for sometimes my Lord cometh with a fair hour and O! but His love be sweet, delightful, and comfortable.

Madam, I know your Ladyship knoweth this, and that made me bold to write of it, that others might reap somewhat by my bonds for the truth; for I should desire, and I aim at this, to have my Lord well spoken of, and honored, howbeit He should make nothing of me but a bridge over a water.

Thus recommending your Ladyship, your son and children, to His grace, who has honored you with a name and room among the living in Jerusalem, and wishing grace to be with your Ladyship.

ABERDEEN

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