

Xxxiv. to John Gordon of Cardoness, the Younger

by Samuel Rutherford

The sermon emphasizes the urgency of salvation and the importance of seeking God while He may be found, using the means of profiting such as prayer, reading the Word, and family worship.

Scripture: Psalm 90:12, Matthew 16:26, 2 Corinthians 6:2, Hebrews 9:27, 1 Peter 1:3

Topics: "Repentance", "Eternal Salvation"

Description

Samuel Rutherford delivers a heartfelt letter to a wayward young man, urging him to turn away from his reckless lifestyle and seek salvation in Christ. Rutherford emphasizes the fleeting nature of life on earth and the eternal consequences of neglecting one's soul. He passionately pleads with the young man to repent, seek the Lord, and embrace the love and grace of Jesus Christ before it's too late. The preacher paints a vivid picture of the joys of heaven awaiting those who reform their ways and return to the Lord, contrasting it with the temporary and deceptive pleasures of the world.

Transcript

See the note on his father (Letter XXXII). The son, to whom this letter was addressed, was an uncivilized loose liver, and made his home a misery. Like his others to the same address, Rutherford's letter is outspoken and straight to the point. Nor could he ignore the fact that though the young man continued to attend church at times he came late and strode out before the service was over, behaving with the utmost irreverence and as if he was deliberately trying to insult his minister.

MUCH HONORED SIR, -- I long to hear whether or not your soul be hand-fasted with Christ. Lose your time no longer: flee the follies of youth: gird up the loins of your mind, and make you ready for meeting the Lord. I have often summoned you, and now I summon you again, to compear before your Judge, to make

a reckoning of your life. While ye have time, consider your ways. Oh that there were such an heart in you, as to think what an ill conscience will be to you, when ye are upon the border of eternity, and your one foot out of time!

Oh then, ten thousand thousand floods of tears cannot extinguish these flames, or purchase to you one hour's release from that pain! Oh, how sweet a day have ye had! But this is a fair-day that runneth fast away. See how ye have spent it, and consider the necessity of salvation! And tell me, in the fear of God, if ye have made it sure. I am persuaded that ye have a conscience that will be speaking somewhat to you. Why will ye die, and destroy yourself? I charge you in Christ's name, to rouse up your conscience in time, while salvation is in your offer.

This is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation. Therefore, let me again beseech you to consider, in this your day, the things that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes. Dear brother, fulfill my joy, and begin to seek the Lord while He may be found. Forsake the follies of deceiving and vain youth: lay hold upon eterna] life. Shoring, night-drinking, and the misspending of the Sabbath, and neglecting of prayer in your house, and refusing of an offered salvation, will burn up your soul with the terrors of the Almighty, when your awakened conscience shall flee in your face.

Be kind and loving to your wife: make conscience of cherishing her, and not being rigidly austere. Sir, I have not a tongue to express the glory that is laid up for you in your Father's house, if ye reform your doings, and frame your heart to return to the Lord. Ye know that this world is but a shadow, a short living creature, under the law of time. Within less than fifty years, when ye look back to it, ye shall laugh at the evanishing vanities thereof, as feathers flying in the air, and as the houses of sand within the sea-mark, which the children of men are building.

Give up with courting of this vain world: seek not the bastard's moveables, but the son's heritage in heaven. Take a trial of Christ. Look unto Him, and His love will so change you, that ye shall be taken with Him, and never choose to go from Him. There is nothing that will make you a Christian indeed, but a taste of the sweetness of Christ. 'Come and see', will speak best to your soul. I would fain hope good of you. Be not discouraged at broken and spilled resolutions; but to it, and to it again!

Use the means of profiting with your conscience: pray in your family and read the Word. Remember how our Lord's day was spent when I was among you. It will be a great challenge to you before God if ye forget the good that was done within the walls of your house on the Lord's day; and if ye turn aside after the fashions of this world, and if ye go not in time to the kirk, to wait on the public worship of God, and if ye tarry not at it, till all the exercises of religion be ended.

Give God some of your time both morning and evening and afternoon; and in so doing, rejoice the heart of a poor, oppressed prisoner. Rue upon your own soul and from your heart fear the Lord. Now He that brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of His sheep, by the blood Of the eternal covenant, establish your heart with grace, and present you before His presence with joy. Your affectionate and loving pastor.

ABERDEEN, 1637

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