

# Letter 184.

by James Bourne

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*The Lord's troubles in our lives are meant to humble us, reveal our misery, and show us the beauty and suitableness of the Saviour.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 34:18

**Topics:** "Spiritual Transformation", "Gods Mercy"

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## Description

James Bourne, in a letter to W. B., expresses deep concern for his friend's captivity, urging him to see it as an opportunity to heed God's voice speaking to his conscience. Bourne emphasizes that true religion goes beyond receiving the word and light from the ministry, highlighting the need for a deep encounter with God's justice, holiness, and truth to lead to genuine transformation and salvation. He encourages W. B. to persistently seek God's mercy and affection even in the midst of trials and suffering, believing that such encounters with the Lord will reveal the beauty and sufficiency of the Savior.

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## Transcript

London, 23 June 1840.

My dear W. B.

I am truly sorry I cannot get at you so much as I could wish. I feel much for your long captivity; but consider (as no doubt you do), This is the Lord's doing; and I trust it is to engage your attention to that "still small voice" which he utters upon your conscience, to inform you of the dangerous state of your soul, which perhaps would never be laid to heart were the body sound, and all things going on well.

Young people are apt to think that religion is receiving the word in their natural perception, and establishing themselves in the light they receive by the ministry, and suppose that this is all that can be known; whereas it is worse than nothing if it end here. But angry looks and terrible frowns from God, and a sensible rebuffing from the Lord, together with some sight of his justice, holiness, and truth - these are considered the black marks of a finally-condemned criminal. O no! They are not so; but on the contrary this is the sort of trouble which turns men into such fools as God makes wise unto salvation. The Lord hides his purpose in these terrible dealings, for a time, in order to humble the poor soul in the dust, and to show him something of the depth of misery into which he is fallen, and then to discover the greatness of the beauty and the suitableness of the precious Saviour.

Although you say but little to me about these things, yet, if I can ever read hearts, I think I can read something of this sort upon yours; and my counsel is, While you are the Lord's prisoner, give him no rest, until he condescend to bestow a kind look, a tender word, or some heart-rending mercy, which shall for ever fix him in your best affections. So prays

Your affectionate friend, J. B.

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