

Letter 26

by James Bourne

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and spiritual vigilance in maintaining a strong spiritual life and avoiding worldly distractions.

Scripture: Psalm 62:8, Proverbs 4:23, Ephesians 6:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, James 4:7

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Personal Prayer"

Description

James Bourne emphasizes the importance of continuous prayer as a powerful tool in seeking God's help and protection, especially in times of spiritual warfare. He warns against becoming complacent or neglecting personal prayer, as it directly impacts spiritual strength. Bourne urges vigilance against worldly influences and encourages a deep reliance on God for wisdom and guidance to avoid falling into temptation. He advises to heed the inner voice of conscience, obey God's Word, and maintain a humble and childlike faith in Christ to prosper in the midst of challenges and trials.

Transcript

[To M. B.] Aylesbury, July 1828.

Dear Cousin,

I see great beauty in the constant exercise of prayer - "CONTINUING INSTANT IN PRAYER." perceive its prevalency, and that God does indeed hear us when we cry earnestly at the approach of an enemy. Communion with God is a check against levity, and a maul upon the old man of sin, on every occasion; we see what is going on within, watching every emotion of the heart, and are led to bring all our miseries to the "Fountain opened," and are made spiritually-minded, which "is life and Peace." With David we say, "I hate vain thoughts, but thy law do I love."

You are now in an enemy's country, and I hope you will keep a double watch. Let me intreat you not to get into distaste with your closet; as secret prayer ebbs and flows, so will you find your spiritual strength ebb and flow. Delilah is a fair speaker, but will certainly betray us, if we be found sleeping in her lap. The lock will be cut off; and then, like Sampson, we may shake ourselves, but to our sorrow it will cost much time and labour before the lock be grown again. Only the Lord can preserve your spirit, and give you divine wisdom and discretion, that you may not prove a sport to the Philistines. The world is very congenial to our old man; and the professing world is a sort of plaster to the carnal mind, and often hushes a benumbed conscience to sleep; but be sure to listen to every little dictate within, and brow-beat it not. Be sure you do

as this inward monitor bids, and beg to be like a little child at the foot of Christ. As I told you in my last, Enter not into contention; "Keep the door of thy lips;" and let the word of God dwell richly in you; so shall you prosper.

Yours &c. J. B.

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