

# Xvii. to Robert Gordon of Knockbrex

by Samuel Rutherford

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faith, mortification, and courage in times of struggle, and encourages the listener to hold onto Christ's promises and recognize His sovereignty.*

**Scripture:** Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 1:3, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 4:19, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Hebrews 4:16, Hebrews 11:6, James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Faith And Doubt", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

Samuel Rutherford, in a heartfelt letter to a friend, shares his struggles and triumphs in his relationship with Christ. Despite facing temptations and doubts, he holds onto the unwavering love of Jesus, believing in His promises and the glory of heaven. Rutherford expresses the necessity of faith, the importance of being crucified to the world, and the realization that courage in times of trouble for Christ's sake requires divine strength and joy. He emphasizes the value of spiritual blessings and encourages faithfulness and repentance among believers.

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## Transcript

Robert Gordon lived in the next parish to Anwoth. He was a prominent figure in Church life in Scotland.

MY VERY WORTHY AND DEAR FRIEND, -- Grace, mercy, and peace be to you.

Though all Galloway should have forgotten me, I would have expected a letter from you ere now; but I will not expound it to be forgetfulness of me.

Now, my dear brother, I cannot show you how matters go betwixt Christ and me. I find my Lord going and coming seven times a day. His visits are short; but they are both frequent and sweet. I dare not for my life think of a challenge of my Lord. I hear ill tales, and hard reports of

Christ, from the Tempter and my flesh; but love believeth no evil. I may swear that they are liars, and that apprehensions make lies of Christ's honest and unalterable love to me. I dare not say that I am a dry tree, or that I have no room at all in the vineyard, but yet I often think that the sparrows are blessed, who may resort to the house of God in Anwoth, from which I am banished.

Temptations, that I supposed to be stricken dead and laid upon their back, rise again and revive upon me; yea, I see that while I live, temptations will not die. The devil seemeth to brag and boast as much as if he had more court with Christ than I have; and as if he had charmed and blasted my ministry, that I shall do no more good in public. But his wind shaketh no corn. I will not believe that Christ would have made such a mint to have me to Himself, and have taken so much pains upon me as He has done, and then slip so easily from possession, and lose the glory of what He has done. Nay, since I came to Aberdeen, I have been taken up to see the new land, the fair palace of the Lamb; and will Christ let me see heaven, to break my heart, and never give it to me? I shall not think my Lord Jesus giveth a dumb earnest, or putteth His seals to blank paper, or intendeth to put me off with fair and false promises. I see that now which I never saw well before.

(I) I see faith's necessity in a fair day is never known aright; but now I miss nothing so much as faith. Hunger in me runneth to fair and sweet promises; but when I come, I am like a hungry man that wanteth teeth, or a weak stomach having a sharp appetite that is filled with the very sight of meat, or like one stupefied with cold under water, that would fain come to land, but cannot grip anything casten to him. I

can let Christ grip me, but I cannot grip Him. I cannot set my feet to the ground, for afflictions bring the cramp upon my faith. All I do do is to hold out a lame faith to Christ, like a beggar holding out a stump instead of an arm or leg, and cry, 'Lord Jesus, work a miracle! Oh what would I give to have hands and arms to grip strongly.

(2) I see that mortification, and to be crucified to the world, is not so highly accounted of by us as it should be. Oh how heavenly a thing it is to be dead and dumb and deaf to this world's sweet music! As I am at this present, I would scorn to buy this world's kindness with a bow of my knee. I scarce now either see or hear what it is that this world offereth me; I know that it is little that it can take from me, and as little that it can give me.

(3) I thought courage, in the time of trouble for Christ's sake, a thing that I might take up at my foot. I thought that the very remembrance of the honesty of the cause would be enough. But I was a fool in so thinking. Christ will be steward and dispenser Himself and none else but He; therefore, now, I count much of one dram weight of spiritual joy. Truly I have no cause to say that I am pinched with penury, or that the consolations of Christ are dried up. Praise, praise with me.

Remember my love to your brother, to your wife, and G.M. Desire him to be faithful, and to repent of his hypocrisy; and say that I wrote it to you. I wish him salvation. Write to me your mind agent C.E. and C.Y., and their wives, and I.G., or any others in my parish. I fear that I am forgotten amongst them; but I cannot forget them.

The prisoner's prayers and blessings come upon you. Grace, grace be with you.

Your brother, in the Lord Jesus.

ABERDEEN, Feb. 9, 1637

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