

Letter to Lady Katherine Grey

Lady Jane Grey

Anglican · Reformation · Letter

STROMATA 13

Downloaded from The Stromata (thestromata.com). Free for personal, educational, and ministry use.

INTRODUCTION

Written the night before her execution and sent inside a Greek New Testament. A pastoral and devotional letter from an older sister facing death to a younger one facing life. Urges Katherine to read Scripture, deny the world, and trust in Christ alone. Among the most affecting of her writings.

I have here sent you, my dear sister Katherine, a book, which although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, or the curious embroidery of the artfulest needles, yet inwardly it is more worth than all the precious mines which the vast world can boast of: it is the book, my only best, and best loved sister, of the law of the Lord: it is the Testament and last will, which he bequeathed unto us wretches and wretched sinners, which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy: and if you with a good mind read it, and with an earnest desire follow it, no doubt it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life: it will teach you to live, and learn you to die: it shall win you more, and endow you with greater felicity, than you should have gained possession of our woful father's lands: for as if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his honours and manors, so if you apply diligently this book, seeking to direct your life according to the rule of the same, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt: desire with David, my best sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God, live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life, and trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life: for unto God, when he calleth, all hours, times and seasons are alike, and blessed are they whose lamps are furnished when he cometh, for as soon will the Lord be glorified in the young as in the old.

My good sister, once more again let me entreat thee to learn to die; deny the world, defy the devil, and despise the flesh, and delight yourself only in the Lord: be penitent for your sins, and yet despair not; be strong in faith, yet presume not; and desire with St. Paul to be dissolved and to be with Christ, with whom, even in death there is life.

Be like the good servant, and even at midnight be waking, lest when death cometh and stealeth upon you, like a thief in the night, you be with the servants of darkness found sleeping; and lest for lack of oil you be found like the five foolish virgins, or like him that had not on the wedding garment, and then you be cast into darkness, or banished from the marriage: rejoice in Christ, as I trust you do, and seeing

you have the name of a christian, as near as you can follow the steps, and be a true imitator of your master Christ Jesus, and take up your cross, lay your sins on his back, and always embrace him.

Now as touching my death, rejoice as I do, my dearest sister, that I shall be delivered of this corruption, and put on incorruption: for I am assured that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win one that is immortal, joyful, and everlasting: the which I pray God grant you in his most blessed hour, and send you his all-saving grace to live in his fear, and to die in the true christian faith: from which in God's name I exhort you that you never swerve, neither through hope of life, nor fear of death: for if you will deny his truth, to give length to a weary and corrupt breath, God himself will deny you, and by vengeance make short what you by your soul's loss would prolong: but if you will cleave to him, he will stretch forth your days to an uncircumscribed comfort, and to his own glory: to the which glory, God bring me now, and you hereafter, when it shall please him to call you.

Farewell once again, my beloved sister, and put your only trust in God, who only must help you.

Amen.

Your loving Sister.

Jane Dudley.

Source: <https://archive.org/details/memoirsremainsof00grey/page/5/mode/2up>

These texts are drawn from *Memoirs and Remains of Lady Jane Grey*, a compilation of her letters, prayers, disputations, and scaffold writings. The Internet Archive copy used here is available at <https://archive.org/details/memoirsremainsof00grey>. The compilation was first published in the nineteenth century; the letters to Bullinger were originally in Latin and appear here in English translation (translator unattributed in this edition). The translations are themselves pre-1900 and are public domain. Original spelling has been lightly modernised in places by the nineteenth-century editors; the texts are otherwise presented as found. No independent transcription has been made against manuscript sources.

<https://www.thestromata.com/texts/letter-to-lady-katherine-grey>