

A

FUNERAL SERMON,

DELIVERED IN AMHERST,

SEPT. 12, 1815,

AT THE

INTERMENT

OF

DOCTOR SETH COLEMAN, A. M.


WHO DIED ON THE 9TH OF THE SAME MONTH,

AGED 76.

==
BY NATHAN PERKINS, JUN. A. M.

Pastor of the Second Church in Amherst.

==
Published by Request.

—  —
NEW-HAVEN:

PRINTED BY FLAGG & GRAY, AT THE HERALD OFFICE.

Y

Funeral Discourse.



PHILIPPIANS, CHAP. I. VERSE 21.

For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

THE great art of living, is to live so as to die well. For as there is a time to die; and as all know that this time will most assuredly arrive, so the great secret of life is, to be prepared to die. We fondly cling to life. Notwithstanding its numerous pains, perplexities and woes, life is sweet. It has so many pleasurable scenes, so many flattering prospects, and so many endearing connexions, that it strongly tempts us to desire its continuance. But the fashion of this world passeth away. These scenes must vanish, these prospects fail, these connexions be dissolved. Death will remove us from them at an everlasting distance. To discover the way to meet such an event with composure, to leave the world without anxiety, and the happiness it promises without regret, is the grand secret of living. To die well, is a condition desired by all. And various schemes have been formed, by mortal men, to effect this object. Philosophy has tried its utmost, and accomplished nothing.

The most it recommends is, a perfect insensibility to life and death. Pride advises to assume a manly fortitude. Infidelity soothes with the syren song, that "death is an eternal sleep." Under the influence of such counsellors, all we can attain to is, "like brutes to live, like brutes to die." How comfortless and unavailing, are the efforts and suggestions of men, on this subject! How far short do their discoveries fall, of teaching us to die well. But here Christianity steps in, and brings Immortality to light. This instructs us how to live and how to die. Indeed it has made a discovery of infinite importance, to our dying race. It has taught us how to convert death into gain. By the votaries of the world, the sentiment, that "to die is gain," is accounted a paradox. For with them, to live is gain—to acquire fame is gain—to increase in wealth is gain—to revel in pleasure is gain; while to die is loss. But to the real Christian, the friend of God, and follower of the Lamb, the sentiment appears consistent with itself, worthy of the Gospel, and of practical importance.

St. Paul uttered it while under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and at a time when he was suffering bonds and imprisonment for the sake of the Gospel. Though he endured much for Christ, and though it was his work, his interest, his glory, to spread the Gospel, so that for him to live was Christ, yet to die was his greatest gain. This idea

gave unbounded consolation to this chief Apostle, during his multiplied sufferings. It constrained him to desire to depart and be with Christ. For it would be gain to him, to be freed from sorrow, affliction and sin, and to dwell where he should know, love, serve and enjoy his Redeemer better. Every believer who confides in the Son of God, as his hope, may derive support under the heaviest troubles from the same reflection, and adopt the language of Paul, and say, "For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain."

In our meditations upon this text, on this funeral occasion, we shall attend to the two propositions it contains.

I. That to live is Christ.

II. That to die is gain, to the Believer.

And may God give us wisdom to understand the Scriptures; faith to embrace the Saviour; a heart to glory in the Cross; and grace so to live, as that it shall be Christ to us to live, and to die our everlasting gain.

We are FIRST to open the proposition, that for a believer to live is Christ. This proposition is equivalent to another of the Apostle's expressions; "I am crucified to the world; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Conscious of his guilt, of having forfeited the favour of God, and of having incurred the just displeasure of the Almighty, by his past disobedience, and present imperfections in duty; he declared that his hopes of

eternal life were built on Christ alone. So that, in view of his sinfulness, he was dead as to all expectation of future felicity as to himself; and he lived solely by a reliance on the Son of God, for the blessings of salvation. Thus Christ lived in him, and for him to live was Christ.

This implies that Christ is the fountain or source of spiritual life, in the hearts of his people. Naturally we are all spiritually dead. In a moral view, we resemble the dry bones which in vision, Ezekiel saw. We exhibit no symptoms of life. We have no spiritual breath, to breathe forth the feelings of devotion and praise—We have no spiritual flame to enkindle holy desires—no spiritual activity to engage us in the service of our Redeemer. This is the wretched condition of every child of Adam. This was once the case with the Apostle, which he confesses in language not to be misapprehended. “I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” And in our unconverted state, it may be said of us all, “Ye have no life in you.” We may be alive in the service of the world; we may be alive to sin, but we are dead to holiness. It cannot be affirmed of us, therefore, that we live, until we are renewed; until the Spirit comes and breathes upon us, and thus quickens us to life. But of this spiritual life, Christ is the source. He provided for its existence in the soul. He sends the Spirit to communicate it. By the

agonies of the Cross, he obtained this Spirit. By his grace he commissions this Spirit to call forth the sinner from his death in sin. And through his mercy this life is imparted. Thus Christ is the author of eternal life to them that believe. Thus is it Christ for every believer to live. Hence the child of God, who once lay dead in sin, but now is raised to newness of life, by the Spirit, can say, "For me to live is Christ." For *me*, once a lost, depraved sinner; *guilty* before God, and deserving his righteous indignation—for *me*, who naturally drank in iniquity like water, who delighted in transgression, and even despised the name and blood of a Saviour—for *me*, who ought to perish, and to have no hope of life, no offer of mercy—for *me* to live is Christ.

Again, this declaration implies a dependence on Christ for the *continuance* of that life. The Lord Jesus is both the *Author* and *Finisher* of the Christian's faith. Through him spiritual life is first wrought in the soul, and by him that life is preserved. It is as necessary that it should be *supported*, as it is that it should be imparted. And the same power is requisite in the one case as in the other. For of himself, the believer is insufficient to think a good thought, or to perform a holy act. He cannot exercise the Christian graces, or maintain the Christian character. Left of God, he would instantly relapse into unbelief, and sin. He would desert from the standard of the Cross, and walk no more with Christ.

Of this the believer is conscious. He feels his weakness, his dependence, his constant liability to go astray, without his Saviour strengthens, supports and keeps him, For he is taught by his own experience, that he can feel no contrition for sin, no delight in duty, no regard for God's glory, no pleasing anticipations of joys to come, without the aid of Him who is the believer's life. On his righteousness and atonement, his blessing and grace, therefore, he continually relies. He depends on his Spirit which first communicated life, to perpetuate it. To the same Spirit he looks for assistance to animate his affections, to enkindle holy desires, to inspire with devotion, inflame his zeal, illuminate his mind, prompt him to spiritual activity, and to work in him whatever else is necessary to complete the Christian character, and to make him, as a man of God, perfect. Thus, for the believer to live is Christ, as it is Christ who continues and supports the life of faith in his soul.

This declaration implies also, a full surrendering of ourselves to Christ, to suffer his frowns for our sins, or tribulation for his sake; to obey his Gospel, and to promote his cause. In both of these respects, to live is Christ. It was on this account Paul made the assertion. He endured much for the sake of Christ, and he laboured much to advance his cause and interest. He suffered bonds, imprisonment, stripes, and the loss of all things, in the service of his Lord. The followers of the Lamb,

though not called to the same sufferings as the Apostle endured, yet are, like their Leader, often compelled to bear the Cross. They witness the inconstancy of professed friends; they are frequently desolate and afflicted; agonize under the hidings of God's face; weep at the graves of their Lazaruses, and are sharply tried with adverse events, and perplexing providences; yet they suffer justly, and often count it double honour to suffer, as it makes them resemble their Saviour more. Thus they are led to glory in the Cross. And for them to live in frequent sorrow, suffering and trial, is Christ.

So also, while they obey his Gospel, walk in submission to his authority, and conduct as if they were influenced by his example, they exhibit Christ as actually alive. They adorn the Gospel he revealed; they obey the law he honoured; they live the religion he taught and lived, and thus testify to the innocence and purity of his character. For them "to live, is Christ."

But while the Christian is thus concerned to honour his Saviour, by bearing his cross, and obeying his laws, he is by no means unsolicitous to promote his cause in the world. Having obtained mercy of the Lord, it is his first wish that the salvation of Christ may be known, and felt, by all mankind. His heart's desire is, that others may come and see the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. He seeks, by every means in his power, to pro-

mote the purity, the peace, and enlargement of the Church; and to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, until it shall be universally established.

Thus the believer's sufferings and trials, his love and obedience, his desires and exertions to spread the Gospel, and to build up Zion, are a proof that for him to live is Christ.

These things are evidently implied in the declaration of the Apostle, that "for me to live is Christ." When the lives of God's people are of such a description, how is the religion of the Gospel recommended! Christ himself is set forth, in them, a living example to the world. He lives in them, and they live no longer to themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

When such are the state and conduct of the believer, that for him to live is Christ, he can with triumph say, For me "to die is gain." This is the

SECOND Proposition of the text, and a sort of inference from the first. For if the Christian who had been born again, and raised to newness of life, made Christ his joy and dependence, and could justly say, "Bondage to Christ is my liberty"—the smiles of my Saviour, my richest consolation—his acceptance of me, my reward—his Gospel, my rule—his Cross, my glory—the conversion of sinners, the peace of his people, and the welfare of his Church, my great object of concern; then he might add, though all this is quiet to my soul,

and affords a happiness which the world cannot give; yet to die is my greatest gain.—*What* is gain? *To die?* Oh, can it be gain to die; to quit life's scenes and pleasures; to be torn from all our earthly possessions, honours, enjoyments, and friendships? Will it be gain to the wealthy, to lose all in a moment? Can it be gain to the ambitious, to be suddenly wrested from his favourite pursuits and half accomplished plans? Can it be gain to the husband and wife, to have that endeared relation dissolved, which binds heart to heart?—or to the parent, to see the little rising plants stripped of the guide of their youth?—or to the minister, to leave his flock without a watchman to feed and guard them, and perhaps many of their souls unsafe? Yes, Oh Christian! if for thee to live is Christ, notwithstanding all these worldly attachments and interesting relations, it will be thy gain *to die*.

The *wealthy* shall find in heaven an immortal treasure, an exhaustless store of wealth, to enrich his soul for ever: and to die will be *his* gain. The *ambitious* will behold a boundless field for labour, in which he may give unlimited scope to his most enlarged desires, and where he will find rivals enough to vie with him in prosecuting plans of universal happiness, of honouring God, and of brightening his crown of immortal glory. *To die* will be *his* gain. The *husband and the wife*, the *parent and the child*, the *minister and his flock*, shall find, that in heaven there is a more inti-

mate and endearing relation; a fellow-citizenship with the saints; an alliance with the angels, and a joint-heirship with Christ, which shall swallow up, as no longer necessary, all earthly connexions; and in this new relation, their views and feelings will be perfectly one. The glory of God shall be their theme for contemplation—the praises of Immanuel, their perpetual song—and eternity, the duration of their union and their bliss. To die will be *their gain*.

But to die is a solemn and trying scene—Yet it is a scene which awaits us all. And when it seems to be loss in every respect, and loss irreparable: yet, through the Gospel of the grace of God, it is capable of being converted into gain. Let us then, for a moment, inquire in what respects it is gain for the *Christian* to die.

1st. It is gain to him, as it delivers him from the various pains, disappointments, and sufferings, to which, in the present life, he is exposed. Every believer has his sorrows and adversities, in common with other men. All are born to trouble. None, in any condition in life, are exempt. It is the part of human nature, in its fallen state, to suffer. Christians, like others, are exposed to endure their share of sorrows in this vale of tears. They are not freed from the frown of Providence, from disappointed expectations, from sickness, pain, and domestic losses and afflictions; but in this world, like the suffering family of man, they

shall have tribulation. As to outward things, one event happeneth to all, the righteous and the wicked. Christ came not to save his followers from temporal sufferings, but from the wrath to come. But in the midst of their sufferings, and often heavy calamities, he sustains them by his grace, with a support the world knows nothing of. Yet their sorrows never end till life is closed. Then their troubles terminate. Sorrow and sighing flee away. They rest from their labours. A full period is put to all their earthly woes. Never again will they be called to endure affliction, disappointment, pain, or sorrow. In this respect, death to the Believer is gain.

2dly. To die is gain to the Christian, as it delivers him from the remains of in-dwelling sin, and from all his spiritual troubles. Many are the trials and temptations of the Believer, in his journey to the City of the Living God. He has trouble to which the ungodly are strangers.

The conflict *within* is often sharp and threatening. Sin dwells with him. It easily and constantly besets him. It strives for dominion. It sometimes prevails, leads him captive, so that he cannot do the good that he desires, and he is compelled to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am!" While thus maintaining a conflict within, he is violently attacked by enemies from without. An unbelieving world scoffs, reviles, ridicules, and persecutes. Often, his foes are those of his own household.

He sees his dearest connexions, whose welfare and eternal felicity lie near his heart, travelling thoughtlessly and undisturbedly down to everlasting ruin. He prays, he warns, he exhorts, with much long-suffering; but after all, he is constrained "to weep in secret places" for them; lest, through their pride and unbelief, they should be left to weep in places of endless sorrow. And then he looks around upon the ungodly, and unbelieving, every where making void the divine law, disregarding a Saviour's religion, and despising offered mercy, he cries out in deep concern, Oh that they were wise, that they understood these things, and would consider their latter end! These things are trials; but by grace he is supported, and by faith is made to rejoice in God. But the end of them does not arrive till at death he enters into his rest. *There* he is removed from all sin and imperfection. There his conflict with sin is over, his warfare with in-dwelling corruption is ended, and he enjoys a perpetual triumph. There the sinner and ungodly never appear, to disturb his repose, to interrupt his happiness, or to vilify the religion he has embraced, or the Saviour he worships. Surely, "if such deliverance be brought to the believer by death, to die must be *his gain*."

Lastly, to die is the Christian's gain, as it introduces him into the full fruition of all his long-anticipated joys. The Christian's treasure is in heaven. His purest joys are in the world to come. They are laid up for him at

the right hand of God: and he cannot take possession of them till death dissolves his connexion with the scenes of time. For it is through the gate of death that we pass into the kingdom of glory. There is no entrance into heaven except by crossing the shady valley of death, lying at the end of life's journey. Thro' this the Christian travels, often triumphing as he goes, and there sings what his Conqueror taught him, "Oh Death, where is thy sting?" Then, having passed it, he enters upon the full possession of those joys which *he* anticipated, and his Saviour promised—*Joys*, such as mortal eye had not seen, or ear heard, or the heart of man conceived—*Joys* equal to the price at which they were purchased—*Joys* as unlimited as the most enlarged desires of immortal souls—*Joys* ever new, ever satisfying, ever increasing—*Joys* unspeakable, eternal, and full of glory.

What an acquisition is heaven! How immensely rich is he, whose treasure is there! How does the Christian advance his interest by dying! He exchanges sin for holiness—doubt for certainty—expectation for reality—sorrow for joy—mourning for praise—the world for Christ—and earth for heaven. Such an exchange was the hope of Paul; and such will be the actual gain of every one, who can truly say, "For me to live is Christ." It is for these reasons, that to the believer, death is gain.

From our subject, we learn the value of the Gospel. There alone immortality is brought

to light. There alone is a Saviour offered. There alone is a religion contained, which fortifies us against the alarms of death, and fits us for a happy eternity. Without the Gospel, death is armed with awful terrors; and all beyond the grave is enveloped in deep and perplexing obscurity. How valuable then is the Gospel, when it opens the way to the world of spirits, proclaims forgiveness, publishes the conditions of mercy, raises a hope that shall never make ashamed, quiets the soul in the hour of death, and points out the path to a blessed immortality! Its precious contents ought to be sacredly regarded by every candidate for eternity. Let us duly estimate it; and let us be of the number of those who embrace its Author, feed upon its promises, and follow its light; so that when the time of our departure arrives, we may say, "To die is gain."

In view of our subject, we see that Christ must be the only foundation of our hopes, and that the great purpose of our present existence is to have Christ live in us. "Other foundation can no man lay," &c. On no other can we safely build. All other dependences will fail us: They will disappoint us in the trying moment of death. Before the bar of God, they will be swept away as refuges of lies. Do we then build on him? Are we resting our souls on this Rock of ages? Are our affections fixed on him? Is he the joy, the hope, and the solace of our souls? Do we so embrace him,

so obey him, and so exert ourselves to bring others to accept of his salvation, and to enlarge his kingdom, as that we can say, For us "to live is Christ?" If not, our state is dangerous; our prospects in eternity, awfully alarming: for God has promised salvation to none who reject his Son. If this be our case, never, never can it be gain for us to die.

We observe once more from our subject, that it has taught us how to disarm death, and to turn it to our advantage. It is a thing of no trifling consequence, to die. To bid adieu to friends and connexions; to leave this world and every object dear to us in life; and to enter upon the untried scenes of eternity, is a most solemn and momentous change. To pass such a change, would seem to be attended with a loss of all things. But our subject has furnished us with singular, yet most valuable information, that to die may be not our loss, but our gain. When we trust in Christ, imbibe his spirit, and love his religion, he becomes our Conqueror in death; removes its sting, and gives us victory over it. Then death is disrobed of its terrors, and is made our gain; as it separates us from all our sins, our trials, our afflictions and earthly sorrows, and introduces us into a world of perfect purity, joy, and peace. Whatever can be felt by hearts burning with celestial love—whatever can be enjoyed by seeing Christ as he is, and in contemplating his unutterable glories—whatever can be expressed by tongues unloosed to celebrate

the great Redeemer's praises—in short, whatever heaven is, *that* death gives us in exchange for the mixed, transitory joys of time. All who live in Christ, and die in the Lord, shall thus be admitted into the everlasting gates of heaven, and thus be employed, and for ever find that to die is gain.

Propriety dictates that we give you, on this occasion, a concise history of the deceased, with some of the outlines of his religious character. DR. SETH COLEMAN was born at Hatfield, March 17th, 1740, old style. He received a public education, and graduated at Yale College in the year 1765. The same year he was married to Miss Sarah Beecher, a woman of distinguished piety, with whom he lived as a joint heir of the grace of life, 18 years. By her he had eight children, three of whom died in childhood; the remaining five are still living. Two years after her decease, he was married to her who now survives him. As a physician he was much esteemed, and constantly rode in his practice, till, in the course of the year 1813, he was visited with a paralytic shock, which disqualified him for the duties of active life, and left him the admonition that the earthly house of his tabernacle must ere long be dissolved. After this, he declined with a slow, but steady pace, till, on the 9th inst. he departed to the world of spirits, aged 76.

Descended from pious parents, he enjoyed the privileges of an early religious education, accompanied with a godly example, and many prayers. But these advantages were not attended with any saving effects, until the year 1761; when, while residing in Hadley, he passed, as he ever after hoped, that spiritual change, without which none can enter the kingdom of heaven. Nearly three years previous to this

time, he had united himself to the Church of Christ in this town. After he became a hopeful subject of divine grace, on the day of his arriving at the age of 21, he began a diary, which he always kept, while he was able to write. In the year 1785, he was elected a deacon in this Church,* an office which he sustained until he had finished his earthly course. In the remains of Dr. Coleman, we recognize the affectionate companion, the indulgent parent, the worthy citizen, the respectable physician, and an ornament to the Church of Christ. But death has dissolved all these relations---he is no more the husband, the father, or the friend. His work on earth is finished. May we not suppose that, if he now could address us, he would say, "For me to live was Christ, but to die is gain"?

You will indulge me a few moments, while I very briefly notice some of the most prominent traits in his religious character.

1st. In doctrine he was pure. His religion was of that genuine kind, which is founded on principle. He judged that a right belief was essential to a right practice. He adopted those articles of faith, which, by way of distinction, are denominated the doctrines of the Reformation. That "form of sound words," which he held fast, contained the Trinity in Unity, the sovereignty of God, the entire depravity of man, the necessity of divine influence to renew the heart, justification by faith in Christ, and the final perseverance of saints. These truths, he believed and loved. He felt their influence on his own heart, and deemed them to be of essential importance to others.

2dly. He sought to evince to the world the practical use of these doctrines, by his general deportment. Though he was by no means perfect, yet his great object was to live religion---to adorn the Christian profession---to recommend the Gospel, and to ex-

hibit to the world, by his example, what was the influence of truth on practice. How far he obtained his object, the recollection of his example will best prove. Much of his *good* may be evil spoken of, by the enemies of the cross; for *this* Christians are to expect, while they live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation; but his general conduct was such as to show, that for him to live was Christ.

3dly. He was a man of prayer. He had great confidence in the efficacy of prayer, and he lived accordingly. No doubt is entertained by those who knew him best, but that he daily remembered his Saviour's injunction, "Enter thy closet, and pray to thy Father, who seeth in secret." His practice in his family, gave full demonstration, that he had resolved, like Joshua of old, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

4thly. He was faithful in giving religious instruction to his household. Their eternal salvation was his chief concern. He, indeed, watched for their souls. He opened to them the Scriptures, taught them the things of Christ, and then commended them to the grace of God. In this most reasonable service, he laboured not in vain. He had the satisfaction to see all of them, with their connexions, joining themselves to the household of faith, and one of them going forth in Christ's stead, beseeching sinners to become reconciled unto God.

5thly. He greatly delighted in the prosperity of Zion. He knew that the Gospel was the power of God to salvation. And he ardently desired to see it spread in the world, and make its triumph over the wickedness, the superstition, and the idolatry of mankind. Good news concerning its progress at home and abroad, was as refreshing to his heart, as the shadow of a great rock to a traveller in a weary land. He rejoiced at the success God had given to

Missionary efforts, and in the effusions of his Spirit to revive his cause. He felt it to be his happiness to hear of the goings of Christ in these days of Divine ingathering, to redeem Zion and to seal His chosen. With peculiar interest and satisfaction, he beheld the late revival of religion among us. And we trust, that after having enjoyed this spiritual harvest on earth, he has been gathered by the Lord of the harvest, to the heavenly garner, where he has brought his sheaf rejoicing.

Finally, the religion which, he embraced and loved, furnished him with support when the time of his departure drew near. He seemed ready to be offered. Calm and resigned, he patiently waited for the coming of his Lord. It was an expression he often used in his last days, that when he closed his eyes to sleep, it was of no concern to him, in which world he awoke. With this submission, and supporting hope, he fell asleep on Monday last, to awake in this world no more. Thus he believed, thus he lived, and thus he died. May we not say, For him to live was Christ, but to die is gain?

Permit me, before I close, to make an address to Mourners and others.

It is a source of unspeakable consolation to survivors, to hope death is gain to their departed friends. Such a source of consolation is afforded you, Widam, who are now weeping over a departed husband. You will now recollect how sweet the converse was, you often took together, and how long you came to this house of God in company. But death has closed these scenes. You mourn, but not without good hope, that what is lost to you, is infinite gain to him. Let this hope alleviate your sorrows, and compose your thoughts to peace. If for *him* to live was Christ, let it be *your* life also. Then, very shortly, your earthly pilgrimage will be ended—your trials be over

--your afflictions terminated, and *your* death a gain. Let not your soul be disquieted within you, but hope in God. *He* wounds, and he heals. *He* afflicts, and he consoles. To Him, therefore, we most cordially commend you. Cast your heavy burdens on the Lord; he shall maintain you. He styles himself the widow's God. Is not this enough to hush every rising murmur, and to wipe away every tear? Let the remnant of your days be spent in the service of God, and in watching for the coming of the Son of man. And may all your afflictions work out for you, an eternal weight of glory. Thus to die, will be your everlasting gain.

We will address a few words to the Children. Long have you enjoyed the counsel, the Christian example, and the prayers of him whose death you now lament. Peculiarly happy with him as a kind parent, you were blessed in him as a religious monitor. Next to Christ, perhaps you are most indebted to him for that hope of salvation, which you now entertain. He wrestled with God for you, and we trust he prevailed. He would often say, I have no greater joy than to see my children walking in the truth. You well remember that happy, but solemn day, when, at three score years and ten, you were all together around him, and he, like the pious patriarch Jacob, gave you each an address and blessing. But his voice is silent; his counsel you will hear no more; his prayers are ended. Let his counsel, his example, and his prayers, long live in your remembrance. Though dead, may he yet speak to you. So far as for him to live was Christ, so far you are bound to walk in his steps. You confidently believe, that it was gain to him to die. Enquire whether it would be gain to you? Are you now prepared for death? If judgment were now to begin, could you leave the world without regret, and lift up your heads with joy, because your eternal redemption

draws nigh? If the Judge should now appear, and ask what has been your life, could you reply, that for us to live has been Christ? If so, then continue this Christian life; and when the time of your departure shall arrive, to die will be infinite gain.

My brethren of this Church; one of your number has now gone the way of all the earth. For many years the deceased was not only a member, but an officer, in the Church. His name is for a praise among you. Long did he distribute to you the memorials of a Saviour's death. But we trust he has gone to the General Assembly of the Church in heaven, where he will no more need elements to remind him of his Saviour, but where he will see him as he is, and be ever in his presence. None of you will continue, by reason of death. Let it be your care to live for Christ. When seats in the Church are made vacant, by deaths, pray that others may come and occupy their places, that Christ's house may be filled. Honour your profession by a holy walk with God; then, when ye fail, Christ will receive you into His everlasting habitations of rest and praise. Then to die will be your gain.

To close all; are there not some present in this Assembly, of whom it cannot be said, for them to live is Christ? If, my fellow-mortals, such be your condition; if Christ is not your Saviour; and for you to live is not Christ, but sin; a miserable end awaits you. At death you will suffer the loss of all things. Torn from your pleasurable pursuits, and from all you hold dear on earth, having made this world your all, there can be nothing in eternity for you to prize. Having no part with Christ below, you cannot receive Him as a portion above: But must be cast out as unprofitable servants, and for ever remain poor and destitute; having *nothing* to

feel but remorse, and suffering ; and *nothing* to inherit but indignation and wrath. How infinite your loss!—loss of peace—loss of happiness—loss of Christ. and loss of heaven! Oh that men were wise, that they would consider their latter end! May we all so improve Divine Providences, embrace the Saviour, and obey his Gospel, that we may say, For us to live is Christ, but to die is gain.

FINIS.

AM
112