

A

# SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY

THE LAMENTED DEATH OF

MRS. FRANCES M. SANDS,

OF NEW-SHOREHAM.

FORMERLY AN INHABITANT OF EAST-HAMPTON, (L. I.)

*Composed and now made public at the request of  
her afflicted partner, and delivered at East-  
Hampton October 12th, 1806.*

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BY LYMAN BEECHER,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH IN THAT PLACE.

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SAG-HARBOR, N. Y.

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1806.

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S E R M O N, &c.

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COLOSSIANS, III. 2.

*Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.*

**T**HE happiness of intelligent beings is derived from the exercise of the affections. God in love, and loving constitutes his happiness. Angels glow with the same affection, and men become happy only as they are made perfect in love.

The degree and duration of happiness derived from the exercise of the affections, will depend on the permanence and native excellence of the objects beloved.

Respecting the proper object of supreme affection, philosophers have disputed much, and to little purpose. They confined their views to earth, and were divided because no object could be discovered below sufficiently pre-eminent to exclude competition.— Revelation has decided the controversy. It has brought into view a world unknown to philosophy, and discovered objects between which and those on earth, there can be, in point of excellence, no competition. A God of infinite perfection—a Saviour the brightness of his glory, and who still can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. A kingdom peopled with angels and the spirits of just men; strangers to sin and enraptured in the praises of God.

This is that world above, and these are the objects on which we are exhorted to place our affections. The exhortation is also a command. In a little different language it is the first and great command. “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.*”

The duty enjoined implies more than a cold philosophical admiration of God. It embraces indeed the assent of the understanding, but it requires the heart also. Nor is the affection required a feeble or temporary thing. “*Thou shalt love with all thy heart. Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.*”

The things on the earth from which our affections are to be withholden, are the honors and profits and pleasures of the world ; any thing and every thing, indeed, which would in our affections stand in competition with God. To earthly objects, though of value infinitely inferior to things above, we are nevertheless strongly attached ; are inclined to love and serve them more than God. This love to the creature is idolatry, and will, if persisted in, be our ruin : For the friendship of this world is enmity with God, and all they that hate him love death.

The prohibition, however, does not arise from any defect in the world itself, or the government of it.—The world is good in its place ; but its place is the footstool, not the throne. The government of God below is perfectly adapted to the great end which he has in view ; that end, however, is not to make this world a heaven, but a state of preparatory trial.

Nor does the prohibition imply that the things of this world are to be esteemed of no value ; much less that they are to be despised and neglected.—The blessings of life are of great value. They may be—they ought to be desired and sought ; and when bestowed, received with thankfulness. But they are

to be desired and loved according to their value, and rather as means for the attainment of an end, than as possessing in themselves an independant and inherent excellence. In the language of Dr. Wither-  
 spoon, " If the world would keep its distance, it might be esteemed and used in its proper place, and to its proper end, But if it will needs pretend to be what it is not, and promise what it cannot give, we must take it for a deceiver, and hold it in detestation. Your maker formed you for his own glory ; he must be the rest of your souls, or they shall not have rest ; he must be their happiness, or they shall be miserable forever. But if the world would seem to be your home , if it promiseth you content and satisfaction ; if the possession of it is the ultimate end to which you aspire, so that you do not heartily and with affection look any farther, it is usurping its Creator's throne, and therefore down with the idol and tread it in the dust."

To illustrate the reasonableness and importance of the duty enjoined in the text, as explained, will be the object of this discourse. This will be attempted in the elucidation of two particulars—

1st. The folly of placing our affections on things below.

2dly. The importance of placing them on things above.

1. I am to illustrate the folly of placing our affections on things below.

This will be exceedingly manifest if we contemplate for a moment the unstable nature of earthly objects. If we turn our eyes back to the morning of creation, we behold indeed the appearance of lasting good. Eden blooming as the morn. Our ancestors innocent and happy. Happy in each other ; happy in the prospect of a rising world, and happy

in the presence and favor of their God. Sin, pain and death were strangers. Youth sparkled in their eyes and glowed on their cheeks. No painful vicissitude had excited their fears or suspended their bliss. All things appeared permanent, as made to last — How long this privileged state continued, we are not told. But we know it was of short duration—

“ For in evil hour,  
 “ Forth reaching to the fruit, they pluck’d and ate.  
 “ Earth felt the wound—and Nature from her seat,  
 “ Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,  
 “ That all was lost.”

The permanence of paradise is shaken. Youth has fled, and immortality is no more. Here began to roll that rapid stream, which in its course has swept successive generations, heroes and their kingdoms, yea, which swept a world into the ocean of eternity. On this stream all things have since been and are still floating. The busy tribes of men stand awhile on the bank. Now objects in prospect rise and spread their charms; now they are present; now they are past, and are swept down by the current and disappear. Other objects succeed and disappear, until the spectators themselves sink in the waves, and are borne down by the resistless current. The antediluvians, though for many years they seemed to resist its force, did none of them finally withstand. Methusaleh lived nine hundred sixty and nine years, but after all, it is added, “ he died !”

Look back but a few thousand years, and you behold a world full of people; full of noise and bustle, all laboriously engaged in their respective pursuits, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. The next day all are in eternity, and nought but the gentle motion of the ark disturbed the silence of a world !

The same changing scene has marked the progress of time since the flood. Extensive kingdoms have arisen and fallen. Renowned heroes, who filled the earth with convulsions and waded through seas of blood, are no more. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished ! How do cities sit solitary that were once full of people ! Tyre, the mart of nations, is now a barren rock. Jerusalem, the beloved city, is trodden down of the Gentiles.— Her walls are mouldered away, and of her beautiful temple not one stone remaineth upon another. Babylon the great is fallen ! her lofty walls are tumbled into ruin. No trace of her grandeur remains ; even the place where she stood is forgotten.

If, from the world at large, we confine our attention to the little spot we inhabit, what changes even here shall we perceive to have taken place ? How many generations, with all their cares, lie buried in the grave ? A few years since and not one of us had a being. Other tenants occupied our dwellings ; other aged men gave counsel, and other youth sported in our streets. Now they are gone ! they lodge in the land of silence and oblivion ! But on this subject I may appeal to your own recollection. How many heads of families, within your own memory, have finished their course, and left their possessions to their children ? Even our youth have lived to perceive that “ the fashion of this world passeth away.” Numbers of their own age, their companions, have been called from their social circles, and added to the congregation of the dead. Should you descend with me to your burying grounds, is there one of you who could not point to the tomb of some departed relative ?—a father—a mother, a wife or child, or brother, or sister, or friend. And are we exempt from the common mortality ? No. Death

is not weary of his labor, nor will the grave ever say "it is enough." We must all bow to the King of Terrors. Each year will carry off its appointed number, until the places and things which know us, will cease to know us forever. Another preacher will speak from this place, and other hearers occupy these seats. Your lisping infants will be the grey-headed; and those who have never seen the light, the infants of the day.

Nor is this great change a distant one; it is near, even at the door. Thirty years will remove probably one half this congregation into eternity. But what if one of us were assured to live an hundred years? would his permanence arrest the fluctuations of time, or chain the rolling waves which have borne away the hopes of so many generations? The fashion of this world would still pass away. His friends would die—his neighbors would fall around him.—He would stand, a solitary tree, stripped of its leaves, its branches withered and broken, its trunk decayed, and stooping to mingle with the dust of the once surrounding forest. What, then, is gained by age? The painful privilege of following two or three generations to the grave—of burying the companions of our youth, their children and their children's children. And shall we place our affections upon such a world as this? Shall this empty, changing, dying world contain all our treasure, and God and heaven be neglected? "I say unto you, lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust doth not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

But might we live forever, and might our friends

and the objects of time be permanent, it would be folly to place our affections upon them, because, after all, they would fail to satisfy the soul. That they would fail *us*, is perfectly evident from the circumstance that they always have failed. All men have, first or last, been compelled to admit, that “vanity and vexation of spirit,” is the portion of those who make this world their God. The reason is obvious. We were made to love a more noble object. Our passion for this world is a passion in itself sinful and unhappy. It is not of a nature to be satisfied ; and if it was, the world is not the proper object to afford satisfaction. The body and the mind are distinct natures, and require to be fed with different aliments. The application of earthly things to the demands of the soul, is as vain as the application of intellectual pleasures to the appetites of the body. Shall we then disregard the dictates of experience, and war against the constitution of nature ? Especially if we consider that earthly objects are as insufficient to support us under affliction, as to afford satisfaction in prosperity. In our anticipations of futurity, we exclude, it is true, in a great measure, the evils of life. But, anticipated or not, affliction is sure, first or last, to be our option. “If a man, live many days and rejoice in them all, let him remember the days of darkness, for they shall be many.” In these seasons of adversity, we shall need efficacious support ; but if until then we have leaned upon the world, it will be able to delude us no longer. In many cases, such as the death of friends, loss of property, &c. the beloved object is itself the cause of our grief, and the greater our love the more poignant is our sorrow. If the suffering be personal—if sickness invade our frame, acute or lingering, how impotent are friends—how vain is

wealth to procure relief! Parched with thirst and writhing in torture, what avail pleasures that are past, or titles of honor, or splendid apartments, or large possessions, or even the sympathies of surrounding friends. Is it not then consummate folly to love, exclusively, that which in prosperity cannot render us happy, and in adversity is equally unable to mitigate our sorrow?

This folly will be still more evident, if it be considered that the objects of our affection here can neither prepare us for death, nor intitle us to heaven. A holy heart, faith in the Redeemer, the pardon of sin and the favor of God, are the only preparatives for death, or earnest of heaven. But can our friends whom we idolize, procure them? Can riches, or honors, or pleasures purchase them?

“Eternal life can ne'er be sold,  
The ransom is too high—  
Justice will ne'er be brib'd with gold,  
That man may never die.”

In the solemn hour of death our vain idols stand aloof, and confess their impotence. Nor do they merely fail to prepare us for death; they obstruct, and often fatally obstruct, our preparation. A certain rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, fared sumptuously every day. He died, and in hell lifted up his eyes being in torment. The fields of a certain rich man brought forth plenteously. And he said, what shall I do? I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there lay up my goods, and I will say to my soul, thou hast much goods laid up in store for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said; Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee.

A certain young man, also, came to our Saviour and kneeled down, and said, good master, what good

thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? He is directed to keep the commandments. All these, he replies, have I kept from my youth up. He is answered; one thing thou lackest, go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven. And when he heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. And Jesus said to his disciples, how hardly shall they that have riches, or, as one evangelist narrates, that trust in riches, enter into the kingdom of Heaven. Shall we then love, supremely, objects which fail intirely to prepare us for death, and which, too often, are the most active causes of our eternal ruin. We proceed now to consider

II. The importance of placing our affections on things above.

This will appear most evident, from the consideration of their superior native excellence. That there is such a place as heaven, the residence of God and angels, and of just men, revelation does not permit us to question. It is true, indeed, that God is omnipresent. Neither heaven nor the heaven of heavens can contain him. It is equally true that all his works praise him. But heaven is the place where it pleases him to establish his throne, to assemble his holy subjects and to display in a more sensible and glorious manner the perfections of his nature.

This world above, the local residence of the redeemed, is a place of most exquisite natural beauty and glory. It is the city of God, the seat of empire, the capitol of the universe—whose builder and maker is God. If in the structure of the earth, of plants and animals, it has pleased God to display his handy work; if he hath given us faculties to perceive and to be delighted with the perception of natural beauty, why should heaven alone constitute an exception,

and yield nothing to the revenue of praise? The scripture descriptions of heaven, whether to be understood literally or not, were no doubt intended to inspire exalted ideas of the magnificence and glory of the place. Her walls are precious stones, her gates pearl, her streets gold as it were transparent glass. It hath no temple; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple in the midst of it. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it and the lamb is the light thereof.

From this world of glory and beauty, will be excluded all the evils attendant on our earthly state.— However splendid *this* world might be rendered while sin and the curse remained, it would continue to be a world of woe. But in heaven there shall be no more curse; for there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie. No pride shall swell the heart, or lift to the throne of God the aspiring eye. No anger shall burn within, or envy rankle. No inordinate affection, no impure desire, no discordant passion, shall suspend or alloy the happiness of heaven. The throbbings of ambition, and the alarm of war, shall be unknown. Nor fields of battle, nor smoking cities, nor ravaged kingdoms shall here pain the eye. Nor famine nor pestilence shall scatter their miseries. The inhabitant shall not say I am sick. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain!

Heaven, moreover, while exempt from the calamities of earth, will abound with sublime, perfect, and unutterable joy. Here God himself will reside and display his glory, extending joy and gladness to every intelligence. Here will be the Redeemer, he

who died for us and washed us from our sin. Here will be myriads of angels, the spirits who ministered to the heirs of salvation ; and here will be the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. And here will be heard the voice of harpers, and the voice of many angels round about the throne, and shouts of praise as the noise of many waters, and as the voice of great thunder, bursting from enraptured hosts of ten thousand times ten thousand, proclaiming, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. But who shall describe the joy that prompts the song ? It is unspeakable, and full of glory.

To this let it be added that this happy state will be permanent, The fashion of *that* world will not pass away ; every thing there will be as immutable as every thing here is changing. On earth the fear of bereavement, constantly admonishes us not to love too intensely ; but there friendships once formed shall never be dissolved. No disappointment shall cloud the prospect ; no pang of separation agonise the heart. The city hath foundations, and incloses an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. God the eternal lives. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The saints, as angels, will be immortal ; will go no more out, or cease day or night to cry holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. There appear also to be intimations in the scriptures of a constant and indefinite increase in knowledge, capacity and joy. While with open face they behold the glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same image from *glory* to *glory*. Truly it doth not yet appear what we shall be, nor even hereafter will the full value and

extent of heavenly blessedness be comprehended.— The glory of God is infinite—to know him is life eternal. Jesus the only begotten, who dwelleth in the bosom of the father, will declare him. Will stand forth, commentator upon the works of creation, providence, and redemption—will loose the seals—will lead forth the happy myriads to green pastures, by the side of still waters, and conduct their minds in their boundless research. New glories will break in upon the astonished eye, and new raptures swell the tide of joy, and sweeten the song of praise.

Beside the native excellence of things above, it ought to be recollected that placing our affections upon them will contribute to mitigate our present sorrows, and to support us under them. The undue attachment which we bear to this world, gives our afflictions their principal weight and poignancy.— Like Micah, our hearts are bound up in these idols, and when they are taken away, what have we more? But if, beside these fleeting treasures, we have treasure laid up in heaven, and if our hearts are there also, the superior excellence of things above and our superior love to them, will lead us to estimate the sufferings of the present life unworthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. Our happiness below is far less dependant upon external circumstances than we are accustomed to imagine. St. Paul, did we read only of his sufferings, would be accounted of all men most miserable. But, in fact, he was probably the happiest man of the age. He looked not to things which were seen; his eye was fixed upon heaven, and therefore he could glory in tribulation, and exultingly say, this light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall work out for me a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.

Nor were those who, clad in sheep-skins and goat-skins, wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, as miserable as their appearance indicated. They were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; but they possessed the faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. Nor has attachment to things above to the present moment lost its consoling influence. It is possible still to glory in tribulation, and to conceive the most weighty afflictions light and momentary; while we look not at the things which are seen, and are temporal, but to those which are not seen and are eternal.

I would just add that the setting our affections on things above, is itself preparation, and the only preparation for death and heaven. To those who do not love God and Christ, and holy employment, death will be terrible, and heaven a most dreary place. Torn from their idols below, and dragged into the presence of God and angels and holy spirits, and surrounded with anthems of praise, how would the ambitious, the impure and the worldly minded appear? But to the believer, heaven includes his, all. Well assured of his state he is not afraid to die, because he is prepared. He has often thought upon the subject, and as often experienced the joyful assurance that when this earthly house of his tabernacle is dissolved, he shall remove to a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

To him death is a welcome messenger; the end of sin and care and sorrow. The signal to put off this mortal, and to put on immortality. He has never died, indeed, but, by faith, he has so often explored the way, that, when he enters the gloomy valley he fears no evil. He feels the attracting influence of things above. The love of God is shed

abroad in his soul ; and as heaven draws nigh, he exultingly cries, who shall separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus ?

I would observe once more, that if our affections are not in time placed on things above, they never will be, and will, hereafter, have no object of complacental regard.

This world is a state of probation, a place for the formation of characters and habits, in reference to a future immutable state. The temper we cultivate here, and the habits we form, will cleave to us forever. If we live and die strangers, in affection, to things above, we shall awake in eternity and continue, thro' eternity, as indifferent to them as we died. At death the irrevocable decree is pronounced. He that is holy, let him be holy still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. There is no mediator ; no offer of mercy, and no regeneration beyond the grave, to those who die impenitent. And as in that world they will find nothing to love, so, from this, they will be able to carry nothing.

The blessings of providence, perverted in this world, will not be extended to the next. The blessings of friendship will be there unknown, for in hell there will be no objects of complacency. Hateful and hateing one another, is the awful characteristic of their state. Selfishness will have full scope ; and as on earth it destroyed much good, in hell it will destroy all. They will eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall be their destruction. To these natural and inseparable fruits of sin, God likewise will superadd the plagues of his own right hand, tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath upon every one that knoweth not God, and hath not obeyed the gospel.

Having illustrated the folly of placing our affections on things below, and the importance of placing them on things above, we proceed to an improvement of the subject, and

1. How different the rule by which mankind will, in fact, be judged, from that by which they are now expecting to be tried at the last day.

To love the creature more than God, is, in the eye of a thoughtless world, no sin. An amiable disposition, a cultivated mind, polite accomplishments, an enterprising spirit, integrity in dealings, liberality to the poor, and exemption from great crimes, are, by multitudes, considered a safe passport to heaven. "Why if God should damn all but just sober saints, he must damn, O what multitudes! and can it be supposed? No, God is a merciful God. We are not perfect, to be sure, but who is perfect? we hope, however, we are as good as our neighbors, and, perhaps, as good as some who pretend to be much better." Of the idolatry of their hearts, they are wholly ignorant, and have forgotten that whosoever loveth father, or mother, or husband, or wife, or house, or land better than their Saviour, cannot be his disciples. They do not reflect that straight is the gate, and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; while wide is the gate, and broad the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat; and that even the path of industry, and lawful enterprise, pursued without religion, will end in death.

2. Permit me, now, to inquire on what objects are you, my people, placing your affections? Does this world contain your all? What a portion for an immortal soul! How fleeting! How unsatisfying! How soon to be abandoned forever! How dare you to live in this unprovided state? No God, no Saviour, no heaven, alas! what will you do when you come to die? Awake, I beseech you, before it be too late,

and now, while it is called today, set your affections on things above.

This discourse will now be applied, more particularly, to the mourning families, who have, at this time, desired an interest in our prayers. And, first, I shall be permitted to address a few words to the surviving partner, at whose request this discourse has been penned.

*My Dear Sir,*

The wound, made in your heart by the loss of a beloved wife, is deep and painful; no connection of this life, constitutes so nearly a perfect union of soul, as that formed by marriage: and in no channel does bliss, here below, flow so full and so pure. The period, and the circumstances of the separation, add poignancy to your grief. You had just begun to live. You realised much, and your anticipations of the future were high. But, in a moment, both your present felicity and your future hopes are swept away. Thus circumstanced, it would be easy for you to render yourself miserable indeed. Let your eye and your affections be confined to earth, and the work is done. But, blessed be God, you may also, in this scene of sorrow, render yourself very happy. Set your affections on things above, and the work is accomplished. You will be able to rejoice, even in tribulation.

As an assistant to composure of mind, and to christian resignation, let me exhort you to remember, that this affliction did not come upon you by accident, but as a part of the deliberate and holy counsel of God. That God has a design to be answered by it, not only as it respects his great system, but a particular end, or purpose as it respects yourself. The present life is a state of trial. We are placed here to prepare for another and better world. And all the duties, and all the blessings and evils of life, are distributed, by the hand of God, with an imme-

diate reference to our spiritual and eternal good.— and they are admirably and most mercifully adapted to answer their design. The goodness of God, proclaimed by unnumbered mercies, is a constant reproof of our stupidity and ingratitude, and calculated to dissolve our hearts in penitential sorrow. Afflictions proclaim the vanity, and the uncertainty of mere earthly good. They admonish, and they are sent on purpose to admonish us, to place our affections on things above. It is with this message that this most weighty affliction has, by your heavenly father, been sent to you. The same voice which proclaimed to your dear wife that her warfare was accomplished, called upon you also to prepare for death. And even she, tho' dead, yet speaketh, sweetly persuading you to raise your affections from earth to heaven. The instruction is painfully obtained, but, should it produce its destined effect, you will be able to say, and most thankfully, this light affliction, which is but for a moment, shall work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Beware, then, my dear sir, that the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, do not spring up to prevent the complete maturity of what may be now so happily begun. While your sorrows are new, their language plain, their tendency auspicious, and above all, while God is waiting to bestow his grace, and render them effectual, hear, I beseech you, hear and obey.

“ Seize the kind promise while it waits,  
And march to Zion's heavenly gates,  
Believe, and take the promis'd rest—  
Obey, and be forever blest.”

To the families, affected by the mournful providence which has occasioned this discourse, I would address also a few observations : The death of your friend is a most pathetic illustration of the truths you have just heard. It speaks to your hearts, and teaches you, in a way that you cannot misunderstand, that neither youth, nor health, nor pleasing

prospects are proper objects in which to confide. All these were, a few days since, in the possession of our friend.— Now her body moulders in the cold grave, her soul is in eternity. Nor is this an uncommon event. Every generation that has lived, has also died. They have all had their sicknesses, their bereavements and their sorrows, while they walked down the vale of tears. Every family, also, that has been built up, has in time been pulled down. Your family is going. Numbers have gone before, and now another is added to the dead. You are all hastening to the same place, and your children, if they do not arrive first, will tread hard upon your steps. In these desolations what would you do were there no God, no Saviour, no heaven? What will you do, if, after such loud admonition, you still neglect them, and place your affections on things below? The improvement which it is your duty, and your interest to make of this painful providence, is expressed, I. Cor. Chap. vii. 29, 30, 31 verses, in language most appropriate and beautiful. “*The time is short; It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy, as tho’ they possessed not, and they that use this world, as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away.*”

To the youth of this congregation, and particularly to the former companions of the deceased, the providence of God, in her early death, speaks most loudly. How strikingly does it proclaim the fallacy of all earthly expectations. And will you still cleave to this world? Still neglect your souls and your God? What security have you that the world will not fail you, as it has failed your friend? Is her death any pledge that you are to live? rather does it not admonish you that you must die, and that you may die in the midst of all your golden dreams. From the tomb, methinks, her voice ascends, proclaiming, “All flesh is grass,” and calling upon you, “Come, view the ground where you must shortly lie.” Shall she die in vain, and in vain call you to reflection?— Will you still spend your strength for nought, and your labor for that which doth not profit? Your days all in mirth, and in a moment go down to the grave? Remember, I pray you, the worth of your souls; consider their present danger, and seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near.

A M E N.