

A
DISCOURSE
ON
THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL,
AND THE
RESURRECTION OF THE BODY:

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH
OF
THE REV. JAMES BOYD, A. M.

Late Pastor of Newton and Bensalem.

DELIVERED AT NEWTON, BUCKS COUNTY,
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BY GEORGE C. POTTS,
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A DISCOURSE, &c.

"For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2 Cor. v, 1.

MAN is a compound being. A natural frame of the most exquisite workmanship; formed by the hand of the Most High, from the dust of the ground; animated by an immortal soul, from the same Divine power; endued with reason and all its concomitant blessings;—constitutes that creature man, who is fearfully and wonderfully made. But man, by rebelling against the wise, holy and just commands of his Creator, introduced sin and death; and these two principles of our constitution became subject to separation, the body to return to its original dust, and the spirit unto God who gave it. All we know of death is, that it puts an end to our present mode of existence; but we have no reason to infer that it decomposes or annihilates our being. Death we conceive to be a separation of the two principles; the immortal soul from the mortal or natural body. We have been led to this view, from the intimation given in scripture of a second death; where it is said "blessed and holy is he who hath a part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." Now,

if the first death be such a separation as we have spoken of, the second death must be something more, even a total separation in another state of being, from God the only source of happiness: which, we are also taught, is the doom of all those who reject the Saviour, who is the resurrection and the life, and who live and die in a state of impenitency; while those who are united to Christ by a living faith, renewed in their hearts and influenced in their lives by the sanctifying operations of the Holy Ghost, shall not be subject to the second death, but shall rise and reign with Christ, and enjoy God forever and ever.

The apostle in the preceding chapter, verse seventh, with his usual eloquence, considers the human body figuratively as an earthen vessel, frail and subject to be broken in various ways; and in the words of the text as an "earthly house," which implies an inhabitant to be dispossessed from that mansion, which for a time it occupies. The grave, that mansion on the confines of both worlds, holds within its bosom the breathless clay, the earthly tabernacle of a venerable brother in the Lord, a faithful servant and minister of Jesus Christ. This is a moment for reflection; the silent tear of sorrow is permitted to flow at the remembrance of departed worth; for the suffering lot of humanity, and the dishonour which has fallen on our nature by sin and death! But shall this tear flow for ever? Shall the memory of his virtues carry us no farther than his grave? No, my friends, we are taught to wipe that tear away, and to console ourselves with

the joyful assurance, that the attenuated tabernacle of clay, which you lately deposited in the tomb, shall be again raised up, a building of God, incorruptible in its nature, immortal and eternal in its duration : for according to our apostle, that which was sown in weakness, shall be raised in power ; that which was sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption. Let his relatives and friends, and all who were not long since the people of his charge, who have grown up to the knowledge of Christ under his ministrations, mourn not as those who have no hope. You shall see him again (if like him, you are risen with Christ,) in that place and in that state, where the strokes of misfortune shall no more be felt, and the shocks of repeated affliction no more crumble to dust the glorified body in which he will then appear to your view.

The words of the text are comforting to the true believer in the prospect of death, when he lays down his weary head in the silent grave, with an assured hope, that to him all its truth shall be realized.

This passage has its difficulties in a critical point of view. We shall not attempt to solve these at present ; but shall proceed 1st, to a brief examination into the meaning of the different expressions in the text ; and, in the 2d place, take a view of the doctrines contained in, or necessarily flowing from this passage.

I. By the phrase "earthly house," we are to understand the natural or mortal body, which the immortal soul of every living man in this present

state inhabits. This is evident from the construction of the passage, which will bear the following translation: "If our earthly house of the body were dissolved." The original term, although generally applicable to the moveable tents in which the Jews dwelt in their pilgrimage through the wilderness, and sometimes applied to more permanent habitations, yet by an easy transition signifies the human body, physically viewed as to the formation of its various parts; constituting one beautiful frame, erected by Infinite Wisdom, for the accommodation of a spiritual and immortal inhabitant. If the apostle means by the *earthly house*, our present frail bodies, *the building of God, the house not made with hands*, which is set in opposition, must have a different sense; and imply that spiritual body, which this apostle assures us, the saints are to receive at the resurrection. As the apostle speaks with assurance, the sense is—We have a building of God, that is, we shall have from God a building, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Some interpreters seem to suppose, that heaven itself, and not the spiritual bodies of the saints, is meant by this expression; because they think there are allusions in scripture where that glorious place is described as not made with hands. But the words we conceive will not admit this sense, because, that cannot be heaven, of which it is declared, that it shall be eternal in the heavens. Besides the phrase "not made with hands," which is the same in import, as made without hands, we find applied to Christ's body,

by the false witnesses who were brought against him, and which he never denied; for he said to the Jews, destroy this temple, (meaning his body) and in three days I will raise it up: In allusion to this saying, the false witnesses testify, Mark xiv, 52, "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days, I will build another that is made without hands." And although the false witnesses might not have understood it as applying to Christ's natural body, yet the evangelist John tells us, that he applied the saying to the temple of his body: therefore, if Christ meant his natural body, as that made with hands, in the first, that which he placed in opposition, must mean his spiritual body after the resurrection. Moreover, the apostle in another passage expresses himself in a similar strain, Col. ii, 11, where he speaks of the christian circumcision, (or putting off the body of the sins of the flesh,) as made without hands, in which passage he must mean spiritual circumcision.

But it may be objected, Are not our present bodies as much made without hands, as any other bodies can be, which we are to receive hereafter? Whence then the distinction in the text, between natural and spiritual bodies? The solution is not difficult; for that which is formed by human agency, must naturally be composed of frail and perishing materials, while to that which represents any thing spiritual and incorruptible, the words "*made without hands*," may be applied. Hence, it is not the manner of its origin we ought so much

to consider, as the permanency of its nature, and the length of duration which it is to enjoy.

Then the plain sense of the text may be understood by the following paraphrase: We know that when death puts an end to the saint's abode on this stage of being, and separates the body and soul, so that the perishable part shall dissolve in dust, he shall hereafter receive another body of a spiritual and imperishable nature; one which God will give him at the resurrection, not subject to sufferings or corruption, and which shall be eternally with him in the heavens.

II. The doctrines here inculcated now claim our attention. They are two-fold; one is expressly contained in the words, the other naturally flows from them.

1st. The doctrine inculcated is, that the bodies of the saints—the redeemed and ransomed of the Lord, shall at their resurrection, undergo such a change as will render them incorruptible, and thereby become a fit habitation for immortal spirits.

It is not my present business, were I so inclined, to answer questions that are endless and impious, or the cavils of the sceptic or unbeliever against this comfortable doctrine. Suffice it to say, that we have various proofs, that there is no natural inconsistency in God's raising the dead. We have correct emblems of death and the resurrection in the successive revolutions of day and night—of summer and winter—in our own bodies in their various changes—and in the activity of the body and its rest and refreshment, by sleep at night,

when our senses are chained in fetters of inactivity, and the general suspension of all our rational operations, while for a time we are hushed into silence, rest and forgetfulness; yet in the morning we awake again, when each sense resumes its proper functions, and each faculty returns to the discharge of its proper duty. Nay, through the whole course of nature there seems a general dying and rising again. But from God's sacred word, as well as from our own frail and sinful nature, we are taught the necessity of a perfect and thorough change, before we can be admitted into the felicities of the heavenly state; for the Holy Spirit by our apostle has declared, that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven," 1 Cor. xv, 50. In our present mortal state, our bodies are well adapted to the different uses for which they were designed; yet who of us does not see, and feel, and know, that he is subject to dissolution; that here we have numerous infirmities and sinful propensities, which could not be admitted into heaven consistently with God's holiness.

If it were the will of our heavenly father that our bodies should forever remain as they now are, and yet pass into another state of being, no future state that was not like the present could be suitable for us; because our wants and miseries would render heaven itself, as it respects us, a place where our happiness would not be complete. The body, however beautiful and noble in the present stage of being, is, in a comparative view, not sufficiently adapted to serve higher purposes, or to be the ha-

bitation of the sanctified soul in a state of endless perfection, where it is destined to behold the glory of the Lord. The price of redemption paid by Jesus Christ—his own blood—the blood of atonement, by which the sinner is reconciled unto God, requires the eternal duration of those for whom he died. His almighty power is also exerted to bring his chosen and redeemed children with him, that where he is, there they may be also. A change, great in its nature, is necessary for the body to undergo, before it again becomes the habitation of the soul, that the felicity of the glorified saint may be perfect. It does not yet appear what we shall be, though our personal identity be the same as at present, yet we shall be very different in various respects from what we now are. For he who will change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body, not only redeemed the soul from hell, but also ransomed the body from the grave; for, saith he, “I have redeemed thee from death; I have ransomed thee from the power of the grave: Hence that which is sown or buried in corruption, is (or will be) raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body,” 1 Cor. xv, 43, 44. Hence it follows, that the souls which once inhabited and animated mortal bodies, and at death were made perfect in holiness, shall in the morning of another life, again be re-united to the spiritual and glorified bodies of the saints, and shall dwell forever

immortal and eternal in the presence of the Lord; who declares of himself, by a strong figure, "I am
 " the resurrection and the life: he that believeth
 " in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live
 " again; and whosoever liveth and believeth in
 " me, shall never die."

The doctrine of our immortality, and of a future state of retribution, is important to man in various points of view. It is important as it regards the heart and the conduct—as it regards our real pleasure and satisfaction—under the pressure of affliction—and in the hour of death.

Your attention is requested, while we endeavour very briefly to shew,

That the soul is a substance distinct from the body, or the organized matter which it animates. That it survives the body, after death dissolves their union; and therefore cannot be matter different only in its organic qualities. Now, if in these respects it differs from the body, we may rationally conclude that it is *immortal*. To these we shall add some reflections corroborative of the doctrine laid down.

Whatever difference of opinion there may have been among speculative men, either ancient or modern, concerning the specific nature of the soul; yet in this they have all, with very few exceptions, agreed—that *it is a substance*, in itself actually distinct and separable from, though in its present state closely united with, the body. There is scarcely a single truth that has met with such a general reception from mankind, whether savage

or civilized. Go to the cold regions of the north, or the sultry climes of the south; to the half civilized children of the east, or the naked savages of the west; wherever man is found, there you may discover under different names, however deformed by fable or degraded by error, the traces and outlines of this belief. This is a proof strongly presumptive. But that which gives the Christian solid and substantial evidence, is the declaration of the saviour Jesus Christ to his disciples, when he was warning them what they should endure for his sake, and arming them against apostacy: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Matt. x, 28. Now suppose the soul formed of matter like the body, and nothing different from it except in its organization; no good reason can be given, why the power of man is limited to the body, and not extended to the soul: for, if both be the same, he has power over both, which would render the encouragement of Christ to his disciples to continue stedfast in the faith, from a consideration of the imperishable nature of the soul, of no effect. But as the creator of man knows best of what materials he is formed, these words of Jesus Christ will remain forever the best confutation of the materialist; who asserts that the soul differs from the body only in its organic qualities, or that it is only the life or breath of the body, and of a finer or more ethereal quality.

Further, the soul is not only distinct and separable from the body, but also survives it after death. This consoling truth is deducible from

principles of reason, and from the antiquity and universality of the opinions of mankind; from the strength and vivacity which it seems to acquire, when the objects of sense recede from mortal view, and the body is almost worn out with pain, sickness and old age. These, with many other things which we could adduce did time permit, afford evidence, that our thinking part is something more than mere organized matter; for if it be proved that the principle of perception is distinct from the body, its capacity to survive the body's dissolution or the grave is established. But to Christians the most convincing arguments are those drawn from the sacred records. The Redeemer, in forewarning his disciples and all his followers of hypocrisy, says, Luke xii, 5, "Fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." And in the above cited passage in Matthew, "Rather fear him, which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Now, if the soul survives not the body, how can there be such a power, if they are both subject to the stroke of death and the same dissolution in the grave? That such a power exists is strongly asserted and generally believed, that is, that God possesses a power of punishing *something* which we call the soul, in hell or a place of punishment, after our bodies are dead, enclosed and dissolved in the grave: hence if he has the power of punishing, it follows, that there must be something to endure the positive punishment of pain and suffering in another state, immediately after we pass

from the present; hence too it is equally evident that the same power can reward all who, according to his own purpose, have embraced Christ and his gospel, through whom life and immortality have been brought to light.

An all-wise God has ordered and will order all things for the promotion of his own glory, and for the good of his people. To enjoy and glorify God was the chief design of man's creation; but if we proceed on any other plan than that which the gospel teaches, the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body, his design would seem to be defeated; because if the soul dies with the body, it cannot forever praise him, which was the chief thing designed; for the dead praise him not. But all the difficulty on this point ceases, when we embrace the soul's immortality; for that which animated our mortal frame ever lives to praise him, though separated from the body, and shall again with joy resume its habitation, when raised by Christ a glorified body from corruption and death. Reason herself, of this affords us proofs presumptive, but revelation gives us demonstration. There we find a scheme of religion, founded solely upon this comfortable doctrine of eternal life, as the free and sovereign gift of God, on account of the perfect satisfaction of our surety, the Lord Jesus Christ. There are many promises made of eternal life to those for whom Christ died: on these the dying saint, with firm reliance, rests in faith, amidst all the varying scenes of this distressing life. Because I live, says Christ, ye shall live also; and

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he ever liveth, the same yesterday, to day and forever.

From this firm foundation the believer in Christ can never be shaken, whatever shocks he may feel in his pilgrimage to another world. This has the most powerful influence on the heart and life of the Christian, both in public and private. How consoling is this in the private walks of life, to him who is called and renewed by the Holy Spirit, from a life of sin to a life of holiness, and is thereby preparing for a happy existence in a future state: he has a sure support to lean upon under all the heavy burdens which the calamities of this life may heap upon him, let them spring from what quarter they may.

This hope, nay this well-grounded assurance, is worth a thousand other comforts. The bounties and blessings of Providence in worldly enjoyments, may be adapted to our present convenience; but this is the best the surest stay, under the pressure of surrounding evils or domestic afflictions. For although it will not cure our present miseries, yet it breaks their force, by producing resignation to the will of him who afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men. An habitual attention to, and a deep and lively view of his future state of recompense, will render the religious man's life happy, whatever ills may befall him. Were we fervent in our expectations, and more frequent in our thoughts about it, we would soon learn to overlook or forget the lighter or less affecting evils of time. It is confessed at once, these evils do

and may beset us ; but supported by divine strength they cannot gain the mastery over us : disgust and uneasiness they may produce, but these are more than counterbalanced by a view of heaven and immortality, and by following the footsteps of the *Man of Sorrows* in every part of duty. The good man will not say with the romantic philosopher, “ that pain is no evil.” He feels its reality, and often heaves the sigh of sorrow and utters the groan of suffering nature, but by faith he gains the victory over sufferings, through patience, in the full persuasion, that the time will come when all tears shall be wiped from the eyes of the righteous ; when the voice of the mourner, the sighs and groans of the distressed, will be heard no more. The cheering thought that eternal joys are his in reversion, will dissipate the chief portion of the real, as well as the imaginary evils, that now disturb his present peace, as the wind drives the chaff from the summer threshing-floor. The pious man, who is accustomed to look forward towards the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus, will bear these difficulties which make their way to the heart with weight and keenness most oppressive to our nature and most difficult to be endured by human strength, when he knows that he who never failed in his promise hath said, “ My grace shall be sufficient for thee, and I will perfect strength in thy weakness,” whatever be the trial or suffering that oppress him ;—when he knows and feels, that God will shield the head and the heart of those who trust in him, from the tongue of calumny, from

the arrow shot by the bow of detraction; he is assured, that, though they wound or bruise for a little while, they can never destroy or kill.

Again: This doctrine of life and immortality has not a less influence on men in their public relations in life. Take from man the love of virtuous fame, or above all the consolations of immortality, and you banish with it all public spirit. That heroic greatness of soul which stimulates the warrior to bleed for his country—that elevation and noble emulation in the statesman's mind, which leads him to labour for his country's honour, peace and prosperity—that calm but determinedness of soul in the minister or ambassador of Jesus Christ, who has to contend not merely with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness, for the promotion of God's glory, and the present and future felicity of his fellow men. Take this support and encouragement from him who voluntarily dedicates himself to the service of Christ, though he knows that contumely and scorn, poverty, and reproach on account of that poverty, await him, together with the gainsaying of men; tear from him this hope and stay, he could no longer be patient with gainsayers, nor endure the cold regard of those who call themselves the friends of Christ and his friends, while his heart may sob and bleed its last through want or affliction, yet have not the generosity to relieve, or the humanity to pity him, who under every circumstance requires the tenderest sympathy, and the warmest charities of life.

This present period of man's life has not rewards enough to animate men of such exalted natures to serve their country and their God, and to benefit mankind at the hazard or loss of fortune, of reputation, of life; yet many in each of those stations have risked their lives, their reputation and comforts, for the noble ends they had in view. Some other motive must have prompted them besides worldly advantages or earthly fame, we conceive this to be nothing less than the strong persuasion deeply impressed on the heart of the good, the just, the brave and upright, that the recompense of their faithful and useful labours (however perhaps neglected by those whom they have benefited in this life) is not lost, but only delayed and kept for them in another state of being, who have honoured God and saved their country: Yes, it is this hope of immortality and eternal life, that excites to deeds of heroism and self-denial, and which steels the heart against the adversities of life and woes of time. It is this pushes on the Christian and the hero to deeds of virtuous fame.

It calls forth our pity as well as astonishment, to find men possessed of reason and refinement, nay men who pretend to be more rational than their neighbours, who yet have such a mean ambition, such an inverted species of pride, as to lead them or rather to puzzle them into the belief, that their nature is not more exalted, and that their end is to be like that of the brutes which perish.—Still, however, they boast of the dignity of man's nature, of his reason and refinement, while they

believe that their origin and end is similar to the meanest creature that crawls beneath their feet. An opinion so mean, so uncomfortable, as well as false, can never excite to truly noble actions. In such an opinion there is nothing laudable or glorious, delightful or refreshing. Its effect can never make men more easy in themselves or more useful to their country. This would be to place man, who is said in scripture to be "made but a little lower than the angels" on a level with the beasts of the field.

But the good, the truly enlightened, the brave of every age, would rather stand the most convincing proof that his body is mortal, than for a moment yield his belief that his soul is immortal. The Christian is well assured, that not only his existence, but his happiness hereafter are everlasting, and secured for him by that redemption which Christ his saviour effected by price and by power. Eternal life none but God could promise—none but Christ our surety could purchase—and none but the spirit of God could bestow in fulfilment of that promise. For eternal life is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God. On this the believer founds his hope for the pardon of all his sins—for peace of conscience and meetness for heaven and happiness, after which his heart pants as earnestly as the hunted hart in the desert pants for the refreshing stream of water.

That which animated the hopes, and influenced the life, of our departed brother and minister of

Christ, was the assured hope of entering into the house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, through the righteousness of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith. After having lived the life, we trust that he has died the death of the righteous. He has entered into that rest prepared for the faithful servants of God. His labours, toils and afflictions are over. You have committed his earthly remains to the cold, dark mansion of death, with the hope that the grave shall not forever hold its prisoner; assured that at the call of God it must yield up the sleeping dust. Then, and not till then, shall you, who have long known him, be fully able to appreciate his worth. Then you will see, that the faith which he so often preached, and the duties which he enjoined on you from this place, was a living principle in his heart and ran through all his actions; that from this flowed the humility, the meekness and candour, which so singularly characterized his life, drew the esteem of all who knew him and obtained the approbation of God. Then you will see the source from whence his patience flowed, that patience which had her perfect work in him, during a long life spent under its influence,—through afflictions and sufferings of no common grade. But you knew him, my friends, and have had the most ample evidence of his patience in suffering—of his meek and humble spirit in the hour of adversity, as well as of enjoyment—of his faith unshaken in the promises of his Lord, amidst the changing scenes of this mortal state:—And as Jesus has plucked out the sting of death to the believer, you have seen

him meet the king of terrors as a friend which released him from the miseries of this life and launched him into the joys of his Lord. For him to die was gain. He now lives to die no more. Christian friends, it is not my intention to pronounce an eulogy on our departed brother: had this been the design, we should have pursued a very different course. Permit me to say, from an intimate knowledge of him, that in all the relations of life to which God called him, he was upright, honest and sincere in the discharge of duty as far as divine strength enabled him.

A detailed account of the early period of the Rev. James Boyd's life, cannot be expected from me. From the few materials furnished, we are warranted in stating, that he was born at Picqua, in the county of Lancaster, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and forty-three, and was the youngest son of pious and respectable parents, who had emigrated from the north of Ireland and settled in this state. Having dedicated him to God, their first desire was, that if the great head of the church pleased to call him thereunto, that he might be a useful and faithful labourer in the Redeemer's kingdom. With this view, he received the first rudiments of a good classical education at the school of the Reverend Dr. Robert Smith, pastor of the church of Picqua, who was instrumental in educating many young men for the gospel ministry, that afterwards became burning and shining lights in the American churches. He was sent to finish his studies at Nassau Hall, now

Princeton College, New Jersey, where he graduated in the year 1760; of which institution he was afterwards appointed a trustee. In literature his acquirements were respectable, and his attainments in science beyond mediocrity. After he left college, he put himself under the care of the presbytery of Newcastle; and having passed through the usual trials, with considerable reputation, he was licensed to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God the year following. Having received a call to be the pastor of this church in connexion with Bensalem, he was ordained and installed by the presbytery of Philadelphia in the year 1769; and for near half a century (forty-five years,) he has preached to you Christ, "the way, the truth and the life,"—and, as Christ's ambassador, with earnest prayers and tears did beseech you to be reconciled unto God.

Here he has laboured, during a long and painful life, with the fidelity of a conscientious steward of the household of faith. But he is gone to render his account at the judgment seat of his Divine master, where the reward is of grace to the most upright servant. From you he concealed not the counsel of God. What effect the precious truths which he proclaimed have had, you my hearers can best judge: as for this, you will be answerable when you are brought before that judgment seat to which he has already gone. His ministerial and christian character he dishonoured not, as it was his study to keep a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man. The evange-

lical truths of that gospel which he preached, he exemplified by a life of faith, piety and meekness: in all the duties of his ministerial character, he lived in the most perfect harmony with his session, and amidst you without contention or strife.

For some years past his health and bodily strength gradually declined. The tongue which often announced to you the glad tidings of salvation, first began to lose its cunning by slow paralysis, which rendered him incapable of performing the duties of his office with comfort to himself or advantage to his beloved people. The sensibility of his heart was rendered acute, because he could be no longer serviceable in preaching Christ the only way of salvation to the sinner. The disorder crept slowly over his frame, while his mind was left unimpaired under the repeated shocks which the frail tabernacle of clay underwent by the strokes of death. His faith and patience were supported, though he longed to depart and be with Christ; yet with resignation he waited till the order from on high was issued, to change the countenance and call him away. At last the moment came, and the disencumbered spirit winged its way to the bosom of its God, when death had levelled the clay cold tabernacle with its kindred earth.

Christians! what could have sustained him in all the calamities of life, in bodily sufferings and pains? Nothing but the supporting power of God's almighty arm. It was the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which gave him a full sense of the pardon

of sin through the blood of atonement. He experimentally felt the effect of that gracious promise made to the apostle under temptation and affliction, and alike sure to all who trust in the Divine veracity, "My grace shall be sufficient for thee; I will perfect strength in thine exceeding weakness. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

To you my dear young friends, the children of him who has gone to the grave like a shock of corn fully ripe, or like a flower that shuts up at the close of day, suffer me to sympathise with you without insincerity on this melancholy occasion. Cold are the consolations, and feeble the efforts of all human friendship, while the heart labours under these woes of life. As we cannot attempt to console, for consolation is alone of Divine original, yet when the heart is melted under no imaginary affliction or tale of woe, with the faithfulness of a friend we would even now under the full tide of your grief, direct your hearts to look to the only and proper source from whence you may draw the most divine relief and comfort. Go unto Him, who though ascended to the throne of his glory, yet bends on earth the eye of a brother; for there is not a groan or pang which can now rend the heart of his children, of which he did not fully share. Go unreservedly to a God in Christ, the covenant God of your father, and he will give the Spirit the Comforter, to heal the wounded heart; and he will pour into the bleeding wound the balm of consolation. His promise is yea, and amen, to them who

believe; and he has promised to be a father to the fatherless, and the orphan's stay and shield. On Him who has supported the feeble and tottering steps of an aged parent until he descended into that house where the weary are at rest, place your dependance under all your exigencies and in every situation in life. He will never leave you nor forsake you. Into the compassionate, and affectionate bosom of your heavenly Father, you may safely pour out all your complaints. Among the sons of men you will find few to pity you, still fewer to relieve. Let the piety of your beloved parent ever live in your remembrance: seek to be transformed into the likeness of your Redeemer, and then with him you shall be forever blessed with the full enjoyment of God through eternity. Commit your ways unto the Lord, and he will direct your steps. To the care of an ever-watchful Providence, the grace of Christ and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we would tenderly and fervently commend you.

Members of this congregation, over whom the Holy Ghost once made him overseer:—Having been steward of the manifold mysteries of God to you, he is called to render an account of his stewardship, after a long life of labour among you. The improvement you have made of the doctrines he taught; the earnest entreaties, the warnings, the reproofs and counsels he offered, the tears he shed for your salvation, will make up a long item in the account you will have to render before the tribunal of the judge of all the earth. Those of you, to whom his ministrations have been made through

the grace of Christ and application of his spirit, the savour of life unto life, have reason to rejoice : for the blessings of the house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, into which he has entered as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, are also reserved for a faithful people. But what shall we say to those who have turned a deaf ear to the truths he taught ; who have mispent and misemployed their time of improvement ; against such in the day of general judgment he must witness—that your blood is not found in his skirts. He often invited you to the gospel feast, to taste and see that the Lord is good ; but ye came not at his call. As the day of grace and mercy to you is not yet closed, we would add to his many warnings, this one more : We beseech you as perishing sinners, flee without delay to Christ the only Saviour ; for there is salvation in none other. There is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved—his blood can cleanse from all sin. It is he that beseeches you by his word, to be reconciled unto God by the blood of his cross ; and he is ever ready and willing to receive the repenting sinner. To such he says, in the language of the prophet, “ Come, let us reason together : though “ your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool ; “ though they be red like crimson, they shall be “ white as the snow.” Flee to the cross, and prostrate there, plead as the chief of sinners, that it is a faithful saying, (and you may rely on it,) that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners : there urge your suit until you obtain pardon,

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peace, and reconciliation, through the blood of atonement: when, if you are quickened together with Christ in this life, united to him by a living faith, and his love is shed abroad in your hearts, you will know that you have passed from death unto life; yea, you shall know with the apostle and all the redeemed of the Lord, that when the earthly house of your tabernacle shall be dissolved, you have a building of God, an house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. To be Christ's in that day of decision, when the heaving earth shall yield up her dead, and the sea shall give up its dead,—that day when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and this earth shall be dissolved in flames—then may you, through *his* grace and power which raised your sleeping dust from the grave, be able to *snatch a brand from the burning funeral pile of nature, to light your way to the throne of God.* Amen.