
Mr. *Parsons's*

FUNERAL SERMON,

On Mr. *Little.*



A F U N E R A L
S E R M O N :

Occasioned by the DEATH of
Mr. EBENEZER LITTLE,

ONE OF THE
*Elders of the Presbyterian Church in
Newbury-Port ;*

Who departed this Life July 30th, 1768, in the 53d
Year of his Age.

By JONATHAN PARSONS, A. M.
And MINISTER of the GOSPEL There.

Hear what the Voice from Heaven proclaims,
For all the pious Dead,
Sweet is the Savor of their Names,
And soft their sleeping Bed.

WATTS.

S A L E M :

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F U N E R A L S E R M O N.

P S A L. LXXXVIII. 18.

*“ Lover and Friend hast thou put far from me, and mine
 “ Acquaintance into Darknefs.”*

SOME Divines interpret the Words of *Heman*, as a Complaint that his Friends had forsaken him, while they were yet alive. If this be the Meaning, we may observe upon it, that it is no Wonder the last Part of his Lamentation was repeated ; for what an Aggravation of our Trials must it be, when we are under some Affliction ; to have our Friends hide themselves, and refuse to appear for our Relief. They that have their Affections change with the shifting Scenes of Providence, are but shallow Friends, better lost than found.

OTHERS understand it, that his best Friends, those that loved him dearly, and would have been ready to relieve, defend and comfort him under his sorest Trials, were dead, and gone down to the Grave, the Place of Silence. This last Sense of the Words appears to me the most probable, because so wise and good a Man as *Heman* might doubtless have many Friends, and some of them, it is reasonable to suppose, were *real* Friends, and such as would not hide themselves from him in Adversity. But the most faithful, trusty Friends are liable to be arrested by Death. If God calls for them they must be gone, be the seeming Calls for
 their

their Continuance ever so loud, and our Adversities ever so many and great. . In this Sense our Friends are “ put far from us,” by Death ; far out of our Reach, out of our Sight, out of our hearing, when they are lodged in the House of Darknes.

To improve the Words in the latter Sense given, I propose to consider, that our best Friends must die as well as others—that Death removes them from us, and puts them into Darknes—that their Death is ordered by God—and that it is a sore Frown of Providence to have dear and useful Friends hid in the Grave, especially when our other Trials seem to call for their Help.

I. “ OUR best Friends must die as well as others.” Since the first Entrance of Sin into the World, Death hath dwelt among us, and prevailed over us with irresistible Power. “ By one Man Sin entered into the World, and “ Death by Sin ; and so Death passed upon all Men, for “ that all have sinned.” † All the living have sinned against God, and therefore, by his settled Law and righteous Appointment, for the Punishment of Sin, all must die a temporal Death ; i. e. all, in *general*, must undergo a penal Sentence of the Law, so far as it respects a Discharge from this mortal State. The wicked must die because they are under the Curse of the Law, in order to receive the Wages of their Sin. And, though Christ has freed Be-

† Rom. v. 12. Though I had no Occasion to consider this Text any further than it related to *temporal* Death ; yet doubtless more is meant, than that Death which we all die, viz. the whole of that Death which is the proper Wages of Sin ; the whole of that Death which *Adam* was exposed to by his eating the forbidden Fruit. And it is evident from the inward Dread of divine Wrath, which he discovered by flying from the Presence of God, and endeavouring to hide himself, that he was deprived of the holy and happy Life, in the Image and Favor of God, and Communion with him, which he enjoyed before he fell, by consenting to eat of the forbidden Fruit. Besides, the Opposition that the Apostle makes between *Death*, and *eternal Life*, (Ch. vi. 23.) shows that the Death which is the Wages of Sin, takes in that which is *spiritual* and *eternal*, as well as that which is temporal.

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lievers from eternal Death, yet God has wisely ordered that they must die also : It is for the Glory of his great Name, and the Honor of his Son's Name, that they should leave a Testimony of their Resignation to the Will of God, by their Readiness to part with all worldly Enjoyments and Life itself at God's Call. Besides, their Death ministers an Occasion of the most glorious Display of divine Love and Grace, by opening the Way to the immediate Vision and compleat Fruition of God, and to their being with Christ, to behold the Glory which the Father hath given him.

FRIENDS and Acquaintance, the best and dearest of them, are no more discharged from temporal Death, than the most useless among the Children of Men. Death is such an Enemy, that no Weapon, no Plea, no Prayer, can prevail against it. The Friends of God and Men, those that give the clearest Evidences of Christian Benevolence, have had their Day for Service, and then they are called to lay all by. They must work the Work of him that sent them into the World, and then lye down in the Dust, never to awake and rise, until Time shall be swallowed up in Eternity. They did not continue in this World so long, expecting a settled Residence in it, as if it were their Rest ; but earnestly desired, and by all the Means of divine Appointment, sought after a future and better Country, that is an heavenly.—Though the Pleasures of Friendship are next to those of Religion, and in such a dark Day as this is, both in the Church and State, we do not know how to spare the most useful of our Numbers, yet they can not pass the Bounds which God has fixed : His Counsels are unalterable ; the Number of their Months are with him, “ at the
“ Dispose of his Power, which cannot be controlled, and
“ under the Ken of his Omniscience, which cannot be de-
“ ceived.”

II. "WHEN our Friends die, they are removed far from us and put into Darkness." The Thoughts of losing the Pleasure of their good Company, of the Benefit of their Ministrations and pious Examples, are very trying to us, especially considering we shall never see their Faces more in the Land of the Living. When our Friends take long and dangerous Voyages by Sea, to fetch Merchandize from a far Country, it is hard parting with them; we are concerned how the Ship will be preserved upon the tempestuous Seas, how she will escape the Rocks and Quick-sands; but we live in Hopes of seeing them again, and perhaps in the mean Time we hear of their Arrival at the designed Port, and receive Intelligence of their Success in Business, and their Expectations of a speedy Return Home. These Tidings of their Safety, and the Success of their foreign Trade, mingle Joy with our Sorrow in their Absence; and still we live in Hopes of seeing their Faces once more in the Flesh, and of stirring up the Flame of mutual Friendship. But Death is a Voyage to another World, and they that "go down to the Grave, shall return no more." Friends are constantly passing from this World to another; but being once housed in the Place of Silence, they return no more back, from their House under Ground, to their House above Ground, to the Possession and Business of it; but Children or other Heirs take Possession and keep it till they resign all up to the next Generation. Our dearest and most useful Friends who are gone to Heaven, and left us in Mourning, will never return to share our Joys and Sorrows; we shall have no more Acquaintance with them, nor be any more under their Influence, till the Heavens be no more.

— "If, O Man, thy vital Streams desert

" Their purple Channels, and defraud the Heart,

" With fresh Recruits they ne'er will be supply'd,

" Nor feel their leaping Life's returning Tide." WE

We may reflect upon past Intimacy with our Friends, and upon their eminent Serviceableness in private and public Life, but the Reflection will give fresh and sensible Grief, because their Lives are cut off, and the Scene is closed. And this is the common Lot; we shall die shortly, and go to them into the Grave, but they shall not return to us. Alas, they are among the ghastly Corporation, "free among the Dead," become a Prey to Corruption, and to the Worms: A Period is put to all their Acquaintance with this World, and the Things of it; and if their Souls are removed to a Land of Light, their Bodies are gone to a Land of Darknes, and the Shadow of Death; "neither have they any more Portion forever," of what is done or gotten under the Sun. Death parts the greatest Friends, and puts an End to their past Friendship. It is highly proper in the Time of Mourning, to remember and reflect with the greatest Seriousness, that the whole Duration of our Abode here, is absolutely, and in itself, exceeding short and uncertain, and will soon have an End, none knows how soon. We are following after our departed Friends, as fast as the Wings of Time can carry us. Let us not make an Idol of Friends, "Conveniences, and Services of Life; nor misapply and abuse them, to the Dishonor of God, and our own Hurt: For the whole Form and Figure of this World, as to our enjoying, conversing, and living in it, is flying off like a Shadow, and will soon vanish away."

III. "WHEN our Friends are put far from us by Death, it is by the wise and righteous Disposal of divine Providence." God is the rightful Owner and Possessor of all; "all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth are his," and at his Disposal, by the indispensable Right of Creation; and as supreme Ruler and Commander of all. || His Influence and Agency is universal, and the Designs of his Providence

|| Mr. Henry.

are deep and unaccountable. He has an absolute Propriety in all his Creatures ; Mankind, in particular, derive their Being from him, owe their Being to him, depend upon him for the Support of it, lie at his Mercy, are under his Direction and Dominion, and at his Summons must resign their Lives. All our good and evil Things are in his Hands, and there is no contending with his Providence, nor breaking the Measures of it. “ Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again : He shutteth up a Man, and there can be no opening.” † None can dissuade, none can alter his Counsels, none can resist him, or oppose his Operations. “ Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him ? Who shall say unto him, what doest thou ?” † He has set Bounds to our Lives, and the Lives of our Friends, beyond which neither we nor they can pass. He has set the special Periods of Time for their Existence, and the Boundaries of Life, with the Time and Manner of Death.

Particularly, THE *Time* of their Death is determined by God. We may desire the most useful and friendly might live to old Age, before as long as we live : But God has determined, in his Counsel and Decree, just how long they shall be with us, and they can stay no longer. Diseases are God’s Servants, and when he sends them they must do their Office. “ Is there not an appointed Time to Man upon Earth ? “ Are not his Days also like the Days of an Hireling ?” * There is a set Time for Soldiers to fight, a set Time also for them to serve. Hirelings are sometimes hired by the Year, but ordinarily by the Day. So we have a set Time to labor and grapple with the Miseries of Life, and to finish our Warfare. Every Man’s Days are *set*, and his Days numbered, and at Night their Labour ends. Some have a very short Day to work in ; they are called off from their

† Job xii. 14.

† Ch. ix. 22.

* Job vii. 1.

Labour in Youth : Others live to middle Age, and some few to old Age. But whether our Continuance in the World be longer or shorter, the Time of our Death is absolutely and irreversibly determined.

AND not only the Time, but the *Manner* also. There is but one Way into the World, but many Ways out of it. Death-bed Agonies are to some hard and terrible, to others lingering ; one dies suddenly, not weakened by long Sickness ; another dies slowly, with much Pain and Misery, “ in the Bitterness of his Soul, and never eateth with Pleasure.” * Some are snatched away unawares, with little or no Warning, by some unforeseen Accident, others gently fall into the Sleep of Death, having “ filled up the Measure of human Life ;” not only without Distress of Soul, but without bodily Pains, they easily put off their Bodies, and fall asleep. In what Manner soever our Friends die, it is God directs to it, and influences all second Causes that effect it. He turns all the Wheels of Nature to give the fatal Blow ; sometimes they are suspended, and sometimes precipitated to bring about his wise and righteous Counsels. He impresses and directs the Motions and Degrees of Motion, the Influences and Degrees of Influence, of Nature and Intelligences, in the upper and lower World.

IV. “ IT is a humbling Dispensation of Providence, to have our dear Friends taken away from their Usefulness, and hid in the Grave, especially if it is a Time when we are sorely exercised with other Afflictions.” It was doubly painful to *Heman*, that, under the Hidings of God’s reconciling Countenance and his other Afflictions, which were very distressing, his “ Friends were put far from him,” and his “ Acquaintance into Darkness.” He reckons the Death of special Friends among his Afflictions, and one of

* Job xxi. 25.

the greatest of them. Had God, in his good Providence, continued his Friends, to shew Offices of Kindness to him, to sympathize and bear with, to pray for and assist him, to support, lighten, and relieve him of his other Loads & Grievances, Trials and Exercises, this would have been a great Alleviation of his Sorrow. But instead of this, his Friends must be put away from him, and his Acquaintance into Darkness. God not only bro't him into great inward and outward Distress, but left him friendless, alone to get along as he could. Well might he think that his Afflictions were so much the greater for this Calamity, added to what went before ; for it was really so on several Accounts, and would appear to be so to any of us in the like Condition, from several Considerations.

Particularly, If our departed Friends were truly *pious* and *beneficent* while they lived. Some of our Acquaintance are far from discharging the Duties of the Christian Life, whether they respect God or Man : They are covetous, sour, peevish and unholy ; all they have serves but to excite their rapacious Desires after the World, crying, GIVE, GIVE. Now, tho' the Death of such Acquaintance may occasion much Pain to us, from our just Fears lest the Justice of an angry God has demanded Satisfaction to his Law and his Authority from them, yet the Loss to us cannot be so great as the Death of a Friend who is eminently pious and beneficent. The Friend of such a Christian Character inspires our Hopes of his further Usefulness, in the particular Relations he sustains, in the Family, in the Neighbourhood, and the Church of God. If therefore God puts such Friends far from us, and lodges them in the Grave, the pleasing Hope of Relatives and affectionate Friends is cut off, and their Expectation is perished.

AGAIN ; if our departed Friends have been *faithful Re-provers*

provers in their Life-time. Among all the Offices of Friendship, there is none equal to that of assisting the Soul, and helping forward our spiritual Welfare. And when we have been favoured with such a Blessing in a departed Friend, it is the greater Frown of Providence to have him taken away by Death. Such as are zealous Reprovers of Vice, zealous Vindicators of the Doctrines, Names and Honor of our Lord Jesus Christ ; such as have been impartial Monitors, and Terrors to evil Doers ; to have such as those taken away from the Evil to come, is a great Frown indeed. Where shall we find many among a People, who will stem the Torrent of open Wickedness and Error ? Who will not fluctuate between two Parties, hither and thither ? Who will, with a Spirit of Love and Friendship, deal plainly with us, and reprove us for what we say and do amiss ?—It must be a very great Frown, especially when it is hard to find a faithful Friend, a Friend that in Love to our Souls will not suffer Sin upon us ; I say, to have such a Friend put far from us into the Grave is a great Frown.

AGAIN, if our departed Friends have been *public Blessings*. They were, perhaps, in some public Station in the Church, and many had great Dependence upon their Influence, under God, in its most interesting Concerns. They seemed to be Men of Faith and much Prayer ; to have great Interest at the Throne of Grace, and to have been great Blessings to the People where they lived ; yea, extensive Blessings abroad, to many who never saw their Faces : God, it may be, fitted them by his Grace and an Affluence of the good Things of this Life, for very extensive Blessings in their Day, and disposed them to “devise liberal Things,” far and wide. When such Friends as those are called off, in a Day that produces very few of the like Spirit, it must be peculiarly afflicting.

AGAIN ;

AGAIN ; if they are taken away *in the Midst* of their Usefulness. When the Lord has preserved the pious and faithful, the public-spirited and useful to old Age, we can expect nothing further of them but a speedy Dissolution, and then their Death does not seem so shocking : They have served their Generation ; they are breathing after Heaven, and wonder the Wheels of Death are so long a coming to convey them to the holy City that is above.— And now if they die, they come to the Grave at full Age. To desire their Continuance in this World, with sinking, languishing Bodies, when they have out-lived their Serviceableness already, would be unkind ; their Death is rather to be welcomed by us, than to be lamented. But to have Friends of eminent Piety and Usefulness cut off in the Midst of their Strength and Activity, when we were hoping that their Work was not half done ; when, according to an ordinary Course, they might have lived to do eminent Service, many Years longer, cannot but be lamented.

AND their Death is *peculiarly* trying, if it comes when we are almost **OVERWHELMED** with other Sorrows. If we are perplexed with inward or outward Trials, where the Determination is doubtful, and the Concern is great, how happy is it to have the Prayers and Assistance of a good Friend ; one that will naturally care for us, comfort us in our Afflictions, and help us bear our Burdens ? Surely, we are exceeding stupid, if we do not feel the Loss of such a Friend. God expects we should take Notice of it. There is much of his Displeasure in it. We are left exposed to our Enemies by it : and therefore it would be displeasing to God if we should not mourn the Loss. “ Help, Lord, “ for the godly Man ceaseth ; for the faithful fail from “ among the Children of Men.” The godly and the faithful fail ; who will lend us a helping Hand to support us under all our Sorrows ?

APPLICATION.

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Use I. If it be the Lord that takes away our Friends by Death, then we should watch against *Impatience* under such Losses. "The Judge of all the Earth has done right," whatever second Causes have been the Means of their Death. Let us not murmur and complain; God has given us many good Things, and yet continues to us many undeserved Mercies, and shall we not accept the Punishment of our Sin, and acquiesce in the Will of God, when his holy Hand is lifted up against us? When our Relatives, or the dear Members of the Society, are taken from us, let us not complain against God for sending the Disease, or not healing it. If we should be offended with Instruments, could they prevent his sending, or work a Cure without him? Should we be angry with ourselves for omitting something, as a Means of their Recovery, if that Omission was not voluntary, it will be found that our Impatience is rather against God than blaming ourselves.

WE have no Reason at all to murmur. God, who is infinite in Wisdom and Goodness, has an infinitely wise *Design* in all our Bereavements. Earthly Parents may sometimes chasten us in an arbitrary Way, thro' Pride or Humor; But our heavenly Father afflicts his Children "for their Profit, that they might be Partakers of his Holiness."† And besides, Death is a *special Favor* to our Friends if they were prepared for eternal Life and Glory. If Christ was glorified, and the Power of his Grace was exalted by them, in their Life Time; if his Interest and Glory were the delightful End they pursued, then their Death is unspeakable Gain to them in their complete Salvation. We may, indeed, apprehend their Continuance with us a little longer in this troublesome World, to help us against surrounding Temptations and Dangers, might have been for our Benefit: But being

† Heb. xii. 10.

loosed from all the natural and moral Imperfections of this frail State, to be in the immediate Presence of Christ, to behold his Glory, is inexpressibly better for them, than any Condition of this Life could possibly be.

Use II. WHEN God frowns upon us by the Death of dear Friends, we should learn the better to *improve* the Friendship of those who are yet alive. Though God has taken away some that have been near and dear to us, yet we may have some good Friends left us ; some that will pass by our Infirmities, and put up our Affronts ; some that are “ afflicted in all our Afflictions,” and are ready to help us bear our several Burdens. And should we not endeavour to get all the Good we can by them, before they are put far from us ? Is it not expected that we should make our profiting appear unto all, for the Indulgence of such Blessings ? Will not God be provoked to put them away from us in his Anger, if we get no Good by them ? And if we should live regardless of the Blessing, and of our Accountableness to God for it, they may be soon incapable of affording us any further Help, let our Wants and their Desires be ever so great.—Let us be engaged to gain in Knowledge and Holiness by all our Opportunities with them. Their Days are numbered, and when the Period is come, in which they must be put far from us, we can enjoy them no longer, to admonish us of our Sins, to comfort us in our Darkness, or help in our Journey towards the City which has Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. Did we rightly improve the Friendship of living Christians, it might serve to strengthen our Faith and Love, and excite us to the holy Practice of every good Work, as the Fruit of Faith, and the Evidence of a State of Grace.

O LET us take heed that we do not make their Death-Beds uneasy to them, nor render our Case desperate. O let
none

none of us pay so little Regard to their friendly Advice, as to give them painful Reflections that they have laboured in vain for our Good ; that they must leave us Slaves to Sin, after their utmost Endeavours to recover us out of the Snares of the Devil.

AFTER our Friends are dead, they will give an Account of all the Warnings they have given us, and the Pains they have taken with us, and for our spiritual and eternal Good, and of the Success they have had in their Attempts. And O how shocking will it be to us, if we should find that they have filed a Bill against us, and it remains uncanceled ! God will not suffer all their solemn Warnings, Reproofs, and Counsels, *finally* to fall to the Ground. Therefore let us admit their Calls while they are yet living, and not turn a deaf Ear and harden our Hearts. Bring not your best Friends with Sorrow to the Grave ; hasten not their Death, by your being obstinate to all the Methods they have taken to recover you.

Use III. LET Friends so live together in this World, as to be *always ready* to die. Saints and Sinners will see Christ in the Day of Judgment with very different Sentiments. With what Watchfulness and Preparedness then should every one of us be looking and waiting for our Death, that it may not surprize us, before we are aware, into eternal Misery ! Our Lord's Caution belongs to us under present Providences, " Be ye also ready ; for, in such an Hour " as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." † Death will certainly and soon seize upon and carry us hence, and perhaps it will come upon us by Surprize, when we are laying up a Store of worldly Good, and likely to live yet many Years.—Would you be found ready in the important Moment ? Then make you a new Heart, and fly to the Blood

† Mat. xxiv. 44.

of the Covenant without Delay ; for you may be struck dead in a Moment, while you have no Finess for the heavenly Inheritance, which God has provided for them that love him and believe in his Son Jesus. Many that resolve to mind the eternal Concerns of their Souls in *old Age*, are cut off in *middle Age*, or in Youth. Many that intend to seek Christ upon a sick Bed, are taken away by some sudden and surprizing Accident. The most diligent and watchful will find Time little enough to prepare for dying, if they realize the awful Tribunal of God, and that vast Eternity which succeeds. Each of you are renewed by the Spirit of God, or unrenewed ; Believers or Unbelievers : And it is infinitely important that both be ready to have your Bodies lodged in the Grave, and your Souls *actually* ready for their Appearance before God.

Are you still in a *State of sinful Nature* ? O never give any Rest to your Souls, until you are born again, and find Rest in Christ. God still affords you a Season of Grace, to seek Mercy before you die : He invites and pleads with you to repent and obey the Gospel. As long as you reject him of your own Choice, and rebel against his Call, you cannot be ready for your great and last Change. If you are not regenerated, if you have not the Faith of God's Elect, if you are not true Penitents, you " shall die in your Sins ; " go to your Graves before you are rid of them. And if " he that despised Moses's Law, died without Mercy, " how inexpressibly more dreadful must you conclude in your Consciences, will that Punishment be, which shall be inflicted upon those that despise the Gospel ? At present your Condition is miserable ; you trample upon the divine Person, Offers and Mediation of Christ : Instead of trusting in that precious Blood, by which the Covenant of Grace is ratified, you injuriously treat that very Blood which was shed for the

Remission

Remission of Sins, as if it was of no more Value than the Blood of a common Man, or even the Blood of a Malefactor. O trifle not with the Wrath of God ; no Ransom can deliver you when God enters into Judgment with you ; no Servants can rescue you out of the Hand of divine Vengeance ; no Darkness can hide you from the omniscient Eye of him to whom the Darkness and the Light are both alike.

SUPPOSE you are born again, and believe in Christ, yet there is an *actual* as well as a habitual Fitness for Death. And in this Sense you must be in a good *Frame* as well as a good State ; live a spiritual and holy Life, in Communion with God. If you “ draw back, God will have no Pleasure in you,” † it will argue that your Faith is not saving. Or, what if you should be called, when under Decays, Doubts, and a careless Spirit ? These render a Christian very unprepared for the Hour of Death. You conduct very unwisely, if you allow yourselves a Moment in any Frame or Practice, wherein you would be loth to be arrested by Death. But you manifest Christian Wisdom, when you live every Moment as if it were your last. Therefore live in the Exercise of holy Faith ; mortify in-dwelling Sin ; whatever your Hand finds to do, in the Labor of Love, do it with all your Might ; employ every Talent for God, converse daily with divine and heavenly Things : Use the utmost Diligence to “ add to your Faith Virtue, and to “ Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and “ to Temperance Patience, and to Patience Godliness, and “ to Godliness brotherly Kindness, and to brotherly Kindness Charity.” ‡ If these excellent Graces be found in you, and be lively and enlarged in their Exercise, they will make you thriving Christians, and will be the Way to a holy Assurance of your effectual Calling.

† Heb. x. 38. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7.

Use IV. MEDITATING upon the Frown of Providence in the Death of near and dear Friends, renews the *Springs of our Sorrow* upon the Death of a FRIEND who is lately taken from us. Methinks we must still be a Congregation of Mourners, and say with *Heman*, " Lover and Friend hast thou put far from us, and our Acquaintance into Darkness." All of us are deeply affected with the Death of our Friend and Brother.

You must be sensible, *my Hearers*, that I have usually been backward to give an explicit Character of the Dead ; and I am still afraid of Flattery and other Temptations to which the Practice of the Age exposes me. But a good Man ought to have a good Name, and the truly pious will desire to have his Name perpetuated ; especially if he has distinguished himself by many good Things. So that I expect all the truly pious, who desire that " the righteous should be had in everlasting Remembrance," will agree with me in several Things, viz.

THAT our Friend and Brother, whose Death we are mourning, had the Redeemer's Interest very much at Heart— That the peculiar Doctrines of Grace, as they are explained in our Summaries of Christian Doctrine, he looked upon fundamental, zealously contended for, and would by no Means part with, being persuaded that the grand Cause of the Christian Religion depends upon their being known and cordially embraced. That the Doctrines appeared to be efficacious upon his Heart, by the Holiness of his Life, and his righteous, godly and charitable Walk in a general Course ; and that the more he studied them, and the nearer he came to the Close of his Life, the brighter he shined in those Graces which are an Ornament to any Christian.

Particularly,

If we consider his *Piety* towards God, perhaps none exceeded

ceeded him : Would to God, we might find many that were equal to him ! His diligent and constant Attendance upon the public Ministry of God's Word and holy Ordinances, his apparent Delight and Reverence under them, and the pious Use he made of them afterwards, are worthy of Remembrance and Imitation. He was strict in the Sanctification of the Lord's Day, and greatly lamented the Neglect and Contempt of the Sabbath, a due Observation of which is a Guard to all true Religion, and a Bulwark against the Torrent of Vice and Wickedness that runs down our Streets in these evil Days. He constantly and devoutly maintained Family Religion together with his whole House ; and, of late Years, kept up and lead in a religious Society, who met once every Week in his House for Prayer and other religious Duties, besides frequently attending private Fasting and Prayer with some Christian Friends elsewhere.

And,

If we consider his *Conduct to Men* ; Honesty and Truth in Trade was his Character. None will think that he kept " divers Weights and Measures ;" one to buy by, and another to sell by : None, that knew his Practice, will think that he would " grind the Faces of the Poor," or take the Advantage of Poverty or Dependance, to oppress them or bear hard upon them in any Instance ; but was careful to do to them, and to all others, as he " would they should do " to him," in the same Circumstances.

He was very hospitable to godly Strangers, and eminently so to Christian Ministers. These he was fond of entertaining at his House, and especially those of them who appeared to be hearty Friends to the puritanical Doctrines of Christianity, and their Efficacy upon the Souls of Men. To these he was so generally known, and by them so highly esteemed for his Piety and friendly Disposition, that they
will

will mingle their Tears with mine, when the painful Tidings of his Death comes to their Ears.

He clothed himself with tender Compassion towards the miserable, giving many bright Proofs of his merciful Disposition to Men by sensible Instances. “ When he beheld “ the Transgressors he was grieved, because they kept not “ God’s Law ;” he could not without tender Sorrow and solemn Reproof, see them provoking the great God to Jealousy, throwing away their precious Souls, and laying up in Store for a dreadful Reckoning hereafter. Besides, did he not express his Love to Christ and Souls, by his generous Contributions to the *Indian School*, * that the poor Savages in the Wilds of *America*, might be turned from the Darkness of Heathenism and idolatrous Worship to the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ? In this, though many others among us have been liberal to the Institution, yet perhaps he has outdone any one in Proportion to his Abilities.— And with Regard to the *worldly Poor*, among us, and abroad in different Parts, he might have said as *Job* did when he was accused of Unmercifulness, if he had had the like Call to it, “ have I with-held the Poor from their Desire, or have I caused the Eyes of the Widow to fail ? “ Or have I eaten my Morsel alone, and the Fatherless hath “ not eaten thereof ? Have I seen any perish for Want of “ Cloathing, or any poor without Covering ?” We, and many others, are Witnesses of his great Tendernefs and fatherly Concern for the poor and distressed. Though he interested himself in the Poverty of his Fellow-Christians with more Tendernefs, than in the Distresses of Men at large, as belonging to the same Body of Christ with himself, yet he

* The *Indian School* referred to, is that Institution of which the Rev. Dr. *Wheelock* was the Founder, and is the worthy President. A School worthy of the Attention and Encouragement of all those that desire the Spread of the Gospel among them that are perishing for Lack of Vision.

felt himself a Debtor to all Men, as they come within his Notice or Reach.

AFTER all, we shall not pretend that he had no Infirmities : He knew that he was imperfect, and readily took Blame to himself as soon as he saw his Mistakes. It was a detestable Thought in his Account to boast of any Thing he had done, or to rely on any Thing as the Ground of Acceptance with God, but the atoning Sacrifice of our crucified Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ was the Principle of his Joy, and trusting in Christ as his only Saviour, he would sometimes rejoice even unto Rapture ; a Joy that is glorious in itself, and attended with glorying in nothing, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. He confessed that he was an unprofitable Servant, and lamented on his dying Bed, that he had not done Abundance more for Christ in his Members. And yet from an experimental Acquaintance with Christ in the Glory of his Person and Offices, and in the Efficacy of his Death and Resurrection, his joyful Hopes of eternal Life were strengthened from Time to Time. *

* Mr. Little, about an Hour and a Half before his Death, took me by the Hand and addressed me to the following Purpose, viz.

" Dear Sir,

" I did not really conclude that I should die of this Sickness 'till this Morning ; but the Matter is now determined. I thank you, Sir, that you have, by the Grace of God, maintained the Cause of Truth among the People here, against all the Opposition that has been made to it---I thank you for all your particular Kindnesses to my Family, and desire you would be a Father to them as long as you live.---And now, I am going the Way of all the Earth, I leave my dying Testimony to those great and precious Doctrines of Grace, which God has enabled you to preach and defend among us ; and I hope you will live long to espouse and enforce them. Particularly, I desire you would open and enforce the moral Law of God, in its Extent and spiritual Nature. Show Sinners the Nature and Necessity of being dead to the Law in Point of Justification, that they might live unto God. Insist upon the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration, and of Faith in Christ. Strive to convince Men that the Prince of this World is judged and cast out of the Hearts of all true Believers ; and that Faith is not of the right Kind or Saving, unless it works by Love to Christ and his Cause, and disposes Men to the faithful Discharge of every Branch of Duty to God and Man.---The Lord be with you, Dear Sir, and bless you. Farewell."

THUS

THUS I have collected a few Hints of the Character of this our worthy *Brother* and *Friend*, whom God has put far from us. And had all of you enjoyed the Intimacy and Freedom with him that I have done, for more than twenty Years, you would readily allow that much more might have been said, to the Glory of rich and free Grace, of what God had wrought in him, and done by him.

BUT enough has been offered to convince us that we are called to Mourning, because much of our Beauty is departed. A holy, wise and sovereign Providence has decided the Matter, our dear Friend is gone down to the Place of Silence, we must see his Face and enjoy his Help no more. The mourning *Widow* is deprived of an exemplary *Husband*, the only *Son* and Heir, of a careful and faithful *Father*, the bereaved *Sisters* and other *Relations*, of a cordial *Friend*, with whom they lived in Amity.

THE *Church* is bereaved of a worthy *Elder*, who commended himself to their Esteem *more and more*, by the Purity of his Life and Conversation; and the many *Poor* among us are bereaved of a liberal Benefactor; besides the mourning *Pastor* and other *Ministers* of his Acquaintance, are deprived of a great Friend.

WHERE a just Sense of this Loss prevails, Sorrow will be unavoidable. But it is not so necessary to justify our Sorrow, as to guard against *Excess*. As the Loss is not confined to Relations, we are all Sharers with them in their Mourning. God has smitten us, but not injured us; he has "bereaved us, and we are bereaved:" But if we are teachable, we shall be spiritual Gainers by our Loss.

'Tis a fore Breach upon the distressed *Family*. There he will be extremely missed, and greatly wanted. His busy Thoughts and Labors, his frequent Cautions and Counsels, though

though they were improved respecting the Things of this present Life, were chiefly concerned that they might have Treasure in Heaven, which can neither be corrupted nor lost. O may God regard the Case of the Widow and the Fatherless, and hear their Supplications, when they cry to him, Day and Night. May each one apply himself diligently, seriously, and constantly to him who lives, and reigns, and promises to take care of them that put their Trust in him.

MAY we of this Church, *Officers* and Members in *particular*, be duly humbled under this Frown. He is taken from us in the Midst of his Usefulness. We can have none of his Advice nor Assistance, none of his Prayers nor Company to help us, any more forever. O let us carefully search out the Sins that have provoked the Lord, to deprive us of his Help so soon, and in a Time when he is so much needed. Let us not lose this afflictive Season, by neglecting to search out the Ground of the Controversy; and when found, let us exercise that Repentance which is "unto Life eternal."

AND under all our Sorrow, let us not unthankfully forget the Goodness of God, that he continued him to us so long. He has been with us, a steadfast, zealous Friend, from the first Settlement of this Church, and cheerfully undergone the Reproaches that we have suffered for Christ and his glorious Gospel. Wherefore let us be thankful to God that he continued him and made him an Helper to us and all the People. 'Tis true, he could but be illy spared, in this Day when "Iniquity abounds, and the Love of many
"waxes cold." The Lord has a Controversy with us; we have a great Scarcity of Men, who are zealously engaged in the Cause of Christ. We sow the Seed of the Word, in Season and out of Season, but our gathering is, "as the
"Grape-gleanings of the Vintage." D To

To shut up all ; let us turn to the bright Side of the Cloud :—Our good Friend, we hope, is gone to reap the Reward of his Labors of Love ; got rid of the Burden of Sin, that cost him many a Groan, in his serious Reflections upon it. “ I heard a Voice from Heaven, says *John*, saying, blessed are the Dead which die in the Lord, from hence forth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labors ; and their Works do follow them.”† We trust our Friend died with Faith in Christ, united to him as a Member of his mystical Body, and is unspeakably happy ; resting from all his Labors and Trials, from all his spiritual Conflicts with Sin, Satan and the World, and from all Sorrows of every Kind : And none of his Works of Faith, Love and Charity, shall be lost, or forgotten ; but he is receiving the blessed Fruit of them in a proportionate Reward of free Grace.

How important is true Religion ! How vain to trust in Man, whose Breath is in his Nostrils ! Death is creeping upon us also ; we carry the Harbingers and Fore-runners of it about with us daily. What are Pains and other Diseases, which are working in these Tabernacles of Flesh, but so many Monitors of an hastening Dissolution ? What is all the Toil and Intention of the Brain, or the Care and Labors of the Body, but Ministers of Death ? But if we are ready to be offered, we may look forward to the last great Day, and see our eternal Interest safe in the Hand of Christ. “ Behold he comes with Clouds, and every Eye shall see him ! He comes in his own Glory, and the Glory of his Father, and with all his holy Angels,” and will bring us safe to an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.

† Rev. xiv. 13.

