A most striking representation of human life was given by the Patriarch when he spoke of it as a Pilgrimage. We are travellers. Our starting point is the Cradle, our goal the grave. As we advance we encounter some points of deeper interest than others. Day by day, as we go on in the previous portion of the way, we come to regard surrounding scenes and objects with a kind of indifference. But suddenly we reach one of these prominent points, and our attention is at once arrested by them, and we pause to consider them more closely; as the traveler in Alpine regions toiling over cliffs which rise before him, often attains some lowering sum-
mit from which he can command a view of
the brest of country behind him as well as of
that which lies yet untrodden before him. So
in the pilgrimage of Life, there are periods of
remarkable interest which are ever recurring
as we journey towards the grave, at which when
we arrive we find ourselves arrested by the
interest with which they are invested. Memory
is sent back to review the past, and the mind
by a natural impulse involuntarily looks on-
ward to the future. The close of one year and
the opening of another constitute together one
of those eras of deep solemn interest. Here we
may take our position as upon an eminence
and with mingled emotions of joy and sorrow,
of gratitude and of regret, of encouragement and
mostification we may review the past. On the other hand, with an imagination chastened by this review we may anticipate the future and enter upon the new year with more hopeful and hopeful spirits. I invite you to spend with me this morning a brief space in looking back upon the closing year, so that together we may trace with grateful hearts, God's gracious dealings with us; and together we may take note of our unfaithfulness, and be stimulated to greater diligence in the future. One of the most prominent thoughts in this verse is that the Lord of those servants delayed the period of settlement with them "a long time." This is a representation of God's patience, inasmuch as He allows us time to improve all
the talents, opportunities and privileges He has bestowed upon us. It will be well for us to decide, upon this proposed review, whether we are fully prepared for the reckoning to which God calls us today.

I propose a very simple plan and it will embrace the subjects following, viz:

I. What God has enabled us to do, during the past year, — as a Church and as a people;

II. What privileges and exemptions we have enjoyed;

III. What improvement and spiritual advancement we have made.

I. What have we done by God’s help during the year? I remark first as regards our financial operations, that the Church and Congregation
have been enabled by the good Spirit and Providence of God, to contribute to every one of the prominent departments of Christian Benevolence organized under the care of the Gen. Ass, as follows:

To the cause of Foreign Missions, — $50.00

  Sustentation, — 43.90

  Publication, — 24.15

  Education, — 138.90

Relief of disabled ministers & the widows tophans of deceased ministers, — 39.00

For the evangelistic fund, — 40.40

Total, $336.35

Total average per member — $4.20

For Miss " 62.45, — Sustentation, 51.5.

Publication, 30.6, — Education, 173. Dim. 48. Ev. 20.83.32
Now I wish you to notice the fact that these averages are far above those of our Chhs. in general. We have reported 112,000 members in round numbers in the So. Ch. You will see that if all had contributed to these causes in the same proportion the sum for Missions would have been $99,440, instead of $45,054. For Sustentation, $60,500 instead of $39,391. Ed. 193,760, instead of about 16,000. Pub. 33,600 – 8,666. Ev. 56,000, and of 15,500. Invalid 53,460 inst. of 9,641 and the grand total of the whole amt. of benevol. contributions of the So. Chh. we have been $470,400 instead of $150,974. In other words if the whole of the Chhs. had averaged for the 6 causes the same amt. as given by the Sanderst. dole at Ch., we should have raised in the So. Ch. more than three times as much as was raised.
It is to be observed that this estimate does not include four other subjects that are embraced in the tabulated summaries of our:

- Presbyterian (Comptd.) Pastoral
- Congregational (building repairs) Miscellaneous,

amount altogether to the sum of $1380.

In addition to which we have raised funds for the poor $46.31 for contingent expenses $320.16 = $366.97.

Our Sab. School children have raised $106.45.

All of these various amounts combined and aggregated give as the result of the financial operations of the year the sum of $809.77.

Besides, as another part of the material or more secular operations of the Ch. we record with gratitude to God, and under God to many friends into whose hearts it pleased Him to put the kindness for their liberal pecuniary
and whereby we have been enabled to purchase the
eligible lot in the city, and to erect
upon it a beautiful commodious House
at a cost of $10,868.12 which has been paid up.

of Worship. It is to our privileges to expect,

During the year the solemn dispensation
of the regular ordinances of God’s House
and worship have been kept up during
all the Sabbaths, except four or five during
my necessary absences, and 108 discourses and Ser-

ures have been delivered by your own minister,
de 2 by Rev. Mr. Marshall
rides 2 by Dr. Hall, 2 by Rev. Mr. Young, 1 by
1 by Dr. Staton and 1 by Dr. Palmer
Rev. Mr.

Wittenoom and 1 by Dr. Palmer. 4 by Rev. Mr.

Dr. Jackson of the M.E. Ch.

Daniel. The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper 4 times.

There have been added to the Church membership
during the year twenty-one, of which eleven
joined by certificate, and ten by profession of faith.
Our present membership numbers 80 after taking into the account dismissions, deaths, and absences. The exercises of the Sabbath School have been kept up without interruption, and the number of scholars on the roll has been as high as 117, while the average attendance has been about 30 for the year.

The Ladies' Prayer Meeting and Society has held its regular meetings, and I have always regarded it as a most important and valuable auxiliary to the spiritual advancement of the Church, and I doubt not that God has made it the channel of great blessings to many, the full value of which will be revealed only when Eternity shall bring its light to shine upon all things earthly. It ought to be stated for their encouragement that by their energy and zeal...
they have contributed to the ornamentation and furniture of the House of Worship the handsome sum of about $600.

For all these works of love and faith done by the Church in all its departments of labor, let us not forget that we are indebted to the kind Providence of God and His Holy Spirit. Through these divine sources of aid we have been enabled and inclined to do them. Our Heavenly Father has not only furnished us the means, but He has put it into our hearts to do these things.

To our beloved and distinguished brethren, Rev. Drs. Palmer and Witherspoon we all owe a debt of gratitude for the precious
Sermons delivered by them in our house of worship, as well as for their able and valuable lectures in behalf of the ladies' association, rendering to them important and timely aid in their work for the house. May the Lord who endowed these beloved brethren and all the others who have filled our pulpit during the year so richly with their eminent gifts and graces, reward them for their labors of love among us!

Above all let us recognize the special goodness of God in enabling us to complete the House of Worship, and dedicate it to the service of the Fieme Jehovah, free from debt. Leaving us thus with no embarrassment or obstacle in our career as a Church, but having before us a clear pathway of labor for God's
Glory and the salvation of souls.
With all these privileges, we should bear in
mind the exemptions from calamity and
evil with which we have been blessed
during the year. It has been a year of almost
unparalleled health in our congregation.
1873 - 1874
Savannah, S.C.

The we have followed to the grave are
loved sister, Mrs. Susan Allen, and mingled our
sorrows of her
sympathies with the bereaved husband & family,
and lament the loss of one so fitted by her
piety to fill a valued place in God's Ch.

But it must not be forgotten that our loss was her
gain, and while Earth has lost, Heaven has

Gained in attractions. Her dying hours were
marked by a faith in Jesus Ch. that enables
her to triumph over all doubt and fear, and
her testimony to the truth of the religion of her
Savior was eminently honoring and full of com-
fort.
Death is always sad to surviving friends, and at a
time so near to the event, it cannot fail to
re-open the wound inflicted upon sorrowing
hearts, to recur to another death, and thus
in the case of a member
in the case of our Sabbath School.
I need hardly tell you that I allude to
dear Sallie Semaster. You know how bright
and lovely she was; how full of life and joy she
seemed just before her illness occurred, when
she was with her Class on her last Sabbath;
how suddenly she was prostrated by disease;
how rapidly she was borne to the grave, in spite
of all that the skill of the Physician could do, or
the tenderest attentions of most devoted friends. But blessed be God! We do not sorrow as those who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

The death of such Characters has been compared to the disappearance of the morning star:

“They set up sets the morning star which goes not down behind the darkened west nor hides obscured amid the tempests of the sky, but melts away into the light of Heaven.”

Last summer one more death occurred for among our congregation—another member of our Sabbath school—little Isiny Pleasant. He was with us not long; but from his death to all
This was little Eva S. who with little warning was taken away from our little Sabbath circle of learners to the little Ark. Learn that none of them are too young to die; and let these three instances here to warn us all to be always prepared to meet our God in death, judgment and Eternity. But just as we were closing up the year’s accounts, the messenger of Jesus came again, and carried home one other little lamb from this earthly flock to his heavenly fold.
now how the account stands. If against us we may find time to reform. If by God’s grace we have done something for His cause, and have grown in grace in good works, then we may rejoice in the grace and goodness of God.

1. Do we take to ourselves the credit of all the good we have done this year? I admit that as instruments we have done something. But if we “sacrifice to our own net and burn incense to our own drag”; if we find ourselves claiming the merit of what has been accomplished, then we are guilty of robbing God of His own glory and idolizing self. Nothing can be more offensive to God than this. Let us be cautious about self-worship. If we have done well, give
bed the glory; and wherein we have failed to do even as well as we might have done, (and who can or dare say that we might not have done more & better) let us take all the shame and humiliation of our failures to ourselves, so we shall grow in humility.

2. Have we been more peaceful & harmonious among ourselves, cultivating brotherly love, and being always on our guard against saying or doing or even thinking evil about our neighbor, to a greater degree than formerly? If we closely observe society around us, I think we shall find that there is always a propensity in men & women to think uncharitably, and that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, there is a like propensity to utter uncharitable thoughts, and then positive & palpable form is given to these thoughts.
and words, in acts of unkindness, or involuntary slights in manner. There is also in some a sensitiveness of nature, that sometimes gives a mis-
construction to words not intended by the speaker or actor, and their such interpreters proceeding upon their own conceptions of what is intended, and estimating over highly what is due themselves, become offended and a breach of peace is made, and oftentimes the peace of Zion is marred. I have no charge of this kind to make against any one. But as we have hitherto lived and labored together in fraternal harmony let us be careful to be more and more imbued with "suffereth long;" that Charity which thinketh no evil; "bearing all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." So shall we assure ourselves of a Conscience
voe of offence toward God and men; and we shall properly value that "peace on earth, and good will to men," which is the substance of the Angel song of heralding Christ's advent into our world. So we shall grow in Charity, Brotherly Love.

3. Have we been advancing in Holiness, and in purity of motive? This is a comprehensive question and one we may find it difficult to answer in each case. Sometimes a modest and humble child of God, more disposed to judge in their own cases severely, and looking at the occasional uprisings of inner sinful suggestions, and words not exactly what they should be, and acts performed under impulse, is ready to decide against themselves and almost to feel that they have no right to consider themselves Christians at all. On the other hand, there are those...
who never have any doubt about themselves, but whose fruits of daily walk and deportment give ground for doubt in the minds of others. And so we may go on to point out other classes varied as human temperament itself. But no one of these classes can be judged by any human standard. You may decide against one class, when indeed this class may have God's grace. You may eulogize another that has little or no grace. God's Word is the only infallible rule, and the fidelity of the magnet even amid occasional disturbances. Its line illustrated the condition of many a heart, the main tendency of whose affections points faithfully to God though subject to many interruptions from surrounding influences. We cannot decide whether there is any daily and progressive growth and enlargement in the young sapling in our yard which we see every day, so we cannot perceive our own growth and enlargement.
in the divine life day by day, because it is gradual, as described in 5:5. But after long absence from the spot returning, we are surprised to find that the slender scion, has grown taller, and larger, its foliage has become more widely spread, showing that there has been steady and progressive growth, real growth; so we may compare our present state on this last day of the last month of the year with that state we held on the first day of the year, and if there has been growth and enlargement in holiness and purity of motive it cannot escape our notice. I doubt not, my brethren, that this will be the experience of many of my beloved friends before me today, by God's grace and spirit's help, and that you have increased your instructed talents from 5 to 10; or from 2 to 4. God forbid that there should be among us any unprofitable servant, who during the past year has buried his
lord's money beneath a mass of worldliness, vanity, and neglect!

In conclusion, I remind you all, my brethren, friends, that God our Sovereign Lord is present this day; that after the lapse of another year "He cometh and reckoneth with us. In His great name then and as His servant I demand of you all, both children of God, and impenitent sinners: "How much owest thou my Lord?" How much for health, and life, and food and raiment, and prosperous circumstances in life; a place to work and reward for your labor? How much for spiritual privileges; an open Bible; and Sanctuary; the blessed sabbaths you have enjoyed; the successful enterprises of the Church; the erection of a new beautiful Sanctuary on premises of your own, free from all encumbrance."
the growing Sabbath school; the happy prayer meetings and the privileges of Sanctuary worship, and closet communion with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. What is the cost of your indebtedness to your gracious Lord and Master? Have you the arithmetical account all made out and are you ready to pay? The blessings bestowed on us are infinite in value, and priceless in their very nature, and so I see not how we can meet God’s claims in kind. But God is very merciful, and I am authorised this morning to say that all He demands in return for all He has done is your heart. “My Son,” etc. Let us therefore this morning enter into new Covenant engagements with the Lord; realizing that the “living sacrifice of our bodies to Him is but our reasonable service,” “that” Love so amazing, so divine, demands our souls, our lives, our all!”
But my careless, impetuous friend, I demand of you: How much of you, my Lord? You have done nothing for God either instrumentally or otherwise. You have forgotten God. You have slighted Jesus. You have done despite unto the Spirit of all Grace. You have been invited, and intreated, and urged time after time to come to Jesus. You have been raised up from a bed of sickness, and granted time to space for repentance. You have not been called to lie down in a dark, hopeless grave. This morning you are here in life and health. Are you ready to settle? This is a good time for a settlement. This is but a type of another day of settlement—Great Day! Come and meet God, and accept his terms. Accept his righteousness, and his peace. Then when the Last Day of Accounts shall come, all those sins will be found in God's Book of records; yet they will be balanced on the credit side by the Atonement of Jesus Christ. If you will be forever free from the stain of sin, the everlasting Life. But if not, the long black list will stand unliquidated with an awful volume against you. It will stand there in Eternity.