

A  
**SERMON**

ON THE MUCH LAMENTED DEATH  
OF THAT REVEREND

AND

*Worthy Servant of Christ,*

**MR. RICHARD ADAMS, M. A.**

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Afterwards Minister of Saint Mildred, Bread-Street, London,  
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WHO DECEASED FEBRUARY THE 7TH. 169 $\frac{7}{8}$ .

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TO

MRS. ANNA ADAMS, WIDOW,  
AND COLONEL JOHN ADAMS, BROTHER TO THE  
DECEASED MR. RICHARD ADAMS.

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My Honoured Friends,

Death is too common a theme, and too obvious to our sense, to be thought strange, any more than that we live. But that the course of our life, as to the rise, progress, and period of it, is at the dispose of one common Lord of all, because it belongs to a sphere above sense, is little considered by the most. To you, I doubt not, it is far from being a new or unfamiliar thought. And thereupon, that the precious life you have lately seen finished, was measured by him who could not therein be unkind to him who is gone; or to you who stay behind.

We do, indeed, tempt ourselves, if we expect from his kindness, unreasonable things. As that he should, to gratify us, alter the course of nature, or recall the universal commission of death, or only let it stand in force with an exception, as to ourselves, our relatives, and friends, or that he should tear his own most inviolable constitu-

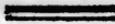
tions; by which the present state is to be but transitory, and the future the only fixed state; which were to subvert the whole frame of religion, to nullify the design of redemption, to take down his tribunal, to abolish and lay aside all thoughts of a judgment to come, and finally to make the kingdom of his dear Son to terminate in a dunghill. While no such wish hath place with you, your reconciliation is easy to the providence that hath for the present bereaved you of so delectable a relation. And the love of God, which prevailing in you, will prompt you to compliance with his will, must be the evidence of your title to the best blessings of both worlds. For both the things in the other state, the eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, &c. And the concurrent operation of all things for good in this present state, do all belong to persons of the same character, the lovers of God, 1 Cor. 2. 9. Rom. 8. 28. Which that you may constantly and fully experience to the end, and in the end, is the serious prayer, for you, of,

Your very respectful,

and affectionate servant in Christ,

JOHN HOWE.

## FUNERAL SERMON.



Philippians 1. latter part of verse xxiii.

*Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.*

**I**F you should have no other subject for your present consideration, than only, that one in your neighbourhood is lately dead; even that itself would deserve your very serious thoughts. The translation of human souls from world to world, and out of this present, into their eternal state, is no light matter; and does claim and challenge more serious thoughts, than it is commonly wont to find and meet with. Nor does the commonness of such an occasion at all excuse the slightness of men's thoughts upon it; but rather aggravate it unspeakably more. That which we find to be so common and universal a case, we may be sure will shortly be our own: and as it is now matter of discourse with us, that such a one is dead, we shall, ere it be long, according as we have been more or less regarded in the world, be a like subject of discourse to others. But it is a greater thing, when it can be said, a good man is gone; there is a more special remark to be put upon the decease of such a one, Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, the end of that man is peace, as Psalm 37. 37. There is that agreement between his way and his end, they are so much of a piece, and do so exactly correspond; a course transacted in a constant serenity and peace, meeting at length with peace as the end of it; an even course, still, uniform, self-agreeable, ever equal to, and like itself, ending at last in peace: Mark this! how he goes off, mark such a life so ending! But it yet challenges more intense consideration, when such a one

is taken away from amongst us, and the progress and period of his course come to be viewed together, whose life was a continued series of labours in the Lord's vineyard, from the earlier, to the later hours of his day; when such a one has finished his course, and fought out the good fight of faith, and is entered into his rest; by the vouchsafement of his indulgent Lord and Master is made to rest from his labours, and receive the reward of them, the reward of grace, with a Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of thy Lord!

And sure it cannot be ungrateful to you, to be desired here to stay a little, to make a stand, and pause, and entertain yourselves awhile with the consideration of such a theme and subject as this. Especially it cannot be an ungrateful contemplation, to such as have known the doctrine, and purpose, and faith, and charity, and manner of life, of such a one, as the apostle speaks; so as to be told of nothing, but what you knew before: and so they are not dubious and uncertain thoughts, that you are to employ upon such a theme; you are well assured of the truth of the fact, and when you know it to be true, you cannot but discern it to be very considerable and important truth, and of very great concernment to you. What the spirit of such a one has been through his whole course, you have a very high example of in this blessed apostle; and a copy has been written out fair, after such a pattern, by this lately deceased worthy servant of Christ. Besides the many straits and difficulties, that great apostle met with in the course and current of his time; he meets with this towards the end of it, to be in a strait between two, and he does not know what to choose, namely, between these two things, the consideration of what would be the best and most valuable good to himself; and the consideration of what would be the more valuable good unto the Christian church; and particularly unto these Christian Philippians, to whom he now writes. He had no doubt at all in the case, but that to depart, and to be with Christ, would be the best and most valuable good to himself: and it was as little to be doubted of, but that his continued abode and stay in this world, would be much more a valuable good unto the Christian church; and unto this or that church in particular, that had enjoyed, and might further enjoy, his most fruitful labours. His difficulty and strait was not either what was best for him, or what was best for them; but which of these two he should, upon the whole, prefer; whether he should prefer his own private interest, or prefer the common interest of Christ in the world. And upon weighing and pondering the matter with himself, he does prefer the latter, so as, without any kind of hesitation, to express a great complacency in it, that he should

he continued yet longer, some time longer, for common good, in this world. And it was a most noble piece of self-denial that was exercised herein, if you consider what the apostle's privileges had been. He had been caught up into the third heaven, he had there seen unutterable things; nor could he doubt his interest in the felicity and glory of the heavenly state. On the other hand consider, his life here on earth was no voluptuous life, it was not a life of ease and pleasure. See the account that he gives of it in 1 Cor. 4. and 2 Cor. 6. and in chap. 11. of the same epistle. And to find, amongst how many deaths he conversed as it were every day of his life, how familiar labours, and fastings, and watchings were to him; yea stripes and imprisonments; and that he was now at this time a prisoner, as we see in some foregoing verses of this very chapter, namely, ver. 13, 14, 16. even in the very lion's paw, in the continual expectation of being devoured, and not long after to be offered up, as he elsewhere speaks. Yet he seems to take great complacency in the thoughts of having some addition made to his time in this world, on the common Christian account: and that his own blessedness and glory should be, for this reason, a little while deferred; he was patient of this, he could endure it, out of his love to Christ and the souls of men. But as to himself, for what he esteemed, and desired accordingly, as his best and most valuable good, he was in no hesitation or doubt concerning that, but pronounces without any more ado, that he did desire to be dissolved, or depart (the words may be read either way) and to be with Christ, which is far better; only he distinguishes what was his own most valuable good, and what was the most valuable good of the Christian church. And though he give this latter the preference, as in itself the more considerable thing: yet as to himself, and his own concerns, to depart, and be with Christ, he reckons far better: and accordingly he did desire it as such, as better for him; as having nothing to detain him, or nothing, which, on his own private account, he could so much mind or covet, as that.

Now in this comparison, it is this one side of it, which the words that I have read to you do call us to consider, and confine us to at this time. As to that other part, it lies within the compass of the context, but not of the text; and so we shall not treat of that at present: but consider, what is the genuine temper and disposition of a christian, and more particularly of a minister of Christ, in reference to what he is to eye and look upon as his own best, and most valuable good; and that is, to depart, and to be with Christ. This indeed the apostle speaks of himself, a great and eminent minister of the gospel of Christ. But though this temper and disposition of spirit was agreeable,

it was not appropriate to such a one. It is indeed very agreeable, it is very suitable to the spirit of a faithful minister of Christ, in reference to himself, and any interest and concern of his, to desire to depart, and to be with Christ: but it is not so agreeable to such a one, as to be appropriate to him, or to exclude the generality of serious and living christians; because it is upon one account; principally common to ministers, and to other christians, that this judgment is to be made, and this desire is to have place in reference to that judgment. And therefore, that is what I will, for the little time that remains, chiefly insist upon:—That it ought to be, and in very great measure is, the temper and character of gracious persons, or sincere christians, but principally of the faithful ministers of Christ, with reference to any interest or concern of theirs, to desire to leave this world, and to be with Christ.—And in speaking to this, I shall briefly, —explain what requires to be explained in it; —shew you upon what grounds this temper and disposition of mind is agreeable, in the general to sincere christians; and upon what more peculiar grounds it is more especially suitable to the faithful ministers of Christ: and—so make use of the whole.

I. As to what requires explication. Here we must show you—what the object of this desire is, and then—show you what this desire, with the judgment unto which it is conformable, imports and carries in it. Then we shall proceed to consider the grounds, both with reference to christians in general, and the faithful ministers of Christ in special, of their having this as an habitual temper of spirit belonging to them.

1. We are to consider the object, which this disposition of spirit, here described, has reference to. And that is twofold, privative, and positive. There is,

(1.) The privative object, that this disposition has reference to; and that is, departing from hence. Their desire is to be gone, not to stay always here, that is, as to any concern of their own. Indeed upon other accounts, abstracted from their own and more important, there may be considerations that may induce their willingness to stay; but as to their own concerns, the privative object of their desire, is, to be dissolved, or to be gone, *εις το αναλυσαι*, they would fain be dissolved; take that reading, and this is such a one's sense, I would fain have my bonds and shackles taken off, I would be loose, not be always confined to a body of sin and death, and to a vain and wicked world: for these are the things to which we are united: or take the other reading, that are to be left, in this departure. To depart, what are we to depart from? Why, the *gravamina*; the most grievous things are, a body of sin and death, and a

vain and sinful world. When God sees good, I would depart, says such a one, from these irksome grievous things, that, while they detain me, torment me every hour. And then,

(2.) There is the positive object, that this disposition has reference to; and that is, to be with Christ. This is a mighty thought, if we had time to stay upon it. It is generally to be considered here, with reference to what state of our Lord Christ, this was spoken, and then what it is to be with him in that state.

[1.] With reference to what state of our Lord Jesus this was spoken, I desire to be with Christ. Christ was not at this time in his state of humiliation; he was not now in the form of a servant; he was not now going to die, and sacrifice himself upon an ignominious cross, as it was mentioned he had done, in the next chapter, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was obedient to death. It is not in reference to this state, but what follows, that this is spoken; wherefore God has highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that at his name, or in his name, every knee shall bow, both of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth. It is that state of glory, in which he was enthroned, and was receiving the homage of all ranks of creatures, according to their capacities. It is this state, that is here referred to. And then,

[2.] What is it to be with him in this state, that we are to consider: and plain it is, it is not to be with him as spectators only, but in some sort as partakers; not barely as spectators. Indeed, to be so, is a most desirable thing, to all the lovers of Christ; to behold him upon the throne, invested with glory, the highest glory. But this is not all. Indeed, participation with him is sometimes expressed by beholding, as in John 17. 24. Father, I will, that they whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, that they may behold the glory that thou hast given me: For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world was laid. But that beholding, is fruitive vision; the vision, not of mere spectation, but fruition, by which we enjoy what we see. And so we are taught to reckon concerning this being with Christ in the state of glory. If we be dead with him, we believe we shall also live with him, by participation of the same glorious, blissful life, Rom. 6. 8. and chap. 8. ver. 17. If we are children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; that if we suffer with him, we might be also glorified together. Glorified, is to be made glorious, to be participants of the same glory with him, and not spectators merely. We are not to be glorified merely by a glory that we

are to behold, but which we are to bear ; not which we are to be the witnesses of only, but the subjects, whereby we are to be made glorious, in conformity to him, and in communion with him. And here that we may more fully conceive the sense of this being with Christ, in the state of perfect felicity and glory, it is requisite we consider these two things,—the highest perfection of the object ; and,—a suitable perfection of the subject, according to its capacity, by which it can converse with, and enjoy, what continually rays, and is communicated from so glorious and blessed an object.

First. The object in his highest perfection ; when our Lord Jesus Christ, not considered merely as God, but as God-man, is exalted, and made as glorious as glory could any way make him, when he is exalted, by way of remuneration for what he had done, for what he had suffered, for what he had achieved and accomplished by his doing and suffering, and he is now in all that most perfect dignity and glory that belongs to him on that account ; this consideration we are to have of the glorious object. We are to consider the high and most absolute perfection of that Person, the most wonderful one that ever was, and of which neither created nature, nor uncreated, affords the like ; that is, such a person, in which all the excellencies of created and uncreated nature did meet, or were united ; and all that felicity, and glory, and blessedness, that this person, according to either nature, and both together, doth enjoy. Here is the object wherewith we are to communicate.

Secondly, And then to be with him, as participants, implies the connoted and consequential perfection of the subject in itself, the highest that it is capable of, the perfection of all the powers and faculties belonging to a creature of such a nature. A mind apt to employ itself about things of highest value and excellency, able to comprehend whatsoever is needful, and fit to be known of such things ; contented not to know what is unfit. A will refined from all terrene tinctures and propensions, enlarged and attempered to the best and highest good. Whence must proceed the liveliest and purest desires, the noblest and most grateful perceptions, and delights, the pleasantest and most satisfying relishes and fruitions.

For (the high perfection of the object being supposed) the subject is the spirit of a just man made perfect, (Heb. 12. 24.) of one arrived, out of an imperfect to a perfect state. No supposable allusion in this text needs to exclude the real subjective perfection, which is so proper to such spirits and to such a state as is then finally referred to. The satisfaction itself, which results, cannot but be proportionable ; according to the perfect excellency of the object, and the perfected capacity of the subject, a most

entire satisfaction. These two, meeting together, the most glorious object, and a glorified spirit made capable of conversing with it, and enjoying it to the full. This makes that fullness of joy, those pleasures for evermore, that are at God's right hand or in his power, to dispose of, in eternal communication, Psal. 16. Thus you have some account of the object, privative, and positive, what is to be left, and whom we are to come to; a sinful, mortal body to be left with a vain and wicked world; and a glorious Lord to be approached, so as to be with him, in actual, and complacential, and eternal communion; to be with him, not as spectators only, but partakers of that glory wherein he is. Then,

II. We are to consider the temper and disposition itself, of serious christians, and of the faithful ministers of Christ especially, in reference to this state of the objects. And it is made up of two things,—desire; and—estimation, or judgment; that is the measure of the former, and according whereto that desire is directed.

1. This desire is *επιθυμια*, intense desire, earnest desire, the fervour of desire. That is, as to myself, and as to any concern of mine, I do most earnestly desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ: *επιθυμια* signifies not less than that. And then,

2. The judgment that is made of the case, unto which this desire is conformable. That is, that to be with Christ is far better, far better! It is a strange emphasis, that is used in the Greek text, to express this: for there are two comparatives, *μαλλον κρεισσον*; more better, with a mighty surplusage besides in the word conjoined, *πολλω*. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ: which is better, better by much; or incomparably better; better above and beyond all comparison. One comparative would not serve the turn, but he adds another, and then superadds a vast surplusage over and above. This is the judgment of the case, according to which this desire is directed and measured. And now for the reasons of this temper and posture of soul, in reference to this state of the case. There are divers very obvious.

(1.) That this is most agreeable to the law of our creation, to desire and covet the most perfect state, whereof we are capable. It is an unnatural thing, not to do so, not to covet the perfection of that state, that we can finally attain to. Nature, in all creatures, tends to perfection; it is a monstrous disorder in nature, for any creature, if it be capable of choice, to choose a state beneath the highest perfection whereof it is capable. And,

(2.) It is most suitable to the design of our redemption, whether we consider the privative object, unto which our re-

demption refers, or the positive. The privative object, this world, that we are to forsake and leave, with this flesh, that con-naturalizes us to this world. Christ gave himself for us, to deliver us from this present evil world, Gal, 1. 4. As for his redeemed ones, those for whom he gave himself, he is willing they should be here awhile; but he gave himself for them, that they might not be here always: that he might fetch them out of this horrid abyss of darkness, impurity, and death.

And if you look to the positive object, our Lord died to bring us to God, 1 Pet. 3. 18. He suffered once, the just for the unjust, for this purpose. He will never desist, till he have brought us quite home to God. And it became him, by whom are all things; and for whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect by sufferings, Heb. 2. 10. He suffered, and those sufferings he underwent, were the price of our redemption; and for this, to bring the many sons to glory, that were to be brought. And it becomes him, that made all things by himself, and for himself, to bring about his great and glorious design this way; to make the Captain of our salvation perfect, that is, perfectly master of his design. And Rev. 5. 9. we are told, that the lamb, that was slain, was slain on purpose, that he might redeem us to God by his blood; that he might be capable of saying at last, I have shed my blood, and it has not been in vain; here I have brought back thy wandering strays to thee, that were separate, that had gone off. He has redeemed them to God by his blood, they were gone off from God; and he, in this way, fetches them back to God; never reckoning his work finished, till he can say, here am, I and the children thou hast given me.

(3.) This most fully answers the gospel call, under which we continually are, as to both the parts of the object, the privative and positive. By the gospel we are called out of the world. This is carried in the very notion of the church, it consists of a people, called out of the world. And that call is not finished till we are quite out; but we must be out in the inclination of our minds; to be gone from this world, that we may be with the Lord. And as to the positive part of the gospel-call, the final term of it is the eternal glory. The God of all grace has called us to his own eternal glory by Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. 5. 10.

(4.) This is most suitable unto the aim and tendency of the new creature, which is indeed the effect of the gospel-call; wheresoever it comes to be effectual calling, the new creature is the product. This is the genius of the new creature, to aspire upwards. They that have received the first-fruits of the spirit groan within themselves; groan as under a pressure, or burden; to be loosened from this world, from this earth, and from these bodies; and to partake in the glory of the sons of God, mani-

fested in the proper season of their manifestation, Rom. 8. 19. compared with the 23d. And as they, that in the work of the new creation, are what they are, new creatures in being born from heaven; so they are born for it. Except a man be born, *αποθεν*, from above, he cannot enter into nor see the kingdom of God, John 3. 3, 5. He is born for this heavenly state, when he is regenerate, when he is made a new creature, that he may be capable of entering into this kingdom. And 1 Pet. 1. 3. Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has begotten us again to a lively hope, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. There are principles inlaid in the work of the new creature, which dispose the soul God-ward, and heaven-ward. Hereby they are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, as in that Coloss. 1. 12. And to suppose that there should be a new creature without such a disposition as this, is to suppose the new creature to be the most unnatural creature under heaven. It must have dispositions in it suitable to its nature, and to that state that it is designed ultimately for; as every other creature is suited to the place and state it is to hold in the creation of God.

But then as to what is more peculiar to ministers, they have more reason than others for this temper and disposition of spirit, both as they know more, generally, of the difficulties of the world, and should be supposed to know more of the state of the other world than the generality of other men do. Their toil, and labour, and travel, while they are here in this world, is like to be more: read at leisure 1 Cor. 4. 9,—13. with 2 Cor. 6. 4, 5. They have many more uncomfortable things to exercise them; especially, the small success of their labours, that they often do but sow the wind, and sometimes reap the whirlwind, and may be glad to depart on this account. And it is to be supposed too, that they should know more of the other world: for they are more obliged to be daily conversant there; their constant business has a steady direct tendency thitherward: and therefore as this cannot but be the temper of serious christians, it is to much more so of the faithful ministers of Christ.

III. And therefore, to draw to a conclusion, and shut up all with some use, we may,

1. Infer from it, the greatness of that capacity which belongs to an intelligent immortal spirit, that it is capable of such a state, as being glorified with the Lord Jesus Christ in that high exaltation of his; it is a state, whereof the human spirit is capable. It is indeed very unapt, very indisposed, till the regenerating work take place; till the divine Spirit have moulded it to that state; but then, in the mean time, there is a capacity,

a ground-work, upon which the divine Spirit does operate, by enlightening the mind, and enlarging the will, and refining and defecating the affections, and implanting celestial principles, that do all dispose it heaven-ward. But in the mean time; it is a useful reflection for every intelligent spirit, that inhabits mortal flesh, to consider, what do I here? While it is my lot, to be yet inhabiting this flesh, am I only to mind the things of the flesh? I am capable of an abode above, with the blessed glorious Lord of all, with him my greater concernments do now lie: Col. 3. 1, 2. And,

2. It further lets us see the wonderful love of God in Christ, that he should design such mean abject creatures as we to such a state; that is, that when we depart, and leave this world, we are to be with Christ. O kind design! What admirable love is this, that he will not have his own to be always at a distance and far from him! When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory, in that of Col. 3. 4. And again further,

3. We may infer hence, that holiness, wherever it comes to have place, does comprehend and include in it divine wisdom, so as to make persons capable of judging right, or making a true estimate of things, which are more valuable, and which are less. Till the sanctifying work of God's spirit take place in the minds and hearts of men, they judge like fools; they say a portion here on earth is better, let us dwell always amidst the darkness and death of this lower world, and let them be with Christ that will. But says a gracious spirit, to be with Christ is far better, incomparably, beyond all comparison better, and therefore let us depart, and be with him, as to any interest and concern of ours. And this being so, it is of the greatest consequence to us imaginable, for all of us to endeavour to get this temper of spirit made habitual to ourselves: for it is a thing of dreadful importance, to find the temper of my mind and soul differ from that of all good christians that ever were, or ever shall be. It is one thing indeed, to be willing to have the height of our happiness deferred for common good; but it is quite another thing, to desire to stay here, because I love this world better, and when the practical judgment of our souls is, I had rather be here; when not any concern for the interest of Christ, or design of doing him service here, does reconcile me to an earthly state; but my own temper and spirit is such, that I cannot endure the thoughts of a remove. And let me insist here a little. When the best are continually going; and though the worst do not go the same way, they are going hence too, departing from hence; not to be willing to follow! To have a desire

running counter to the stream and course of nature, in all, and the current of grace in the best, is very unaccountable; and wherein we should by no means tolerate ourselves. An irrational desire of what we see to be impossible: a desire that fights against necessity, which will be too hard for us, and will overcome at last, as to the term from which, an abode here; and an unholy desire, in respect of the term to which, namely, not to be with Christ; such a desire we should no more endure in ourselves, than fire in our bosoms. To have such an excellent person gone from amongst us, as is lately gone; but to have no disposition to follow! You loved him well, and you loved to hear him preach of heaven, but you cannot endure the thoughts of going where he is gone! Is this well? The world is dying, and you would live! *miser est qui cunque non vult mundo secum moriente mori.* Sen. Trag. What a wretched miscreant is he, that would be an exception from all mankind! And cannot be content to die, when the whole world is dying with him! And for christians united with Christ, they are such in whose hearts there is a rooted propension towards him, so as to covet his presence above all things, Rev. 22. The Spirit and the bride say, come, come Lord Jesus; either come and take us to thee, or come and manifest thyself to us. Consider then, how absolutely necessary it is, if there be this terrene temper of spirit, to get it changed. For,

(1.) While it remains, it countermines the sum of religion. All Christianity runs counter, in the whole design of it, to this temper of spirit, for it terminates on the other world. But when all our thoughts and designs terminate on this world, what a dismal thing is it! to have a temper and disposition in me, wholly repugnant to the design of the Christian religion, which is but to draw people off from this world, and to fit them for another.

(2.) It will infer, in the next place, that whenever any die, they must die just after the same manner that wicked men do, a violent death; be torn away from their earthly station. He shall pluck him out of his dwelling-place, and root him out of the land of the living, as the psalmist speaks, Psal. 52. 5. This is dying a violent death; our hearts do not consent, we cannot go but as we are torn up by the roots, and plucked out of our dwelling-places. This is quite another thing from that, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; and this desiring to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. And it signifies,

(3.) Our not yet having taken God for our God; for our taking him to be our God, and to be our best good, is the same thing. If God be not our best good, he is not our God: and can we choose to be willing to be at an eternal distance from

our best good? It must signify, that the love of God has no place in us, sincere love, true love to Christ, for it is never true, if it be not supreme. But it is the greatest absurdity imaginable, that I should supremely love one, that I desire never to be with, or enjoy. I shall only add, with reference to the sad occasion that lies in view before us, that what instances we meet with of this kind, should leave their several correspondent effects and impressions upon our spirits, partly of lamentation, and partly of imitation, and partly of peaceful submission and satisfaction in the issue, however grievous it be to us.

1. Of Lamentation. It is a much to be lamented thing, when such go, as that reverend and worthy person that is lately gone from amongst you. For this temper of spirit being supposed, by how much the more there was of the conjunct disposition to have been content to have staid longer for public good; this speaks so much the more of an excellent spirit: when desires are so fervent after the purity and perfection of the heavenly state, that nothing but sincere devotedness to the interest of God in Christ, could make them patient of longer abode on earth. It is a respect to God that either draws, or detains them, nothing but what is divine inclines them either way: either the enjoyment of God above or his further service here below. That is an excellent spirit that lies under such influences. And the higher was the excellency of such a man, the greater is the loss of him. The more he desired heaven, within such limits, the greater was his value, and with so much the brighter lustre he shone on earth. There is much of God conspicuous in such a man. And it was not a little of him that was observable in this worthy person. Such a course as his was, that even course, that peaceful course, wherein was so eminent devotedness to God, and benignity towards man, shewed his spirit was touched by the one, for the other. It could not be, but by influence from heaven, that he so steadily tended thitherward himself, and was only willing to stay so long out of it, that he might invite and draw on as many as he could with him thither. Hereby he appeared so much the more attempered to the heavenly state, and that world where divine love governs, making a man by how much the more strongly he was attracted himself by it, so much the more desirous to attract others. It is what such a one has about him of God on earth, that makes him a desirable thing to us here; it is not what men have of the earthly spirit, but what they have of the divine Spirit, that makes them useful, both by their labours and examples, to this world of ours; as was this eminent servant of Christ. It is a great thing, to have one pass so long continued course as his was, with so equal a tem-

per. It is like I may have known him longer than many of most of you that were not related.

About fifty years I remember his course, and our conversation was not casual or at a distance, as that of mere colleagues, chosen by others, but as friends inward, and chosen by ourselves, many a day we have prayed together; conferred and taken sweet counsel together; when he was at once an example, and ornament to his college, where he lived respected and beloved of all, but of them most, who most knew him; that constant serenity, and equality of mind, that seriousness, that humility, wherein he excelled, rendered him amiable to observers; and therewith that industry and diligence that he used in his younger days, by which he laid up that great stock of learning and useful knowledge, that made him (when providence called him to the city) a well-instructed scribe, capable and apt to bring out of his treasury things new and old, whereof there is, and will be a long extant proof in his judicious and dilucid expositions of the epistles to the Philippians and the Colossians, which was the part he bore in the supplement to that most useful work, the English annotations on the Bible, by the reverend Mr. Matthew Pool. In the great city he shone a bright and burning light, till many such lights were in one day put under a bushel, I need not tell you what, or how black, that day was. And then, though he was constrained to desert his station, he did not desert his Master's work; but still he was with God, and God was with him; and you know it, I doubt not, many of you, what it was to live under so truly evangelical a minister; to have doctrine from time to time distilling as the dew, and dropping upon you, such, as from which you might perceive how great was his acquaintance with the mysteries of Christ: in reference to those, over whom he had opportunity to watch, it was undoubtedly, if it were not their great fault, their very great advantage.

As to his domestic relations, knowing so much of him, I cannot but so much the more lament their loss; God will I doubt not, be the bereaved widow's portion; but it ought, with tenderness to be considered, what it was for one person to lose successively two such helps, as this and her former husband were (who was also in another university my former and most inward friend, that worthy man Mr. Thomas Wadsworth) both eminent instruments in the church of Christ. And this has been more eminently remarkable concerning him that is lately gone, that the relations of the family, to whom he was not naturally related, the branches from another root, yet had that apprehension of his love and care of them, and of their own loss, as to desire this public testimony might from them remain

of him, that he was to them as tender a father, as if he had been a natural one; such fathers-in-law are seldom known, and therefore it ought to be mentioned, as that which may signify somewhat towards the embalming of his memory among you. Graces, when diffused, give their pleasant relishes to all that any way partake of them.

What follows was delivered in writing into my hands to be inserted, by a dear relation of his.—His humility and self-denial were eminently conspicuous in his taking upon him the care and charge of so small and poor a people, and continuing with them to the damage of his own estate, though he had considerable offers elsewhere. His meekness, as it was very visible in all his conversation, it was singularly shewed in his bearing and passing by slights and affronts, even from those he had very much obliged, taking off the resentments, that his friends had of the injuries of that kind put upon him, by abasing himself, saying, I am an unworthy creature, I deserve no better. His candour every one was certainly made sensible of, who should offer to speak any thing reflecting about any person behind their backs, for he was sure to vindicate or lenify in this case, as far as he could.

When labours, weakness, and age had worked out his strength of body, there was never any thing appeared so manifestly to trouble him, as being necessitated to desist from constant preaching.—And notwithstanding all temporal discouragements he met with in the course of his ministry, his mind to the very last, was to have both his sons brought up to it. During the short time of his last illness, when his head appeared somewhat disordered in other things, by the pains that were upon him, it was observable, that he always shewed himself sensible in hearing or discoursing about any thing religious; being among other things discoursed with by his brother about the discharge of his ministry, he answered, he hoped, he had endeavoured to serve God faithfully, and sincerely, though he had been an unprofitable servant. About five hours before his death, he said, God is my portion, and desired those about him to join with him in prayer, wherein he expressed himself very suitably to his case as a dying man, concluding thus: “Grant that when this earthly tabernacle is dissolved, I may be taken to those mansions not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

As his life was calm and serene, so was his dying, for though throughout his sickness, he was all along apprehensive of approaching death: there was no ruffle upon his spirit, of which he himself then gave this account, “I know in whom I have believed.”

2. Of Imitation. And as such strokes, when they come ought to be lamented, they that by such strokes are taken away, ought to be imitated. The example remains; you have the idea left; you know how such a one lived, how he walked, how he conversed with his family, how he conversed with you as he had occasion: that excellent spirit he discovered in all, how much of an imitable example has it given to all those that are capable of imitating and receiving instruction that way?

3. Of Satisfaction. But it ought also to have the effect of satisfaction in the divine pleasure. When such a blow as this comes, do not repine, peacefully submit, though it carry smartness and severity with it. You ought to feel it, but yet notwithstanding to receive it with submissive silence, to be dumb, and not open your mouths, remembering who hath done it, and that it is at the disposal of wisdom that cannot err, as well as of power that cannot be resisted, and of kindness and goodness that has its gratefulness to this departed servant of his. For consider, that notwithstanding his willingness to have staid longer, if his Lord, whose he was, and whom he served, had thought fit: yet this could not but be his habitual sense, to desire to depart, and to be with him, which was far better. And if Christ be pleased, and he be pleased, why should we be displeased?

This was the will of Christ, declared by his word, as to the thing, John 17. 24. Father, I will, that those that thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my glory. And declared by the event as to the time. And his will, both because it was Christ's, and because it was best. Who are we that we should oppose our will to so kind a will on Christ's part, and so well-pleased a will on his part? or that a dissatisfaction should remain with us, as to what there is with Christ, and him, so entire satisfaction!