

A SERMON

ON THE DEATH OF

ELD. J. H. EATON, LL. D.,

LATE PRESIDENT OF UNION UNIVERSITY,

DELIVERED IN THE BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE,
MURFREESBORO, TENN., JAN. 13, 1859.

BY

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SERMON.

THE DEPARTING SPIRIT COMMITTED TO CHRIST.*

"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."—Acts vii. 59.

I HAVE never been placed in circumstances so well suited as those which now surround us to test the nerve of my heart. Every object seems to be vocal, and reminds me that I am in the midst of bereavement—a bereaved community—a bereaved Church—a bereaved University—and a bereaved family. I know not whether I can preach to you, except in broken accents. I will, however, with a sad heart, make the attempt.

The words of the text are a part of one of the most interesting narratives of the Bible.

* Substance of a sermon on the death of Elder Joseph H. Eaton, LL. D., late President of Union University, delivered in the Baptist Meeting House, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, January 13, 1859—the corpse being in front of the pulpit.

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Stephen, a man full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, was arraigned before the Jewish Council by the enemies of the Christian faith. Suborned witnesses testified against him. Stephen addressed the Council, giving an epitome of Jewish history, charging on his hearers the murder of Christ, and referring to their ancestors as the persecutors of the prophets. The Council was exasperated, and the rabble became infuriate. They gnashed on him with their teeth, cast the man of God out of the city, and stoned him. Stephen looked up toward heaven and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." While the stoning process was going on, the dying martyr said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." In the discussion of this subject let us consider,

I. THE DYING CHRISTIAN AS COMMITTING HIS SPIRIT TO CHRIST.

It is characteristic of Christians that they trust in the Lord Jesus for salvation. They

begin to trust in him when they believe on his name. They renounce all other hope, and receive Christ as the "only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Having suitable views of their guilt and condemnation, penitent sinners cannot depend on their own works for salvation. They repudiate their own righteousness. They disavow all idea of personal merit. They are shut up to the faith. They look to the Lamb of God. They are fully assured that his blood alone can expiate their guilt—that no sacrifice but his can answer the demands of the law—and that no righteousness but his can adorn their souls. Trusting in Christ, they find joy and peace in believing. In them is exemplified the truth of the precious words, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Justified by faith they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Conscience is pacified. Its accusing voice is heard no longer. The evil conscience becomes a good conscience ; for it is

sprinkled with atoning blood. Committing the interests of the soul to Christ is a delightful act—an act which the believer loves to renew, and does renew all along the pilgrimage of life. It is renewed in health and sickness, in the bright day of prosperity, and especially when the storms of adversity lower, and the temptations of the wicked one assail.

When the dying hour comes, the language of the text is heard, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” You see that the Christian’s confidence in Christ continues till death, and in death. As the spirit is about to leave its earthly tenement the saint commends it to Christ—commits it to his care—not to the care of friends who watch the pale face—not to angels—but to Christ. What a sublime thing it is for a Christian to die! The departing spirit is committed to Christ, and he receives it. All heaven seems to have been interested when Stephen died. He looked steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and

Jesus *standing* on the right hand of God. I believe there is no other passage of Scripture in which Jesus is represented as *standing* on the right hand of God: In other places he is referred to as *sitting* ; but here he is represented as having risen up from his throne, and *standing* to receive the disembodied spirit of his martyr as it ascended to the skies.

Our departed friend and brother trusted in Christ. In the days of his youth he saw his lost condition as a sinner, and committed his soul with all its immortal interests into the Redeemer's hands. You all know how earnestly he preached Christ as the way, the truth, and the life. He loved to dwell on the doctrine of salvation through the blood of the cross. He never considered his powers so worthily employed as in proving, according to the logic of the gospel, that God can be just and the justifier of him that believeth. He thought his learning valuable, chiefly because it enabled him better to elucidate the doctrines of the

cross. And his sanctified imagination never soared on so tireless a wing as when he expatiated on the glories of redemption. Then it was that "in thoughts that breathe and words that burn" he entreated his fellow men to behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

In his last illness his soul still trusted in Christ. He still felt safe in the Savior's hands. I said to him, "you now feel the preciousness of the doctrines you have preached." "O yes," was his reply. He remarked, "I have tried to live a Christian life, but all my trust is in Christ." No man could say with greater sincerity,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee."

(II. WHAT DOES THE RECEPTION OF THE DEPARTING SPIRIT BY CHRIST IMPLY?

1. *That the soul does not cease to exist at death.* Some say there is no more of man after death. How repulsive this theory! Who

would sink into the abyss of nothingness? Who would not deprecate annihilation? It cannot be that the spirit dies with the body. Else why did the dying Stephen say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit?" He knew his merciless enemies were stoning his body, and that it would soon be an inanimate mass of bruised and mangled clay; but he knew equally well that no murderous stone could strike his immaterial spirit. He thought of the words of his Lord, "Fear not those who can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." He was fully persuaded his persecutors could only kill his body—that their power extended not to the immortal soul—and hence, as the earthly tabernacle was falling, the spirit made its escape from the crumbling ruins, availing itself for the last time of the organs of the body to say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Who is willing to believe that the soul dies with the body? Who can believe that the corpse which lies

before us here is all of Joseph H. Eaton ? His manly form is prostrate in death, but where is the spirit that animated it, impressing the features with benevolence, and giving expression to the dark, significant eye ? It is not here, but has it ceased to be ? No, no. It has gone to a brighter clime to mingle with kindred spirits. Jesus has received it, even as he received the spirit of the first martyr. Surely the reception of the spirit by Christ implies that it does not cease to exist at death.

(2. That the soul does not remain in a state of unconsciousness from the death to the resurrection of the body.)

Some who may be styled Christian materialists, adopt this view. They are led to embrace it by supposing that as the soul now acts through the body, it is restricted to this mode of action. Hence it is inferred that upon its exit from the body it falls into a state of inactivity and unconsciousness from which it cannot awake till the body is raised from the

dead. Even Whately, in his "Future State," evidently inclines to this hypothesis. His reasoning, however, is by no means conclusive. He does not positively deny the activity of the soul during the interval between the death and the resurrection of the body, but he insists that if the soul is active it cannot act as it does while connected with the body. This may be granted—indeed no one will deny it—but what then? Will any one say the soul's activity and consciousness are so dependent on its connection with the body as to be destroyed when that connection is broken? This would be assuming the very point in question. It surely does not follow that the action of the soul is to be stamped with unvarying uniformity in all the states of its being. Why may not the disembodied souls of the redeemed be as conscious and as active as are angelic spirits? The latter have no bodies, and yet how intense their consciousness! how unwearied their activity! They hold intercourse with kindred

intelligences, and enjoy the most exquisite social bliss. Why may it not be so with the spirits of departed saints? What says the text? Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Stephen labored under no mistake: strange time to make a mistake, when he saw heaven opened and the glory of God shining brighter than ten thousand suns, while Jesus stood waiting to receive his spirit! Did it enter into the thoughts of the stoned martyr that the Lord Jesus, in receiving his spirit, would receive an unconscious thing? Who can believe it? And who can believe that the soul once inhabiting the lifeless form before us is now in an inactive, unconscious state? Away with a supposition equally incredible and unwelcome. I doubt not the departed spirit is among the spirits of just men made perfect, and has ere now formed a more adequate conception of the bliss of heaven than could be formed by the best theologian on earth in half a century. That spirit uncon-

scious and inactive ! No ; it has risen to a state of exalted consciousness and entered upon the sublime activities of a higher life. No longer weighed down by flesh and blood, it basks amid the splendors of the eternal throne, and, in its heavenly ecstasies, is a living refutation of the supposition that the soul is unconscious from the death to the resurrection of the body.

3. *That the soul does not go into some place like the Elysium of the ancient heathen, there to abide till the last day.*

Many theologians entertain this opinion. They think the redeemed will not enter heaven till after the judgment. This is a cheerless theory. It is said the soul will be happy—that all its powers will be actively employed—but that it will not be in heaven ! Paradise, it is argued, will be the abode of happy spirits till the final consummation of all things, but that paradise and heaven are not identical. Let me quote the language of the Apostle Paul :

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body I cannot tell ; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth ;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth ;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.”

(It is manifest from this language that the third heaven and paradise are the same place. Paul was a Jew, and he expressed himself according to the prevalent opinion of his nation. The Jews believed in three heavens, the atmosphere constituting the first. Hence we read of the birds of heaven. The apparent abode of the sun, moon, and stars they considered the second heaven. Far above the sun and stars they supposed the throne of God to be established. This they regarded the third heaven. To this heaven, even into paradise,

was the apostle caught up. It follows, therefore, that the disembodied spirits of the pious in going to paradise, do not go to a place different from heaven. They do not go into the Elysium of the ancient heathen.)

(4. *That the departing spirit is at once taken into the presence of Christ in heaven.*)

Christ is in heaven. Stephen saw him there. And what did the Savior say to his sorrowful disciples when about to leave them? "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also." "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am there shall also my servant be." Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven, and it is his gracious arrangement that his disciples be where he is. Paul speaks of being absent from the body, and present with the Lord. The language surely implies that the spirit, as soon as it absents itself from the body, is present with the Lord.

The same apostle referring to himself says, "Having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." To be with Christ is to be in heaven. His presence constitutes heaven. There he unveils his glory that his redeemed may see it and rejoice in it. In his intercessory prayer he said, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory." Stephen saw this glory—was enamored of it—and earnestly desired to enter into it. When he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," he expected to be received up into glory in the presence of the Redeemer. What a place must heaven be, how attractive and magnificent! The select locality of all localities in boundless space, chosen of God for the establishment of his throne, and the special manifestation of his presence! The divine glory is so remarkably displayed in heaven, that the bliss of that bright world is often represented by the term glory. Hence we have in the Scriptures such

passages as these : “ Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.” Rejoicing “ in hope of the glory of God.” “ The God of all grace, who hath called us to his eternal glory, etc.” The glory of God consists in an exhibition of the perfections of his character. All conceivable excellences belong to that character. All human, all angelic excellence is but a faint emanation from supreme excellence as exemplified in God. Excellence in creatures as compared with infinite excellence in the Creator, does not and cannot bear such a proportion as does the drop of water to the fathomless ocean, or the tiny spark to the fires that will burn up the world. How enrapturing then must be the manifestations of the divine glory in heaven ! There the pure in heart shall see God. How much is comprehended in seeing him, I pretend not to know, but I am sure the vision is properly termed beatific ; for it must be productive of unspeakable happiness. The sublimest joy

must arise from a contemplation of the divine character. In analyzing, as far as possible, this character, in beholding the isolated glory of each perfection, and the conjoint glory of all, there must be the fullness of reverential ecstasy. But why refer to the bliss of heaven? I cannot describe it. I fear I degrade the subject. Never do ministers regret more deeply the incompetency of their powers, and the inexpressiveness of human language, than when they dwell on the glories of the upper world. O, if the spirit of the departed could come back from its bright abode, and re-enter and reanimate this prostrate body, raising it erect before us as in other days, then we would hear something about heaven. Could that spirit inform us of its emotions as it left this pale clay—how promptly angels took charge of it—how rapidly it soared upward—what sensations of joy filled it when it left sun and stars behind—how kindred spirits welcomed it to the heavenly mansions—and how, at the first sight of its

Savior, it broke away from its angel-escort and rushed into his arms—then would we hear something worth listening to. Then would we learn what it is for Jesus to receive the disembodied spirits of the redeemed. But I mistake : The unspeakable words which Paul heard in paradise, it was not lawful for a man to utter. And so if the spirit of our departed brother could come back, it would doubtless come under an injunction of silence as to the glorious wonders of the heavenly state. It, however, comes not back. Who would bring it back ? Much as we loved the deceased, would we, influenced by selfish considerations, reverse what God, in his adorable sovereignty, has done ? Would we, for our personal gratification, unparadise the glorified spirit and remand it to its former tenement of clay ? Would we dispossess it of its joy ? Would we break up its associations with the happy spirits above ? No : it would be too cruel to eject a happy soul from heaven, even temporarily, and bring

it back to earth. When Jesus told his disciples that he was about to leave them, sorrow filled their hearts ; but he said, "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go to the Father"—as if he had said, it will be so much better for me personally to be in heaven than on earth, your very love for me ought to make you rejoice that I am going to the Father, however disconsolate you may feel on your own account. We may learn a lesson from these words of our Savior. When our pious friends die, though we are sad for our own sakes, we ought to rejoice for their sakes. I have read somewhere that it was the custom of an ancient nation or tribe to lament when births occurred, and to rejoice when deaths took place. Without justifying the custom, I may say it ought to be suggestive to Christians. Man born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. His birth introduces him to scenes of suffering and sorrow. Death opens the portals of paradise that the saints may

enter in. Surely, then, the apostle's declaration is true: "To die is gain." A pious man once said, when looking on the corpse of his brother, "Ah my brother! You have always had the advantage of me—first in Christ, first in heaven." And truly it is advantageous to be in Christ as soon as possible, and to be in heaven too. How much better off is our departed brother than are we! Jesus has received his spirit, and he knows ten thousand times more than we do as to what is implied in the reception of a believer's spirit into glory.

I proceed to notice

III. SOME OF THE HAPPY CONSEQUENCES RESULTING FROM A RECEPTION OF THE DEPARTING SPIRIT BY CHRIST.

1. *There is an end of all doubts as to acceptance with God.*

Very few Christians, I imagine, can be found who are not at times annoyed with doubts. I have known some professors of religion who seemed to indulge a kind of presumptuous cer-

tainty of their gracious state. They expressed no apprehensions as to a failure to reach heaven at last, though those who knew them best were apprehensive for them. And there are, doubtless, genuine Christians whose faith is so strong that doubts and fears are words of which they have no experimental knowledge. Still many of the excellent of the earth, though for the most part they live in hope of the heavenly rest, occasionally tremble lest they should come short of it. The desponding believer sometimes says, "Suppose it turns out after all that I am deceived, how dreadful will it be! What if I, who have had a place among the saints on earth, should find no place among the saints in heaven! What if I, who have sat at the Lord's table, should not be invited to sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb! What if I, who profess to be a pilgrim to the heavenly city, should never see mount Zion! What if I do not come off more than a conqueror through Jesus!" Thoughts like these

will sometimes agitate the soul of the humble believer ; but the reception of the departing spirit by Christ ends all doubts. An eternal farewell to all apprehensions then ! The glorified spirit can then say in the fullness of its joy, “ This is heaven, and I am here. This is the throne of God and the Lamb. I am safe forever.” And echo, such as is heard only in heaven, answers, *forever*. (The voyager who has feared there was a grave for him in the waters of old ocean rejoices in gaining the wished-for shore. How much greater the joy when the Christian voyager on the sea of life, having encountered a thousand storms which have rolled up ten thousand billows, reaches the peaceful coast of immortality where storms never beat and billows never roar ! The soldier who has fought in a hundred battles, conscious of his liability to fall by the hand of the enemy, exults in seeing the last field clear of the foe ; for then he can return to his home, sweet home, to rest from the toils of warfare.

Ineffably higher will rise the exultation when the Christian soldier, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, coming off more than conqueror, goes to his heavenly home where even the rumor of war is heard no more, and where through endless ages he shall wear the victor's crown, and wave the victor's palm.) And strange as it may appear to the carnal,

“ Who first in such a warfare dies
Shall speediest victory know.” .

2. *There is an introduction of the spirit into a region of perfect holiness.*

What distresses the Christian like sin? He is not what he ought to be, nor what he hopes to be. He sees the remains of depravity within him. He sees the flesh warring against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. The severity of the conflict makes him often exclaim as did Paul, “O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Nothing is to the believer so hateful as sin. In the absence of sin a prison would

be a palace, and the darkness of a dungeon would be bright as day. Said the devout Samuel Pearce, the best uninspired man of whom I have read, "I know, and the thought is my constant burden, that the Being I love best always sees something in me which he *infinitely hates*. 'O, wretched, wretched man that I am!' The thought even now makes me weep; and who can help it that seriously reflects he never comes to God, to pray or praise, but he brings what his God detests along with him, carries it with him wherever he goes, and can never get rid of it while he lives?"

But the work of sanctification will surely be accomplished in the people of God. Jesus is made to them sanctification as well as wisdom, righteousness and redemption. His blood possesses a cleansing, as well as a justifying property. It cleanses from all sin. The redeemed before the throne washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the

Lamb. How inspiring the thought that the image of God is to be impressed in perfection on all his people ! They are to be holy as he is holy. The last contaminating stain of sin shall be washed from their souls by the Redeemer's blood, and they shall appear before the throne invested with all the loveliness of sanctified excellence. The searching eye of God will not detect in them "spot or blemish or any such thing." O, this is a heaven worth dying for, to attain a perfect deliverance from sin. To be exalted to such a state of moral purity that God in beholding his people will say, "they are just such creatures as I would have them to be, and I will bestow on them my complacent smiles forever"—who could ask for more ? Heaven is a holy place, and into this place the Christian's departing spirit enters. The spirit that *did* belong to this inanimate body, we all believe, is there, having found its long-sought home—a home perfectly congenial with the desires imparted to it in

regeneration. O, bright spirit, were it our Lord's will, our spirits would leave these bodies and go up to mingle with thine in the realms of perfect purity.

3. *The departing spirit enters into fullness of joy.*

All earthly joy is mixed with sorrow. The rose is found not without a thorn. The cup of worldly pleasure has bitterness at the bottom. All real joy in this life is found in the love and service of God. The Christian enjoys a peace which passeth all understanding. His joy in his most favored hours is unspeakable and full of glory. And yet this joy is only a foretaste of the joy of heaven. The rapture which thrills the believer when in high and holy communion with God, is but an earnest of the exalted transport of the immortal spirit when it enters into the celestial paradise. In the presence of God there is fullness of joy; at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. The joy of heaven is unmingled with

sorrow. It is perfect joy. God himself is the source of this joy. He is termed the blessed, that is, the happy God. What a sublime idea is this ! Jehovah the fountain of happiness, and infinitely happy in himself ! He is independent of all other beings, and finds in the exhaustless resources of his own nature, depths of felicity of which the highest angel can form no adequate conception. It is the pleasure of this infinitely happy God to communicate happiness to all the intelligences that dwell in his presence. This he is ever doing, filling their enlarged capacities to overflowing with joy. The disembodied spirit of the saint, as soon as it is received into glory by the Lord Jesus, partakes of heavenly bliss. All its sorrows are over. All the infelicities attendant on its embodied state are forgotten, or so remembered as, by contrast, to heighten its joy. There is fullness of joy—a rich exuberance of bliss. O, could the delighted spirit of the departed bear its experimental testimony on this

point, its glorious utterances would make us doubt whether we are "in the body or out of the body."

4. *The departing spirit of the saint enters into companionship with all holy intelligences.*

The Scriptures refer to various orders of heavenly beings. They speak of principalities, powers, authorities, seraphim, cherubim, etc. The angels are said to be an innumerable company. They are but a portion, it may be a small portion, of the inhabitants of heaven, and they cannot be numbered. They are called the holy angels. What an exalted privilege to mingle in their society! They are well acquainted with the works and ways of God. They have long been studying the history of the divine government, and, as compared with us, are familiar with its antiquities. What an honor to be elevated to a blissful companionship with these holy beings! But the spirits of just men made perfect are in heaven. Earth has furnished a part, I know not how great a

part, of the population of heaven. We can go back in imagination to the infancy of our world when Abel's spirit, escaping from his murdered body, pioneered the way from God's footstool to his throne. He was the first of the redeemed. How long his song was a *solo* we know not. Enoch joined him after a while, and probably thousands of whom the Bible contains no record. The patriarchs were called for and the prophets followed. Those of whom the world was not worthy, the wanderers "in sheepskins and goatskins" ascended to the skies. Apostles went to the place Jesus prepared for them, and martyrs rode in their chariots of fire to glory. Millions have gone from earth to heaven. All the pious who have died are there. God is taking his people to himself. He takes them at his own time and at the best time. He takes those whose death impoverishes earth and enriches heaven. We ought to think of heaven as a *social* place. What charming society is there! All the good

of every generation and of every clime have been attracted thither. And while they derive their happiness immediately from God, they are permitted to have all the social enjoyment of which their natures are capable. Surely then, among the happy consequences resulting from a reception of the departing spirit by the Lord Jesus, may be mentioned its companionship with all holy intelligences.

IV. EVIDENCES OF THE SPIRIT'S PREPARATION TO BE RECEIVED BY THE LORD JESUS.

Disembodied spirits will not be indiscriminately received. Far from it. What spirits will be received?

1. *Those who have received Christ.*

This matter is very plain. Christ will receive those who receive him. Can any one complain of this? Ought he to receive those who do not receive him? The essence of gospel faith consists in receiving Christ as the Savior of the soul. "As many as received

him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Those who receive Christ honor him with their confidence. They trust in his name. They embrace him as the Redeemer of their souls, and obey him as their Prince. They receive him as Prophet, Priest, and King. To receive Christ is the best evidence of the spirit's preparation to be received by him.

2. Those spirits who bear the image of Christ are prepared for reception into glory.

Stephen was like Christ. While the soldiers were nailing Jesus to the cross he prayed, "Father, forgive them: they know not what they do." While his enemies were stoning Stephen, he cried with a loud voice, "lay not this sin to their charge." He was like Christ. And this is the grand object which Christianity proposes to accomplish—to make men like Christ. Sin having defaced the likeness of

God from the soul, that likeness must be restored before there can be preparation for heaven. Christ's disciples learn of him—they are his followers—his imitators. They love what he loves, and hate what he hates. They have his spirit. The mind which was in Christ is in them. This being the case, when death comes and their spirits leave their bodies they go where Christ is. Where else can they go? Their sanctified impulses prompt them to go to Christ, and he graciously receives them. Jesus attracts to himself all spirits that bear his image. And hence to bear his image is a satisfactory evidence that the spirit is prepared to be received by him to glory. I might mention other evidences, but the time would fail. The two which I have named were possessed by our deceased friend and brother. He received Christ, as I have already said, in the days of his youth. And you who have known him for years past need not to be informed that he bore the moral image of Christ. What a

kind heart he possessed! What a lovely spirit! How ready to attribute good motives if it were possible! How charitable were his interpretations of indiscreet words! How favorable his construction of acts that called from many only unqualified censure! How prompt was he to forgive an injury! And who, like Stephen, prayed more cordially for his enemies? You all know that he bore the moral image of Christ. And I suppose that in this crowded assembly there is not an individual who has a doubt that the spirit of J. H. Eaton has been received into glory by the Lord Jesus.

REMARKS.

1. From this subject we may clearly infer the divinity of the Lord Jesus.

Would Stephen have committed his spirit to a mere man, or an angel? Obviously not. A divine Savior is needed in a dying hour. Stephen was fully assured of the divinity of his Redeemer. Hence his prayer, Lord Jesus

receive my spirit. It is the glory of Christianity that its Founder is divine. He is therefore able to save, and the interests confided to him are secure in life, in death, and through the ages of eternity. How delightful to trust in such a Savior !

2. There is much to comfort us when Christians die.

True, they are taken from us, and, like the devout men who carried Stephen to his burial, we make great lamentation over them, and deplore our loss. We are sad to-day in performing these last offices of kindness for the departed. We can but think we shall see his face no more. Never again will he occupy this pulpit, nor be with us in our social prayer-meetings. No more will he preside over the interests of the University so dear to his heart. No more shall he fill the place he has so long occupied in the Faculty. And there is a vacuum in the family circle which will ever be a vacuum. Still there is much to comfort us.

You, my sister, now left to feel all the desolation of widowhood, are not without consolation. The object of your fondest affection is taken from you, but you "sorrow not as others who have no hope." You know the stroke of death beneath which this manly form has fallen, like a cedar of Lebanon, was but the signal for the spirit to ascend to the skies. You are fully persuaded the Lord Jesus has received that spirit and has imparadised it in his presence. Is there not comfort in this thought? But, then, you think of the grave as a dreary place. I know it is dark, desolate, cold, silent. Think of it as a place of rest, and your loved one needed rest. His labors are over now. His work is done.

" This languishing head is at rest,
Its thinking and aching are o'er ;
This quiet, immovable breast
Is heaved by affliction no more."

Sorrow may break *your* heart, but *he* has found a refuge from all sorrow. Tears may fall from your eyes, but his tears are all wiped

away. And this body, about to be committed to the grave in weakness, dishonor, and corruption, shall be raised in power, glory, and incorruption. Deposited in its resting-place a natural body, it shall be raised a spiritual body—the matter of which it is formed so refined and purified as to resemble spirit. It will be like the glorified body of Jesus. Comfort your heart with these faithful sayings of God—rally the prostrate energies of your broken spirit, so as to perform your duties in the various relations of life, and soon will you rejoin your loved one in the skies.

What shall I say to you, ye three fatherless ones? You have lost a fond father. The heart that throbbed with affection for you is still in death. Your honored father wished to live for two objects—that he might see you further advanced in life, and the University he so much loved placed on a permanent basis. These objects occupied a large share of his last thoughts. O, ye bereaved children! I need

not tell you how your father loved you. You know how determined he was that you should enjoy every literary advantage, so as to be prepared to move in the highest intellectual circles. But his most anxious desires in reference to you, were connected with your salvation. How many prayers he offered to God for you ! How kindly he instructed you in divine things ! He prays for you no longer. He instructs you no more. But will you not remember the words he spoke while he was yet with you ? Will you not look up to your father's God as your God ? Will you not acknowledge him in all your ways, that he may direct your paths and guide you by his counsel ? Should you, when you attain the maturity of your powers, resemble your father in his varied intellectual excellencies, we shall all rejoice ; but our joy will be much greater if we see you humble and devout Christians. God bless you, and make you all your father desired you to be !

To the members of the Church worshipping

here, our departed brother requested me to present his love. You have often met with him in this sanctuary. A few of you remember the dedication sermon he preached when this house was set apart for the worship of God. In mentioning on that occasion the uses of the building he said, "here will we bring our dead that we may perform for them the last sad offices." Alas, who thought then that he would at this early day become an exemplification of the truth of his remark? But it is so. He, the most illustrious of our dead, now lies before us. We shall hear his eloquent voice no more ; but let us not, brethren, forget his counsels, nor fail to follow him as he followed Christ. It was his heart's desire and prayer to God, that this Church should be as a city set on a hill, whose light cannot be hid. For this he called on God, O, how often, and how earnestly ! and may his fervent petitions be answered in our constant progress in the divine life !

To the Trustees and Faculty of the University what shall I say? Surely we are bereaved. *He* is taken from us to whom we looked up, and whom we gladly recognized as our superior. How many anxious moments have we spent with him in earnest consultation about the interests of the University! He loved it almost as he loved his own soul. His self-sacrificing labors prove this. Next to the welfare of his own children, he felt interested for the University. Let us show our love for our late President by doing all we can to make our beloved Institution what he desired it to be. Let us see to it that the young men who are educated here, are thoroughly qualified to act well their part on the theatre of life. This being the case, we ourselves will not have lived in vain.

I am charged with a message to the students of the University. Young men, it is from your dying President. And now your eyes fill with tears, nor do I wonder at it, for he whom

you loved did not forget you when the shades of death gathered round him. I listened to catch the words he wished reported to you. I heard nothing said about Philosophy and Science. Cicero and Tacitus were not named, nor were Homer and Demosthenes; but I heard the dying whisper of the man of God saying, "Tell the students I wish them all to be Christians—what would they do in my situation without religion?" Young men, here is a strong proof of the President's love for your souls. As the dying hour drew near—as the light of eternity began to dawn upon him—you might have supposed that the interests of his own salvation would monopolize all his thoughts; but it was not so. He thought of you—loved you—and sent his dying message to you. Hear it again, "Tell the students I wish them all to be Christians." Many of you have to this hour neglected the concerns of your souls. You have rejected Jesus Christ. Conscience has admonished you

in vain. The appeals of the pulpit have been in vain. Will you not hearken to one of the last utterances of a familiar voice now silent in death? There is weight in the dying words of a friend, and especially such a friend as the students of Union University have lost. Ponder well the message that comes from the chamber of your dying President. Think how much is implied in being Christians. You may be scholars, philosophers, orators, statesmen, but what will all this avail unless you are Christians? "The Christian is the highest style of man." Look into the future, young men, and you will see that very soon death, with all its solemnities, will come upon you. What will you do, what can you do then without religion? It will be hard to die without the consolations of Christianity. Fearful must be a sinner's exit from time to eternity, for he has no God, no Savior, no hope, no heaven. Students of the University, may this fact never be exemplified in you! There is, however,

but one way to prevent such a catastrophe : You must become Christians—followers of Him whose grace extracts the sting of death and enraptures the departing spirit with visions of glory.

And now the grave is ready, and we must convey this body to its resting-place. O, grave! wilt thou, must thou have this noble form? We are not accustomed to commit so precious a treasure to thy custody. Thou receivest an illustrious deposit to-day, for death has shown that he “loves a shining mark.” We must go, painful as it is, to the repository of the dead. Beloved brother, farewell! Thou hast fallen in the vigor of manhood. Thou hast fallen with thine armor on. Thou hast fallen, beloved by thy brethren and honored by all who knew thee. We see thee no more in the walks of life from which thou hast disappeared. But we shall see thee again. Jesus, thy Savior, and ours, says, “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me,

though he were dead, yet shall he live." Thou shalt live again. This body we are now to commit to the grave will be reanimated and fashioned like the Redeemer's glorified body. All the saints will rise. The ransomed of the Lord will come up out of the mansions of the grave invested with the glories of incorruption. With what triumph will they say, "O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is the victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! This is enough. Comfort one another with these words.