

*A Funeral Sermon For the Late Reverend Mr.
John Mottershed, Minister of the Gospel*

by

Edmund Calamy



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A Funeral

S E R M O N

For the Late Reverend

Mr. *John Mottershed*,

Minister of the GOSPEL

IN

R A T C L I F F E .

Who departed this Life, *October 13. 1728,*

An. Ætat. LXIII.

By *EDMUND CALAMY, D.D.*

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A FUNERAL
S E R M O N

IT cannot be denied, but that some have much over-done it in Funeral Panegyricks, and commended the Dead to the Damage of the Living; who hearing such as were well known to have lived but indifferently, applauded and extolled, when they had quitted this Earthly Stage, have been apt to cherish Hopes, that they also might come to be well-spoken of after their Death, tho' they did but little Good of any Sort while they were living. To this it is that some ascribe it, that Funeral Sermons are now pretty generally growing out of Date, and are much less frequent than they were in former Times, and even within the Compass of our own Memory and Observation. Tho' this Reason of the Alteration in this Respect, which falls under general Notice, may possibly have something in it, yet I wish that may not in a great Measure arise from another and a worse Cause.

But be it as it will as to that, I must freely own, that I have known so many good Effects of Funeral Discourses, when manag'd with Care and Caution; and it may be so very advantageous to concern'd Survivors, to have the Removal of their Deceas'd Relatives, Friends and Acquaintance from them, by Death, improved in a Christian Way, by their being led into a Train of close and serious Thoughts about Mortality and another World, at those Seasons when they are many times the most impressive; and it has so great a Tendency to excite a Degenerate Age to greater Warmth in Practical Religion, and Diligence in the whole Compass of Duty which that prescribes, to have such Things as are truly commendable freely set before them, in the Instances and Examples of such as were Personally known to them and at the same time to have Remarks made on the particular Steps of the Providence and Grace of God, towards those that they had Occasion to observe, were incompass'd with Temptation and Infirmary like themselves; that I should be heartily sorry to have the Practise quite disus'd and laid a side.

If any exceed due Bounds, and ascribe upon such Occasions unto those that have quitted our World, Excellencies and Virtues that they were Strangers to, they must answer for it: But to have Funeral Sermons dropp'd upon this Account, would in my Opinion, be a great Loss to the World, and to the Church of God in general. It would be a Letting slip Opportunities of bringing much Glory to the Most
HIGH,

HIGH, and of doing Good to the Souls of many; which, as far as I can perceive, could not be easily justified.

Having therefore been desir'd to give you of this Worshipping Christian Society, a Discourse at this Time, upon the Melancholy Occasion of the late Breach, by the Removal of a Valuable Person, whose Eyes have been clos'd by Death, after his having for upwards of Thirty Years, ministred in Holy Things among you, I readily comply'd: Not with a Design so much to applaud the Deceas'd, (tho' he was One that God was pleas'd remarkably to own and favour, as you'll hear in the Sequel) as to instruct and edify you that survive, whom it highly concerns to improve such an affecting Stroke and Loss: And with a real Desire and Aim (as God shall enable me) rather to touch your Hearts, than tickle your Ears. And may He that has all Hearts within his Reach, herein succeed my well meant Endeavours.

I have chosen for my Subject upon this Occasion, the affecting Words we meet with in

II COR. v. 4.

— *That Mortality might be swallowed up of Life.*

IN order to the Understanding the Intention of which Words, it is requisite the Context be consulted, which Hands briefly thus:

The

Chap. ii.
17.

The Holy Apostle St. Paul, who was far from being asham'd of the Gospel of Christ, or a Discredit to it; and who with great Solemnity disclaims *corrupting*, or as you have it in the Margin of your *Bibles*, dealing deceitfully with *the Word of GOD*, or making Merchandize of it; having in the immediately foregoing Chapter declar'd, with what Sincerity and Diligence he discharg'd his Office as a Preacher of the Everlasting Gospel, and how the Troubles and Hardships which he was upon that Account exposed to, redounded to the Praise of God's Power, the Benefit of his Church, and his own eternal Glory he in the Beginning of this Chapter speaks of *Death*, from which the most faithful and useful Ministers are not exempted, any more than others. And he discourses on this Subject, with a Freedom uncommon with other Writers, and like one used frequently to meditate upon it, though nothing could have been pitched on more distastful to the Generality of Mankind. He was not for putting off Thoughts of Mortality till he found his last Hours just at hand; but was for familiaring such Thoughts to himself long before, that so his Receipt of a Summons at any Time into another World might be the less surprizing, and the more welcome.

Chap. v
1.

He declares. That *Death* which in all Ages had been so formidable, is a *Dissolution*; a taking down of this our earthly House, in which we at present dwell as in a Tabernacle or Tent, being but Tenants at Will, and therefore liable to have Lodgings to leek, at another's Pleasure. Tho' this had a disheartning

heartning Aspect, he yet intimates he was well reconciled to the Thoughts of it, having this to relieve and comfort him, that in Case of an Ejectment, he and his Fellow-Believers would not be left destitute, but have an Admission to a *Building of GOD, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*. And so he opposes the Heavenly Habitation he had in Prospect, to the earthly House or Tabernacle in which he sojourned. He then goes on, and declares, that he and his Fellow-Christians, while in these Bodies which were the Tenements they (after a Sort) inhabited here below, were in a *Groaning State*, and constant Uneasiness, *earnestly desiring* to be better cloath'd, and encompassed with the Incorruptible Celestial Glory: Being well satisfied; that whensoever Death uncloath'd them, they *should not be found naked*. They found indeed the Burdens they were press'd with during their Continuance in their embodied State, so great, as many times to make them *Groan*; and yet could not take Death, as Death and a *Dissolution*, to be a Thing on its own Account at all desirable, for that they should be thereby unhous'd: But that which they long'd for, and which their Hearts were fet upon, was to be cloath'd with an Heavenly Glory; and that that which belong'd to them which was *mortal*, might be done away, and *swallowed up* of a Glory that would never fade: And of this he intimates they had rail'd Expectations. *Therefore*, says he, *we are always confident*.

That which I from hence offer as a fit Subject for your Thoughts to fix upon, is this;

That

That *faithful Gospel Ministers, and serious Christians, have good Reason to hope, that when their Souls quit their Bodies, they will not be left uncloathed or naked, but cloathed with immortal Glory in Heaven; and shall find Mortality swallowed up of Life.*

And here I propose,

- I. To consider the *Mortality* spoken of by the Apostle, with its true Rise and Original; and the Sickness and Pain, Grief and Sorrow, which are its usual Attendants and Concomitants.
- II. To give a brief View of the *Opposite Life*, of which this *Mortality* is to be *swallowed up*.
- III. To touch on the proper Characters of the Persons to whom this Happiness belongs, and who have reason for so raised an Expectation.
- IV. To let before you the Grounds of such an Expectation and Hope as this, in the Case of Persons that are qualified as the Gospel requires.

And by that Time I have advanced thus far, I am inclined to believe, you will generally think it but fitting, that I should bring these Things down to the present Occasion, that so the Thoughts suggested may be of the greater Use.

I begin.

I. With

I. With considering the *Mortality* here spoken of by the Apostle; with its true Rise and Original; and the Sickness and Pain, Grief and Sorrow, which are its usual Attendants and Concomitants.

Mortality is affecting, in whatever Way we take a View of it. In the Original here, instead of *Mortality*, the Thing spoken of is *that which is mortal*: Which takes in every Thing To that is *mortal*, that either is in us, or hangs on us, or any way belongs to us. We tran-
Tὸ θνητόν.
Hate it *Mortality*, and not improperly; that lo our Thoughts may be led, (as there is just Occasion) to take in all that Sorrow and Trouble, which makes way for, and ushers in that *Dissolution*, in which all our present Fatigues and Uneasinesses issue.

Adam, the first Father of Mankind, was surpriz'd with the Notice of *Mortality*, and his Poffterity have been *Groaning* under the Thoughts of it ever since, to this very Day: And yet 'tis as Prevalent still as ever.

The *Socinians* indeed tell us, that *Adam* was created *mortal**, because he was in a Possibility of dying from the first, and actually did die afterwards: But herein (as well as in a great many other Things) they affect to be wife, above and beyond, that which is written. According to the Account given in Scripture, he was created immortal; and had at first no Seeds or Principles of *Mortality* in his Nature, Sin not having yet corrupted or infedted him. St. *Paul* very plainly declares *Mortality* to be

Rev. v.
12.

the proper Fruit of Sin; saying. *By one Man Sin entred into the Worlds and Death by Sin: and so Death faffed upon all Men.* So that had there been no Sin in the World, there had been no Death; no *Mortality*. But Sin having entred, and infected all. Death is now unavoidable. *It is appointed to all Men once to die.* The Sentence is palled, and not to be repeal'd. Death is so appointed, that there is no avoiding it.

Heb. ix.
27.

'Tis true, there were Two celebrated Prophets under the *Old Testament*, viz. *Enoch* and *Elias*, that did not die like others; in whose Case there was no painful Divorce of Soul and Body by Death. We are also certified under the *New Testament*, that such as remain upon Earth till CHRIST's Coming at the Last Day, shall not die as others commonly do: And yet the former did suffer, and the latter shall suffer, a Change equivalent to Death; notwithstanding that as to both, there seems to be some Exception from the general Sentence, which as to others remains subject to no Alteration. *Moses my Servant is dead*, said GOD to his Successor that came in his Room and Stead. Tho' he was my Servant, and faithful to me, and I took Pleasure in him, and signally own'd him, yet his Time is now gone, his Day is over. Tho' he was *faithful in all GOD's House*, yet when he had done his Work, he died, rested from his Labours, and entred into the Joy of his Lord. Even *Moses* in his Turn pass'd off the Stage of this Earth, after all the great Things he had done, for the Glory of God, and the Good of his People; as well as *Korah, Dathan and Abiram*,

Josh. i.

Heb. iii.
2, 5.

Abiram, who were Instruments of so much Mischief among the Israelites, and brought down such exemplary Vengeance upon their own Heads, by their Insolence and Sedition. The best of Men die as well as the worst; and the richest and most advanced, as well as the poorest and most contemptible. So that in the Circumstances wherein we are, we may well enough cry out with pious *Ethan*, *What Man is he that liveth, and shall not see Death?* For where can we find the Man whose Constitution is so firm and strong, that he has any Reason to hope he shall escape that fatal Rent? Diseases, Pains and Aches, Lowness of Spirits, Grief of Heart, and Decays of Strength, occasion'd by Losses or Calamities felt or fear'd, or by such Acts of Violence as could not be avoided, make way for a *Dissolution* by Degrees in the Case of all, one after another; and they always will, as long as the present State of Things continues. We have had an unhappy Gentleman among us, that has talk'd (whether in Jest or Earnest he best knows) of escaping the common Lot, and, compassing a Translation by the help of a strong Faith: But we have not the least Reason to doubt but that in a very little Time, he will prove a flagrant Instance of the Ridiculousness and Groundlessness of that Conceit. And every one of us may very safely cry out with *Job*, without any Liability to a Failure, *I know that thou wilt bring me to Death, and to the House appointed for all Living.* And it would be well for us, were but this more consider'd and laid to Heart by us all.

Ps. lxxxix.
48.

Job xxx.
23.

This *Mortality* is a Liableness to Sickness and Pain, Grief and Sorrow, Trouble and Uneasiness, upon divers Accounts, as the Fore-runners, and at last to Death as the Consequence; and to the Grave, the Place of Silence, to which there is a long Confinement as in a Prison, before the full Deliverance comes. And it carries in it a *Dissolution of our House of this earthly Tabernacle*. It is in Reality a *Tabernacle* rather than a proper *House* that we at present dwell in: And as we have many Things to make it uneasy to us while it continues standing, so in a little Time it will be pull'd or must fall down, and we must quit it. Pursuing which Metaphor, St. *Peter* says, That he *knew that shortly he must put off this his Tabernacle*; meaning, that he plainly perceiv'd he in a little Time must die, and leave his Body behind him. Were this crazy Tabernacle of ours only a little chang'd and alter'd, the Thoughts of it might be more tolerable: But that's not all; it must (like an House that had a fretting Leprosy under the Law,) be taken down and demolish'd, and quite pull'd to pieces, and laid in the Dust. And this is a thing that has; a very formidable Appearance.

Such *Mortality* as this may well enough make us *groan*. It has nothing surprizing in it, for us to bemoan ourselves, under the Burden of what we feel, and the Prospect of what we fear: Nothing can be more natural than our *Groaning* in this mortal State, which has *Labour and Sorrow* attending it from the first, and accompanying it to the very last, when we expire and breathe no
more.

more. We are all *born to Trouble as the Sparks fly upwards*; and Life is full of it ^{Job v. 7.} from Beginning to End. We have *Trouble* in getting, and *Trouble* in loosing those Things that are defirable: and *Trouble* in bearing a great many Things that are unavoidable. We have *Trouble* in Want and Abundance both. *Trouble* in our Bodies, Minds and Circumftances. *Trouble* from our Friends, and our Enemies, and even from our dearest Relatives, in whom, we are apt to promise ourselves the greatest Comfort. We have *Trouble* in coming into the World, *Trouble* all the while we are in it, and *Trouble* in going out of it: And have all of us Reason to cry out with the Good Man that had seen Affliction, and had no fmall Share of it, *Man that is born of a Woman, is of a few Days, and full of Trouble.* ^{Job xiv. i.} In so much, that were we to consider this Life abstracted from another, we might have Reason to question whether there was any Thing to be gain'd in it, that could be a suitable Compensation for the Trouble to which it exposes us. We have indeed a great many Comforts intermix'd with our Troubles, to sweeten them to us, and make them the more tolerable; but a lively Sense of our *Mortality* tends very much to abate their Relish. And supposing them rais'd to the highest Pitch, it's enough at any Time to create a chilling Damp, to have this Thought stirring in us, (for which we at no Time can want good Reason) that Death is at hand, which will bring them to their final Period.

By this *Mortality* a dark and gloomy Shade has generally overspread this lower
World,

World, by Reason that all things from thence appear so full of Vanity and Vexation, and the whole Species of human Creatures in particular, seems made up of a parcel of despicable Shadows, that vanish out of Sight, and quit the Stage, and disappear, as soon almost as they take place, and begin to act their Parts upon it. Even as excellent a Person, as St. *Paul*, was in this respect in a like Condition with others. He had an infirm and crazy, a corruptible and mortal Body like other Men, and it was continually worn and wasted by his Labours, Fatigues and Sorrows: And yet under all, he bore up courageously, in the Prospect of a succeeding and approaching *Life*. In the midst of all the Blessings with which he was incompassed, he saw Cause to complain of his Burdens, and cry out of his *Wretchedness* upon Occasion: He was very sensible his *Dissolution* was at hand, and knew there must be Pangs and Throws, before the *Tabernacle* he dwelt in, as crazy as it was, could be demolished; but knowing the Consequence would be glorious, he was greatly relieved.

This *Mortality* is a Thing that truly Pious Persons, that have the most entirely given their Hearts to God, have from Age to Age been *groaning* under, and wanting to get rid of. They have not only been earnestly desirous to have it abated, and get the Trouble of it lessened, but to have it *swallowed up* and gone, so as that they might be wholly rid of it, and have no farther Disturbance from it. As to which, they have still been contented that God should

should take his own Time and Way, under the ample Encouragement given them by that Covenant, which he has entred into with them, which being *ordered in all things and sure, has been all their Salvation, and all their Desire.*

And finally, it should not I think be omitted, that the Apostle does not here speak so directly of the *swallowing up* of *Death*, as the *swallowing up* of *Mortality*, or our Liableness to die, with the Pangs and Sorrows that precede, and attend the Rent. And when once *Mortality* comes to be *swallowed up*, then *Death* can no more have any Place remaining. When the *Mortality* and Corruption of our Bodies is once intirely gone, then *Death* will be gone too. And the Apostle plainly declares it, saying, *When this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall have put on Immortality, then* (not then only, according to Dr. Whitby's Gloss, in his Annotations on the first Verse of the Chapter wherein is my *Text*, but then most compleatly) *shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in Victory. Mortality is first swallowed up by an happy Life after the Separation of Soul and Body: And then Death is swallowed up in Victory, by a Glorious Resurrection out of the Grave, to return to Dust no more. And so Life shall reign, and as the Apostle has express'd it, The Righteous shall reign in Life by Jesus Christ.* And now,

1 Cor. xv.
54.

Rom. v.
17.

II. Let us consider the opposite *Life*, of which it is intimated *Mortality* is to be *swallowed up*. In the Original Greek the *Article*
is

is inserted, which our Translation has not expressed. For it is not there ὑπό ζωῆς, but ὑπό τῆς ζωῆς: which intimates that *Mortality* will not barely be *swallowed up of Life*, but of that *Life*, which is the most excellent and valuable, and best deserves the Name of *Life*. The Apostle speaks not of the present *Life*, but of the Heavenly and Future *Life*. As for this present *Life*, this is io far from *swallowing up* the *Mortality* of our Bodies, which is with us so great a matter of Complaint, that it is rather *swallowed up* by it. Whatever there is in our Flesh that can be called *Life*, after a few Turns taken, and Experiments made, 'tis over and gone: It is *swallowed up* in the deep Gulph of *Mortality*, Καταποθῆ: It is *devoured*, and is no more seen. But when we once come to feel the immense Force of the Heavenly *Life*, then what is *mortal* in it will be *swallowed up*; it will be absorbed, so as to vanish away, just as we the see Darkness of the Night, swallowed up, and carried off by the Beams of the rising Sun.

If we compare our present Dwelling here below, with that which we are expecting above, through the Grace of God in JESUS CHRIST, we may without Difficulty perceive, that that which is coming has so far the Advantage over that which is going, and which continually passes away, that not being able to enjoy that, without quitting this, we have abundant Reason, (when GOD'S Purposes in sending us hither are once served) to be willing to make an Exchange, that so this *mortal* that has more Resemblance to *Death* than *Life*, may be *swallowed*
lowed

lowed up of that most blessed and only true *Life*, which is highly desirable, notwithstanding that there is no Passage to it, but *through the dark Valley of the Shadow of Death*.

As for that *Life* of which *Mortality* will be *swallowed up*, in the Case of all the true Living Members of the Lord JESUS, we have abundant Reason to believe it will be most excellent and glorious. For it will be Free from any Mixture of Sin or Affliction, Weakness or Pain, Sorrow or Trouble. It will lie in a Nearness, Likeness, and Conformity to the Blessed GOD, and the fixed Enjoyment of him. *Whilst* indeed (as the Apostle observes in this Context) *we are here at home in the Body, we are absent from the Lord*. Whilst we are in the Body, we are not at home; we are detained from the blessed Sight and Enjoyment of God, and kept but of the Possession of the Happiness which makes Heaven. And 'tis thus even with the best of Saints, comparatively to what it will be hereafter. But when the Expected Life is reached upon a Removal and Translation, there will be no Absence from him whom their Souls love, to be the Matter of any farther Complaint in their Case. They that now are full of their sorrowful Complaints and Groans, on the Account of their Corruptions and Imperfections, and the Distance they are in From the Grand Object of their admiring Affection, shall then behold his Face, and receive beatifying Communications from him continually. Often does St. *Paul* touch upon the Comparison between what Believers,

Ver. 6.

reach in this Life, while they are incompass'd with *Mortality*, and in the next Life, when it will be laid aside; and between what we are, and what we shall be, both as to the *Knowledge of GOD*, and *Likeness to Him*. Now, says he, *we know in part, and we prophesy in part: But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*. And it follows a little after. *Now we see through a Glass darkly, but then Face to Face: Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known*. So that it is beyond humane Words distinctly to express the Difference there is between the one Life and the other, as to the *Knowledge of GOD*, and Things Divine. And St. *John* declares the very same, and carries the Matter yet farther, as to *Likeness to GOD*; saying. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of GOD; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is*. And what that carries in it, who can pretend to tell! 'Tis this that raises the true Christian's Courage, and makes Death supportable to him, as terrible as it is to Nature.

The *Life* that is expected will also be *Eternal*, and not capable of any Abatement, Diminution or Period. *The Gift of GOD, is ETERNAL LIFE through JESUS CHRIST our Lord*: And on this Account 'tis much more valuable, and even inestimable. Our present Life is a *dying Life*. St. *Paul* declares with Solemnity, that for his Part, he *died daily*. He carried his Life as it were continually in his Hands, not knowing that it would last to the End of any one Day that
was

Y^g Job. xiii
9, 10.

Rom. vi.
23.

1 Cor. xv.
31.

was begun. And we are none of us out of Danger of dying any one Day we live: For which Reason, preparing for Death should be our constant daily Care. But when the *Life* that is spoken of in the *Text* is reach'd, *there will be no more Deaths neither Sorrow nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former things are passed away.* Rev. xxi.
4.

The Future Life spoken of is also sure and certain, and may be depended on with great Safety. When this wretched World was overspread with the Shadow of Death, *Life and Immortality were, brought to Light by the Gospel; and Death was abolished.* 2 Tim. i.
10. There was some Glimmering of Light about another Life after this, in the World before; but the Gospel Revelation brought in a Certainty. And this, considering the great Importance of the Matter, may well be accounted most Blessed News. The Heathens had some Notion among them of a future *Life*, but it was attended with great Uncertainty. *Seneca* said that *★ it was a thing that wise Men promised, but they did not prove it.* And *Socrates* (as wise and sagacious a Man as he was esteemed) yet when he was just dying had this Expression; † *I hope to go hence to good Men; but of that I am not very confident nor doth it become any wise Man to be positive that so it will be.* And he added, *I must now die, and you shall live; but which of us is in the better State, the living or the dead, God only knows.* These Passages, (to which many more of the same

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Sort

★ Epist. 102.

† Platon. Dial. in Phædone. & in Apol. Socratis.

Sort might, easily be added) plainly discover to us, that the *Pagans* at the best were in great Uncertainty. But we Christians now under the Gospel know with Certainty, that *this mortal must put on Immortality*: must put it on as a Garment, so as to be covered with it, and wrapped up in it. We are now continually changing from the very time of our Birth; and advancing by Degrees thro' Infancy, Childhood, and Youth, to Manhood, Ripe and Old-age; and then at the farthest we drop into the silent Grave. But if we reach this *Life* the Apostle speaks of, we shall be fix'd in a State that will continue in perpetual Vigour, without being subject to any Alteration. *Mortality* will then be so *swallowed up of Life*, that we shall have nothing of it left remaining to incumber or disturb us. And 'tis this only that truly deserves the Name of *Life*. While others are but Shadows, this is the Substance.

This *Life* is the main Sum of the Gospel. For, *this is the Record*, this is the chief Thing the *New Testament* runs upon, *That GOD hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life.* It has pleased our Gracious God in his Gospel, to make a Grant or free Gift of this *Life* to Believers, and He has unalterably settled it upon them thro' his Son. And their receiving him, by a true and sincere Faith, is a good Evidence that this *Life* is already begun in them, and will be carry'd on gradually, till it is completed. And they have a full and clear Title to the *Life* that is reserv'd, and all that is contain'd

1 John v.
11, 12.

tain'd in it, or belongs to it: And such a Title as cannot be overthrown or impleaded. The rest of Mankind, even all *Adam's* Children and Defendants without Exception, shall have their Beings continued and perpetuated, (and that in Consequence of CHRIST's Death too) but it will not by any Means from, hence follow, that these will really and truly *live*. They may indeed give a continu'd Being the Name of *Life*, in Opposition to an Annihilation, or an utter ceasing to be, but it is *Death* rather than *Life*, if it be not attended with true Happiness; which must be the Cafe of all that quit this Earth, Strangers to Vital Religion.

I am not infenible, that there are several, and those Worthy Perf'bns too, who explaining the *Text* I am upon, represent St. *Paul* and his Fellow-Christians, as having a Dread of Dying, tho' desirous of Immortality; and therefore wishing, (if it might be, and God thought good,) that they might be in the Number of those spoken of in a former Epistle, when it is laid. *We shall not all die, but we shall all be changed:* They were desirous of living till CHRIST's Coming to Judgment, and then being chang'd; and consequently were of Opinion, that CHRIST would come to Judgment before the End of that Age. But I must own I cannot say, that this appears to me so evident as they seem to reckon it. Their taking it for granted, that the Apostle and his immediate Companions, look'd for the last Coming of CHRIST to Judgment, and the General Resurrection with which that was to be attended, as what was to fall out in their

Time

1 Cor. xv.
51.

1 Thess.
iv. 5.

Time directly, is a Thought liable to several Material Objections. The Apostle does indeed say. *We who are alive, and remain unto the Coming of the LORD, shalt not prevent them which are asleep:* But it does not therefore follow, that either he, or any other Apostle, ever thought and declar'd to other Christians, that they might live until the Resurrection ; and that St. *Paul* afterwards chang'd this Opinion. This would be a dangerous Mistake, and highly prejudicial to the Christian Faith, and the Authority of the Apostles. For if the Churches of Christ had once receiv'd this Doctrine from them, and afterwards had understood, even from their own Confession that it was a Mistake, this would have naturally led them to conceive, that they might have been mistaken also in any other Doctrine contain'd in their Epistles, and to suspect the Certainty and Truth of all that was contain'd in them. * Such Sayings as these therefore, are not to be taken personally, as meant of the Apostles, but rather as spoken by them in the Person of Christians in the general, some of which would be found surviving at the Time of CHRIST's second Coming.

Nor am I for confining *Mortality's being swallowed up of Life*, which is spoken of in the *Text* I am upon, merely to the Glorification of the Body in Conjunction with the Soul, after the Resurrection. For the Apostle makes an immediate Opposition between our Continuance in the Body, and our blissful Enjoyment of GOD, and lays it
down

* See Dr. *Whitby*, in locum.

down for a certain Truth, that whilst we remain in the Body, we are detain'd from our Happiness, and that so soon as ever we leave the Body, we shall be admitted into it. And which is yet more, when the Apostle in the Beginning of this Chapter mentions a *Building of GOD, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*, in Conjunction with the *Dissolution of the earthly House of this Tabernacle*, he plainly speaks of a *Building and House* that was then actually in being, which he *knew* that he and his Fellow-Christians. should be fix'd in, whenever this *Dissolution* happen'd. He who could not but be much more concern'd for a suitable Lodgment of his immortal Spirit, than a Receptacle of his perishing Body, appears to me to point to the Cœlestial Mansion, and most Blessed Life, to which the Souls of Believers should be advanc'd presently upon their quitting their Earthly Bodies. This manifestly to one so dispos'd as he was, was the greater Comfort by far of the two, under the Thoughts of an approaching Dissolution. And yet the Provision made with respect to the Bodies of the Saints, may well enough be allow'd to come in, in the second Place. So that if that Question was propos'd, (which must be own'd to be very natural) When is it to be expected, that *Mortality* should be *swallowed up of Life*? I should be for returning this Answer. That this will be at the Death of true Believers in a great Measure, and more compleatly, at the Time of the Resurrection.

Mortality shall I say *be swallowed up of Life*, in the Case of sincere Believers, in a great
Measure

Measure at Death: In as much as all Labour and Fatigue, Sorrow and Trouble, will then cease, and our Souls laying aside their cumbersome Cloggs, will be fitter by far for acting with Life and Vigor in Divine Exercises and Motions, than they could be in this Terrestrial State, during the Continuance whereof, the Body not a little affects the Soul, notwithstanding that that is unquestionably of an immortal Nature. And then *Mortality* shall also be *swallowed up of Life*, more compleatly at the time of the Resurrection, when this *mortal* State will be perfectly taken away, by an *immortal* one, of Soul and Body in Conjunction; to our everlasting Satisfaction, Comfort; and Joy. And now,

III. I proceed to touch on the Characters of the Persons in whose Case it may warrantably be expected, that *Mortality* should be thus *swallowed up of Life*. It has been already hinted, and the Thing speaks plainly enough for itself, that this neither can nor will be the Lot of all. 'Tis only such as God is pleased to select for himself, and thinks fit to distinguish by his peculiar Favour, that can expect a Share in this most honourable, and comfortable Privilege. Many will in this respect at last prove wretchedly mistaken.

All such however, as are sincere in their Faith and Obedience, are of the Number of those to whom this Privilege belongs; and there is no Possibility that any such should be excluded. We may therefore remember, 'tis said of *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*,
that

that they had the LORD for their God, of whom it is declar'd, that *He is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*. These Three excellent Persons, must therefore (as our Blessed Lord himself plainly argues) be alive, and live gloriously too, in their State of Separation from their Bodies, as well as have an Expectation that their Bodies should be restor'd to Life again, and cloath'd with Glory at the Resurrection. St. *Paul* also (as has been already observ'd) declares in this *Context* very politively, that he and his Fellow-Christians, *knew*, that upon the *Dissolution* of their *earthly House*, they had a *Building of GOD* awaiting them in Heaven above. But then we should observe, both as to the Former and the Latter, that they were remarkable while they liv'd and pass'd thro' this lower World, for their Faith and Obedience; or else they would never have been thus distinguish'd afterwards. And since all in this Respect stand upon the same Bottom, we may very safely conclude, that all those to whom the same Character belongs, will have the same Happiness.

Luke xxi.
38.

This Blessedness is appropriated to such as are prepar'd for entring upon another World, by serious Repentance, and real Holiness. 'Tis promis'd, to such as *look not at the things which are seen, which are Temporal; but at the Things which are not seen, Which are Eternal: To such as live not unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.*

2 Cor. iv.
18.

Ib. v. 15.

These are the genuine Characters of the Persons to whom this Happiness is appropriated: And they are all of them reasonable,

fit, and necessary, and none of them liable to any just Objection; as might easily be made appear, were there any Scope for dilating. But it may on the other hand, be very easily perceiv'd, that it would carry in it an evident Prostitution of the Favour it implies to have *Mortality swallowed up of Life*, for us to suppose it to lie open to any, but Persons of such a Make and Stamp as this. It would evidently be to GOD'S Dishonour, for him so much as to attempt at last to distinguish, Persons of different and opposite Characters.

Waving the rest, I will but just touch upon one of them, to which we are led by the Clole of the Chapter foregoing. The Apostle speaks there, of *an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*: But then he confines it in the very next Verse, to such as chiefly minded and pursued, not *temporal* but *eternal things*. Were such as chiefly favoured of this Earth, and took up their Rest in it, and were swallowed up in a present perishing World, to be thus honoured, it would unavoidably occasion mean Thoughts of GOD and Religion; it would make Men a Thousandfold worse than they are, to observe it; it would carry in it an Inversion of the Nature of Things; and represent Persons as *reaping* at the last, what was different from that which they *sowed* at present, in Opposition to GOD'S repeated Declarations to the contrary. But for those whose Hearts, and Hopes, and Treasures are above, and who most earnestly seek and long for an Heavenly Country, and in the Hope and Prospect of it, and of Rest and
Glory

Glory in it, patiently endure what Trials and Afflictions God is pleas'd to allot them in their Passage to it; for such at the length when their Difficulties and Fatigues are over, to reach *a Crown of Glory*, that is exceeding worthy, and weighty, and everlasting, is but decent and fitting: 'Tis agreeable to oft repeated Declarations in Scripture, and to the very Nature of Things: 'Tis much for the Honour of God, and the Credit of Religion; and cannot but in the final Issue be highly applauded by all that observe and take notice of it. And now,

IV. I shall briefly set before you, the Grounds of such an Expectation and Hope as this, in the Case of Persons that are qualify'd as the Gospel requires. And here I shall only touch upon the Promise that God has made them; the Change that He has wrought in them; and the Course to which his Grace has inclin'd them. And,

1. The Hopes and Expectations in this Case are bottom'd upon the Promise of GOD. That GOD *that cannot lye*, has engag'd that they shall have *Life*, not only to their full Content, but unspeakably beyond their utmost Thoughts fotegoing, thro' his Son; and that this *Life* shall follow upon the taking Place of *Mortality*. Nay, having *fled for Refuge unto the Hope set before them*, they have *Two immutable Teings* laid in for their *strong Consolation* under the forest Assaults; and they are the *Promise and Oath* of GOD. And so firm is the Security this Way given them, that they need not fear, that either *Death*, or

Heb. vi.
18.

Rom. 8.
38, 39.

Life, or Angels, or Principalities, or Powers, or things present, or things to come; or Height or Depth, or any other Creature, should ever separate them from the Love of God which is in Jesus Christ their Lord.

2 Cor. 3.
18.

2. Another thing that may much encourage their Hopes and Expectations, is the Change GOD hath wrought in them, from what they were by Nature. For though they were naturally as degenerate and vile, as impure and earthly as others, yet as God has altered and changed them, it is a genuine Description of their Case that the Apostle has given, when he says, that *with open Face beholding in the Gospel Relation, as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, they are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* This sets a plain Mark upon them, as Persons designed for that glorious Life which the Apostle speaks of in the Text. And therefore in the Verse that next succeeds it, he says, *he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God, who also hath given unto us, the Earnest of the Spirit.* Believers are even now in hope that *Mortality shall be swallowed up of Life*, and they have good Evidence to support their Hope; for God himself who doth nothing in vain; hath formed them in order to it. He hath not only given them immortal Souls, and Faculties to prepare for a better Life, redeemed them to it, and appointed them suitable Means to fit them for it; but has also produced in them by his Spirit, those holy Affections and Inclinations, Desires and
Longings,

Longings, that are the Earnest of it; which it is not by any means to be supposed that he should ever frustrate. And to this we may add,

3. The Consideration of the Course to which the Grace of God has inclined them, which is such, as that they need not disquietingly fear Miscarrying. As for the Bulk of Mankind, (all indeed in whom the Grace of God has not been thoroughly at work) *things seen* are the chief Motives, Hopes, and Comforts of their Lives; and if they are but well provided for with respect to these, they can contentedly neglect such things as are *not seen*, without any Care or Concern about them. But there is the direct Reverse of this, in Heaven born Souls. They are *things not seen* that chiefly employ them, and take them up. Their *Conversation is in Heaven*. Religion is their main Business, and the Service of GOD their chosen and most delightful Employment, and Entertainment. They *seek first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*, and mind other things but secondarily and by the by: And by a patient Continuance in well doing, they seek for Glory and Honour and a Blessed Immortality: And whoever can say with Truth that this is their Case, (either the whole Scripture is an errant Fable, or) they may upon good Ground hope, that GOD will afford them his Gracious Presence, and be constantly with them, guiding and assisting, cherishing and supporting of them, till having carried them through all the Troubles and Trials of this present State, and over the
Gulph

Gulph that separates the two Worlds, they come to find that *Mortality* is *swallowed up of Life*.

And having thus far advanced upon a Subject of this Nature, I am inclined to believe you will now generally think it high time for me, to bring these things down to the present Occasion, that the Thoughts suggested may be of the greater Use to us.

We have (my Friends and Brethren) had a late affecting and monitory Instance of *Mortality*. Neither could a Good Estate possessed, nor real intrinsick Worth, nor considerable Usefulness to others in his Station, hinder Death from taking place, in the Case of that valuable Person whose Remains were two Days ago left in the silent Grave. Let us all hence learn to manage ourselves as *Mortals*. Let us learn to die, and prepare, for an approaching Dissolution, which no Care of ours, no Prayers of others, no Help from Physicians, no Means of any Sort that can be made use of either by ourselves or others, can be able to prevent. Let us not too much love this dying Life, be too fond of it, or cleave too close to it: But let us be free to quit it, whensoever it shall please God to call us out of it, after the great Business for which he sent us into it is once dispatched and finished. And whatever we neglect, let us take Care under the Direction of God's Word, and with the Help of his Grace, to make sure of a better Life.

I appeal to you yourselves Sirs, whether it is not high time to grow weary of *Mortality*? St. *Paul* was plainly tired with it:
And

And why should not we be so too? Is not this Life a Shadow? Why then should we set our Hearts upon it? Me thinks it should raise us above the poor Enjoyments and Prospects of this present World and Life, to consider how much greater and nobler things we have in View. Let us carefully observe, how great and wide a Difference there is, between this present Life, and that which Believers are allowed and encouraged to expect and hope for. As to this present Life, that will in a very little time be swallowed up by Mortality in our own Case, as well as in the Case of those in their several Turns, that are the dearest to us, that we most respect and value, and that have been the most useful to us, and through whose Hands God has conveyed to us his greatest Favours: But the Life to come, which Believers are expecting and waiting and longing for, will swallow up this devouring Mortality. This is what all they that have serious Religion at Heart, should intently ruminate upon, in order to their being comforted, under the Prospect of that *Mortality* that now reigns, and swalloweth up all in a common Gulph. Though St. *Paul's* Mercies abounded, he yet had many Afflictions in his Earthly Course. He *groaned* as one that was burdened with the Weight of his Body, and a Multitude of Troubles, arising from different Causes and Quarters. But he received not a little Comfort in and under all, from the Hope of a better *Life*. He greatly rejoiced in the Prospect he had of the Happiness which the Faithful would enjoy after Death; and by that Consideration was encourag'd to leave this World, that
he

he might *be with the Lord*, upon any Signification of his Pleasure to that Purpose: And in this Expectation, he bore Hardships of any Sort that came in his way, with Patience and Courage; and labour'd to become acceptable to GOD, by a diligent Discharge of his Duty in all the Parts of it, while he was continued in this lower World. And it should be the same with us also. Heartily should we rejoice that Believers have so sweet and glorious an Hope, that tho' their Bodies are dissolv'd, and scatter'd here and there by Death, yet there is another more happy State, and a never-fading Glory that awaits them: And that when they leave these Bodies, they will *be with the LORD*, in a Degree much beyond what they could be while they continu'd in them. Instead of Bewailing and Lamenting, let us congratulate those happy Souls, in whose Case Mortality is *swallowed up of Life*. Let us bless GOD, and be very thankful, that we are capable of so great an Happiness as this amounts to: And as we have abundant Reason, let us be the more so, if Divine Grace has so wrought upon us, as to qualify us for it, and for it up in us earned: Longings after it. And let us at the same time, seriously consider the lamentable Case of those, who when present *Mortality* is over, have a *second Death* awaiting them, which is a Thousand fold more terrible than the first.

We may also from what has been offer'd, see why it is that Good Christians are often so weary of the State they are at present in, and so willing to be gone from hence. They want to have *Mortality swallowed up of Life*;
and

and to change this earthly dying Life, which at best is but mixed, for one that is heavenly and ever lasting. We may also see, why some are so unwilling to be remov'd from hence. 'Tis either because they have but a low Opinion of that *Life*, of which *Mortality* will be *swallowed up* in the Case of true Believers, being utter Strangers to the Anticipations and Foretastes of it; or else they question their own Title to, and Fitness for it. But provided we are in the Number of Serious Christians, we may venture upon the Exchange, and need not be in any Terrour as to the Consequence. Then, tho' our *earthly House* or *Tabernacle* be taken down, at the Time and in the Way that GOD sees fit, we shall not, we cannot be left destitute, but shall have bestowed upon us, an Habitation prepared by God himself, that will be eternal and heavenly. Then tho' we are at present burden'd with Afflictions and Pressures, which are in a Measure common to all in this mortal State, we shall at length be delivered from them, and *Mortality* shall be *swallowed up of Life*. There's no such Antidote against the terrifying Fear of Death, as a well-grounded Hope of a better Life. And why should any regret the Removal of one from this Earth, in whose Case *Life* has *swallowed up. Mortality!*

I am vey sensible that by the late affecting Stroke of Divine Providence, among you my Friends, a most Tender Father, a Desirable Friend, a Faithful Pastor, an Useful Minister, and a Serious Christian is lost, or rather remov'd from this World of ours.

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He cannot properly be said to be lost since he is got beyond *Mortality* to *Life*; that *Life* that his Heart was set upon. He is no longer what he was: But he is unspeakably happier than he could be here. I am persuaded there are none of you that question this, in the Case of my deceas'd Brother, the Reverend Mr. *Mottershed*: Of whom I am Very sensible that according to usual Custom, it will be expected I should give some Account; tho' it will be but brief to what it might have been.

His upright Father, who was a reputable Tradesman in the City, and one of good worldly Substance, did from the first design this Son of his for the Sacred Ministry, and he also himself inclin'd that Way. And had we more Instances of the same Kind among us, of Persons either born to Estates, or who were by Divine Providence led into plentiful and easy Circumstances afterwards, that inclin'd the same Way, and had Courage and Resolution enough to persist in it, under a Variety of Temptations to the contrary, it would be a real Service to Religion, and have a great many good Consequences attending it.

The Father being a Member, of that Christian Society that was under the Pastoral Care of the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Doolittle* *, after he was ejected from the Parish Church of St. Alphage, for his Nonconformity in 1662; and having a particular Respect for his Worthy Minister when the Law had

* Of him, see my *Abridgment*. Vol. II. p. 52. and *Continuation*, p. 75.

had silenc'd him, he thought fit betimes to commit the Education of his Son to his Care. And it this Way fell out that this Mr. *Mottershed* and I, liv'd together for some Time under the same Roof, now above Five and Forty Years ago, while Mr. *Doalittel* was at *Islington*, where he had a private Academy; tho' he being some Years my Senior, was Reading Logick, while I only apply'd to *Grammar* Learning.

I well remember that Mr. *Mottershed* was at that Time generally respected by his Fellow-Students, as he has been since, by those of the best Reputation and Worth we have had among us. By Means of his Tutor's Care, his own Diligence, and the Divine Blessing, he improved considerably both in Humane and Divine Literature. And it deserves a special Remark, That not only did his Tutor's Pains with him contribute to his Advancement in Knowledge, but his Ministry also, which he duly attended, prov'd a successful Means of producing in him in his early Days, a serious Sense of Religion, as he himself publickly own'd some Years after, when he became his Assistant in his Place of Worship in *Mugwel Street*. And as this Step of Divine Providence was a great Comfort to the Tutor, so did it also greatly contribute to the sitting of the Pupil, for all the Service for which God afterwards design'd him.

Mr. *Mottershed* sometime after this, became Assistant to Mr. *Gosse*, while he was a Pastor of a Congregation of *Dissenters* in the Town of *Kingston upon Thames*, and gave that Worthy Man his Help, and his Flock the Benefit of his

Pains, for a good while *Gratis*. This he was well able to do, without straitning himself, by reason of the plentiful Provision GOD had made for him as to the World.

But before his appearing any where in publick, he was for some Time in *Holland*, and there liv'd, (I think he himself has told me so) under the same Roof with Monsieur *Bayle*, who is generally allow'd to have been one of the most polite and ingenious Gentlemen of that Age. But whether he lodg'd in the same Houle with him or no, I am well satisfied from what I remember of the Account he himself gave me, that he had the Benefit of his Lectures, and free Conversation, which were the Means of great Additions to his Knowledge, and gave him an advantageous Opportunity of an Insight into the *Belles Lettres*: And he was forward enough afterwards to own his Obligations to him, tho' very thankful to GOD, that he preserv'd him from the *Pyrrhonism*, which that great Man unhappily fell into, and was remarkable for.

He had his Education in order to the Sacred Ministry, during the Rigour and Severity of the Reign of King *Charles II*; and I must own, I think it argu'd a good Degree of Courage and Resolution in him, at such a Time as that, to venture to take his Lot with the poor despised *Nonconformists*, as he did very chearfully, notwithstanding the odious Charges brought against them, which he knew to be groundless: And I never could hear that he repented of his Choice.

I have

I have it from one that laid Hands upon him at the Time of his Ordination, that he discover'd a very serious Spirit upon that Occasion, and devoted himself to the Service of GOD in the Work of the Ministry with great Solemnity. And from this Service, when once he was engag'd in it, he was not to be diverted, by the farther Enlargement of his Estate, when the World flow'd in upon him; tho' that is a Temptation, the Force of which some others have not been able to withstand. And if he in this Case acted out of a sincere Regard to GOD, (which is what we have no Reason as I know of to call in question) whoever pass their Censures upon him, we may yet be assur'd he cannot go without his Reward.

His Entrance from a single upon a married State, (which is the greatest Change in common Life,) was not without great Preparation for the Discharge of the Duties, which that Change would bring along with it: And the Success in his Case may be allowed to be an Encouragement to others herein to imitate him; he being afterwards remarkable as an Affectionate Yoke-fellow, a most Tender Father, and a very Kind and Considerate Matter.

From *Kingston* he remov'd to this Place, where he succeeded the Reverend Mr. *George Day* * in the Pastoral Care of this Society, in the Year 1697. I have been credibly informed, that upon his first settling in this Congregation, he was of himself

* Of him, see my *Abridgment*. Vol. II. p. 602. and *Continuation*, p. 749, 750.

self inclined to have given his Pains for nothing; but he was advised by his Prudent Father-in-Law, to take what you were able and free to allow him, that he might not prejudice such as came after him; giving it away to such as were in want, as he saw fit. Which was most certainly wise Advice, and in my Apprehension more for your real Advantage, than for him to have preached to you so many Years for nothing, which would have tempted some to have thought it must be so always. And he gave you a good Example of Charity, in distributing what he received from you towards the supplying the Wants of others.

How he in other Respects behaved among you, you yourselves best know: But I have, been, told in his Ministerial Service, he has been useful to many, and would gladly have been so to more. He sought not Yours but you: And spreading the Knowledge of CHRIST among you, was a singular Pleasure to him. His Religious Performances in his Family I have been assured by a very good Judge, were managed with great Fervour, and the Inerest of GOD both general and particular lay very manifestly upon his Heart: And the Honour of GOD and the good of Souls was what he aimed at in his publick Ministrations.

His plentiful Circumstances in the World put him into a great Capacity of Usefulness beyond others, and 'tis hoped his Talent was not hid in a Napkin, but that the Loins of many blessed him. I was not I must own often a Solicitor with him, though he allowed me great Freedom: But this I
can.

can say, that I never made a Charitable Motion to him for a Person or Family, which he did not readily comply with. And I have also heard others of my Brethren say the same. But any that knew him might observe he was reserv'd in his natural Temper, which inclin'd him to pursue our Saviour's Rule strictly, and in the Letter of it. *Not to let his Left Hand know what his Right Hand did.*

God was pleas'd to give him a Number of Children, tho' he has left but one surviving him, with two Grand-children. The Loss of them that were taken from him, and particularly of him that was then his only Son, some time since, went very near him. Submission to the Divine Will in that Case, was what he endeavoured as it became him: But (I have some Reason to think, that) had he given himself more Freedom to vent his Concern, (which is what a merciful God no way disallows) it might have been better for him. His Strength declined gradually; and though he wanted not for the Advice of the Skilful, yet no means used succeeding to the repairing his Constitution, he after languishing Weakness, at length Expired in the Sixty-third Year of his Age.

He has now done with the World, in which he very much studied Privacy and Retirement. I cannot hear he ever published any thing from the Press, though (I have been informed) he assisted in translating some of the Learned Dr. *Lightfoot's* Works into *Latin*. But he is now gone from hence. And yet such as survive him have a Duty lying on them, upon his Removal. Suffer
me

me in a few Words to touch upon that, and I will soon conclude my Discourse.

It will concern you that sprang from him, to choose and cleave to his GOD as yours, and then you will find him peculiarly ready to favour and bless you. Study the Covenant, and that will at once afford you Consolation and Direction. A Father's and Grandfather's Blessing, tho' large in Shew and Appearance, without GOD's special Blessing, will go but a very little Way towards true Satisfaction and Felicity: But let that be added, and the Comfort will be great here, and so also will be the Happiness hereafter. Follow him that is now taken from you, as far as he followed CHRIST: And then e'er it be long, you will be with him where he now is, and find *Mortality swallowed up of Life*, as he now does.

And as for you that had the Benefit of his Ministerial Labours, be thankful that you enjoy'd them so long: be concern'd you profited under them no more; and yet bless God for what real Benefit you found accruing to you by their Means. Recollect what you saw in him, or heard from him, that may be most of Use to you. Follow his Faith, considering the End of his Conversation. Endeavour to improve his Death and Removal. Be thankful that tho' Ministers die, yet the Word of the LORD, that Word that is deliver'd, unto you under the Dispensation of the Gospel, abideth for ever, and is always the same. Look up to the Great Shepherd of the Sheep who dieth not,
for

for Help in filling up the Vacancy there is among you. Take of Divisions. By way of Prevention, allow me to leave it with you as my deliberate Advice, to beware of multiplying Candidates in the Election that is now necessary. Tis a Fancy of some, (and a most ridiculous Fancy it is, and an usual Spring of Contention and Division) that unless more than one be in Nomination, there is no Choice. Whereas on the contrary, I must own it to be my Apprehension, that where there is a Vacancy in any Society, and there is not Occasion for nominating any more than one, in order to the gaining the Consent of a good Majority, it is the best sort of Choice that can be desir'd. If a Majority do not agree, no Choice can be pretended; nor can there be any Dammage done. And supposing that a considerable Majority does agree. Why is it not a Choice? When there is such a Number agreeing as more than barely turns the Scale; and the Person pitch'd on is preferr'd, before all others that could come in Competition? And why is it not a better Choice, than by nominating several at once, to divide People into Parties; and lay a Temptation before them, (which very commonly proves the Case) to lessen and reflect on one to whom they are less inclin'd, in order to the advancing of another whom they are rather for which often does Mischief, and makes Work for Repentance? Let me then recommend it to you, first to nominate the Person, in whom, all Circumstances being consider'd, there is a Probability and Likelihood of a pretty general Concurrence: And till that Matter is try'd, let

it be agreed that no one else be nominated as a Candidate. If a good Majority concur, the Point aim'd at is gain'd, and the Vacancy is fill'd up. If that will not do, let another be nominated (and but one at once by Agreement) and let the same Trial be made as to him also: And so go on till a Person is fix'd on. I am firmly persuaded, and am confirm'd in it by Observation, that this is a better Way to Union and Harmony, than the multiplying the Number of Candidates, which is a common Inlet to Division and Confusion.

But I beseech you take Care to choose one that will have a joint Concern for *Truth* and *Love*. And when you have chosen a Successor to the Deceas'd, stick to him, and do not desert him, as some have been apt to do. Assist, encourage, and hearten him by your Presence, and Purses. Carry it to him with Respect and Tenderness. Pray heartily for him, and be ready to submit to him in the LORD. And tho' you choose one that is ever so faithful, or ever so Useful, yet still remember you sit under a dying Preacher, as well as are yourselves dying Hearers, that are just going off the Stage. Expect Changes in your Congregations as well as in your Families, while you are here, and endeavour to make a Christian Improvement of them.

In short. Strive to be Faithful in the Whole, and in every Part of your Duty, and that in every Capacity, out of a sincere Regard to God, and Love to Christ, and Concern for his Honour: And then
tho'

tho' you live in a very uncertain World,
and pass thro' many Changes yourselves,
and see many pass upon others too, both near
and round about you, yet may you live
in Hope, at last to see *Mortality so allowed
up of Life*, to the Honour or Him that
liveth and reigneth World without End;
and your own everlasting. Comfort and
Joy.

FINIS.