

*Funeral Sermon Occasion'd by the  
Sudden Death of the Reverend  
Mr. Matthew Sylvester*

*by*

*Edmund Calamy*



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A  
Funeral Sermon

Occasion'd by the

SUDDEN DEATH

Of the Reverend

*Mr. Matthew Sylvester.*

Preach'd at his

Meeting House in *Black-Fryars*,  
On *February* the First, 1707/8.

Being the next

Lord's-Day after his decease.

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By *EDMUND CALAMY*, E.F. & N.

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To those who Attended on  
the Ministry of the Late  
Reverend Mr: *Matthew  
Sylvester.*

Beloved in Our LORD,

**I** *Here present you with a plain Dis-  
course, upon a Sorrowful Occasion,  
which I desire you to Accept, as a  
Sincere Respect to you, and  
lately was over you in the  
LORD.*

*Accept it as a small Acknowledgment  
of the many Expressions of Affection and  
Kindness I receiv'd from you, when for  
four Years together, I was endeavouring  
to be an helper of your Faith and Joy.*

*Accept it as a Memorial of your De-  
ceased Pastor, whom I always highly ho-  
nour'd, and whom I hope you have Rea-  
son,*

son to remember with Great Thankfulness, considering how much of GOD you saw in him, and how much you receiv'd from GOD through his Hands. Having lost the Satisfaction of his pleasant and improving Conversation, it may not perhaps be disagreeable to you, to view the Picture I have drawn of him. Tho' it pretends not to Masterly Strokes, and is many way defective, yet I know not but it may help you to recollect the Features that are wanting, and keep you from losing what you are desirous to retain.

Accept it as a Faithful Warning to provide for a Dying Hour, which is one of the most important Cares, which we that live at so great uncertainty can employ our Thoughts about; and at the same time the best way to improve the sudden Death of such as we most valu'd while they liv'd: and the surest Course we can take, to make our own Lives Useful, our Last Agonies Comfortable, and the Issue of them Joyful.

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*I rejoyce that you have acted with so much Unanimity, in the Choice of one to fill up the Vacancy which Death hath made among you. I join my Prayers with Tours, that (if it may be for the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Tour Souls,) he that you have Chofen, may be inclin'd to accept Tour Call: that you may not fcatter, but may continue to dorn Religion, by your Vnity, Catholick Spiritedness, and Christian Temper: That he and you may experience to Your Satisfaction and Comfort, that the residue of the Spirit is with GOD; and that the Gleaning of the Grapes of Ephraim is better than the Vintage of Abiezer: And May you long sit under his Shadow with Great Delight, with a special Blessing from Heaven Attending you. Even you your selves are not more Hearthy in these Requests, than*

March 8. Yours in Our Common LORD.  
1707/8.

*E. Calamy.*

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*Advertisement.*

MR. *Matthew Silvester* hath Left  
ready for the Press,

The Christians Race and Patience  
Describ'd, Urg'd and Encourag'd, in  
several Sermons from *Heb. 12.* The  
Second Part.

Which will be shortly Printed, if  
the Booksellers meet with, suitable  
Encouragement.

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 MAT. XXIV. 44.

*Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.*

My Friends and Brethren.

**I**T cannot but be Affecting to you that had as Worthy a Servant of CHRIST as this City affords, preaching to you from this very Pulpit, at this very time, this Day was a Seven-night, to think that now he is not, for that GOD hath taken him. Is not did I say in compliance with our common Language? give me leave to corred it. I mean no more than that he is not here: He will be no more here. His Body is laid in the Dust. His Spirit is gone to the Father of Spirits; and he will have no farther concern with this lower World of ours. He is taken up to Act in a much higher and nobler Sphere. On Lord's Day last, he here ended his Ministerial Labours, and a little after his Life. How attentively would you have listen'd to his Words, had you had this Thought stirring in you, at the time when he was Speaking, that he was taking his last Farewel! Tho' he commonly had but an Handful in comparison (which was no great sign of the Wisdom of the Age) yet what Crowds would have attended him both in GOD's House and in his own, had it been known he was then to have his *Quietus est*, and immediatly be lodg'd in Glory? Who of you that lov'd him, (and who knew him, that did not love and ho-

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nour him?) but must be affected with the suddenness of his Death? He was gone in a Moment. He past through Death, before either he himself or they that were about him were aware. He was translated without Warning. There was scarce room for so much as a Sigh or a Groan upon the Rent; but Nature was spent in the Service of his Matter, and in the twinkling of an eye *Mortality was swallow'd up of Life*. He went directly from his Work to his Wages; and before he could well think of it made a Blessed Exchange; and past out of a troublesome World, into a State of Rest and Peace and Joy: from these course inconstant disturbed Regions, to farr better Mansions, Company, and Employments, In short, he died as a serious Christian that is always ready, and a Faithful Minister of CHRIST would wish to die. He dy'd just as he himself would have desir'd to die. For this time then let Providence Preach to you, and take this for the Language of it to every one of you: *Be ye also ready; for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.*

1 Cor. 5. 4.

We all of us know, that CHRIST is coming. He is coming to *Judge the World in Righteousness*; and he is coming to each of us in particular, to summon us by Death into another World. This Text without the least force is applicable either way. Say that it primarily refers to the Last Judgment, when 'tis as certain he will come again, as 'tis that he once was here already; yet may we properly enough apply it to the Day of our Death, which will as certainly transmit us over to the Last Judgment, without any possibility of having our State afterwards altered. We have abundant Evidence, that this  
coming

Acts 17.31.

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II

coming of Christ may be sudden, and without any particular Warning; therefore nothing concerns us more than to get ready, that we may not be surpriz'd. This is loudly proclaim'd by that Providence that has made this Congregation destitute: And therefore that way should it carefully be improv'd.

Let me then beg your Attention while I am setting before you these Four Things.

I. The Uncertainty we are in as to the Time and Circumstances of our Departure out of this World.

II. The Force of the Argument drawn from thence, to engage us to get ready for a Dying Hour.

III. Some further Motives to quicken our Preparation. And,

IV. Some Directions about the Way of our making such Provision, as that we may not miss of being ready for our LORD's Coming, let it be when, or now it will.

And when these Things are dispatch'd; What the present Mournful Providence most directly leads me to, will fall in very naturally.

1. Then, It will deserve our close and serious Consideration, That tho' there's nothing more certain, than that we all must Dye, we yet are utterly uncertain, when or where, or in what Circumstances we shall Dye, and pass off this

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Earthly

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Gen 27. 1.

\* Jac. Augusti Thuanii Histor. Lib. 62.

Earthly Stage. As our LORD'S last Coming will be in such an Hour as the World thinks not, so will it be also, as to his coming to withdraw us out of this into another State and Life. We may every one of us say with the Patriarch *Isaac*, upon the same Grounds, *Behold, I know not the Day of my Death*. There have been many that have in that respect been desirous of Information, and they have us'd the Astrological Art to make the Discovery: whereby they have been miserably befool'd and ensnar'd. They have lost the relish of their Comforts, and doubled their Cares and Troubles; and sometimes have hasten'd their End, that such Predictions might not remain unaccomplish'd. This is particularly reported to have been among others, \* the Case of the famous *Cardan*, who starv'd himself to Death, that he might leave the World according to the Rules of Astrology. But if we are rightly dispos'd, we shall rejoyce that in this respect we are kept in Ignorance. Many Useful Designs, would never have been formed; many Matters of Consequence, had never been attempted, if the Parties concern'd could certainly have foreseen that they should not have, liv'd beyond such a time. Many would have been quite sunk by the Difficulties and Troubles they have met with; they had been overborn by them, without any relief, had they been assur'd their Lives could not have reach'd beyond such a Date. Others would have been effectually tempted to a neglect of GOD and their Duty, to squander away their precious Time, and have run into some of the worst of Snares, if from the first they could have had any assurance that their Lives would have been so far prolong'd. Did we certainly know before-hand the exact Period, if  
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13

our Lives were but short, we should be very apt to spend them in Complaints and Lamentations, that they were not longer: And if we were assur'd that they would be considerably prolong'd, we should be strangely apt to throw them away upon Trifles, as reckoning, we had time enough before us: And either way, we should live to left purpose than we ordinarily do as things Hand with us, while we are kept at uncertainty. And do you want Evidence of this, that we are left at uncertainty? Does not *Solomon* fully confirm this Observation, when he cries out, *Man also knoweth not his time; as the Fishes that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the Snare, so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.* Death, as to its Season, Manner, and Circumstances, by no means falls within the reach of our fore-sight. It surprizes us at unawares; and often overtakes us, when we no more think of it, than the silly Birds or Fish do of the Net, or Snare in which they are caught. In reality, *we have our Flesh between our Teeth, and our Souls in our Hands.* Our Souls are as it were continually upon our Lips, ready to fly to him from whom they came forth: And we may each of us say with *David*, *My Soul is continually in my Hands.* And have we not very sensible Evidence of this? Hath not Death many ways to creep in upon us, that we think not of? Could *Abimelech* foresee when he assaulted the Tower of *Thebez*, that a piece of a Mill-stone cast from the top of it by the Hand of a Woman, should be his Death? Or King *Ahab*, that he should lose his Life by an Arrow shot by an unknown Soldier? Could *Pharaoh* foresee that he should be drown'd in the *Red-Sea*? *Judas*, that he should be his

Eccle. 9. 12.

Job 13. 14.

Psal. 119. 109.

Judges 9.

1 Kings 22.

<sup>14</sup>  
 his own Executioner? Or *Herod*, that he should be destroy'd by Worms and Maggots, because he robb'd GOD of his Glory? Could either *John Baptist* foresee, that he should be Beheaded, or *Stephen* that he should be Ston'd to Death, unless GOD was pleas'd to discover it to them? Good and bad are in this respect at the same pass: and Divine Providence serves considerable Purposes as to both, by keeping them in uncertainty \*.

\* Set Mr. Nathaniel Taylor's *Funeral Sermon*, occasion'd by the sudden Death of Mr. Nathaniel Vincent.

1 Sam. 16. 7.

Job 14. 5.

But though we are uncertain, it does not follow the Blessed GOD is so too. For in this respect as well as any other, does it hold true, that *the Lord seeth not as man seeth*. He can no more have any Accession to his Knowledge, than to any other of his Glorious Excellencies. He is no more uncertain as to the time, and manner of our Death, and all its Circumstances beforehand, than he is afterwards. Job tells us expressly. *The Days of man are determin'd; the number of his months is with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass*. However though all is clear to him, we are in the Dark. We have nothing to lead us into any certainty: and know not whence to borrow Light, or how to fix our Measures. May we not observe some of all Ages daily dying? How then can we tell before hand at what Age we shall be call'd away? Are there not Ten thousand Distempers, and as many Casualties that may be equally fatal to us? Have not some been carry'd off in their sleep and others awake? Some at their meals, others in the midst of their worldly business, and others upon their knees, as they have been calling upon GOD? Have not some gone abroad and return'd no more; while others have



15

have had Death entring into their Houles, and taking them upon their Beds, or in their Chairs? Are not some hurry'd away by an Apoplectick or Asthmatick Fit, without any Warning; when others are taken off by the Cholick, Gout, or Stone, or a Consumption, after much notice, and long pining and languishing? When there are so many ways out of the World, how can we tell which will be ours?

Its a vain thing to make Tragical Complaints of this uncertainty, and make as if we were hardly dealt with, in being left at a loss, in what so much concerns us. Our wisest way would be to improve it to a Christian purpose. The plain Language of it is this; that therefore and upon this account we ought never to be unprepar'd. This is the way that we find this Consideration is apply'd in the Text: *Therefore be ye also ready*: For nothing can be more evident than this; that for what Certainly will come, but we know not when or how, we ought never to be unprovided: And that you may be the more sensible of this, I shall go on in the

2d. Place, to Consider the Force of the Argument; *Therefore be ye ready*. And to heighten this instructive Inference, I move that a few things may be consider'd.

1. Whether we are ready or unready. Death won't stay, when our Time is come. There's no calling Time again, (which the Poor Woman once mov'd for) if we let it slip through our Hands, without applying our Hearts unto Wisdom. Let us amuse our selves as we will. Let any  
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16

one Distemper be it a Fever or Dropsie, a Gangrene, Consumption, or Astma, come and seize us, with a Commission to put a Period to our Lives, it will take its Course, and cut us off, whether we are prepar'd or unprovided. Had we indeed any security that though we were careless and negligent before, yet when our End drew near, we could be able to Hop the Arrest of Death, till we made ready, we should have something of an excuse: But what can be more foolish than such a thought? Death won't stay a moment because of our being unprovided: and therefore we run the utmost hazard in being so. The Ship moves forward in the Voyage whether the Passengers deep or wake: and Death moves constantly towards us; whether we answer the great End of our Life or neglect it. Whether we really mind another Word or mind it not, it makes no difference in executing its Commission: There's no way to bribe or retard it. And therefore we had need be always ready.

2. It's very common to be surpriz'd. That is a thing which is to the full as common as it is for People to live without GOD in the World; as common as it for Men to live as if they were to live here always. It's a very usual thing for those whom the Blessed JESUS has entrusted with many Talents, expecting they should lay them out for his Honour, and in his Service, to fancy that *their Lord delayeth his coming*, and thereupon to abuse their Trust. You have this, very plainly express'd a few Verses after the Text.

ver. 48. And it is as usual for *the Lord of such servants*, as is also here intimated, to *come in a day they looked not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of.*

ver. 50.

17

of. Were but this believ'd and consider'd, none could dare to continue so much as a Day, unprepar'd for a Dying Hour, for fear lest in that Day they might see an Hand writing on the Wall, to strike them into a fit of Trembling: for fear left in that very Day, they might hear a Voice from GOD, calling them to come away, for that their Soul is requir'd at their Hands. They would not dare to defer their careful endeavours to get ready, for fear their Resolutions for hereafter, should bear longer Date than the time of their Lives. For,

3. To be surpriz'd by Death when unready, and unprepar'd, would be fatal. For *as the Tree falls foit shall lie: in the place where it falleth, there it shall be.* Eccles. 11. 3. Our final State will be irrevocably fix'd at the time of our Departure hence. If we are not ready then, we never can be ready. For then all Means, and Helps, and Offers, will be past and gon for ever. And this is a thought that may and ought deeply to affect. Would you know why we that are Ministers often press you so earnestly to get ready for a Dying hour, and for another World, this is the plain Reason; because when your LORD actually comes, and Death arrests, it will be too late. If you intend to work at all in your Great Concern, you should do it *while it is day, because the night cometh, when no Man can work.* John 9. 4. Should your Souls be required at your Hands, (as they may be at any time) and you be unready and unprovided, you'll call your selves a thousand Fools; you'd be full of Horror; you'd be miserable past retrieve, and that for ever.

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4. Suppose there should be some little Warning before Death makes an actual seizure, yet is it a mighty hazard whether or no Persons then get truly ready, that were not habitually so before. 'Tis indeed undoubtedly true, that true sincere Penitents, let them come in at what Hour they will, are never rejected: But I doubt they that pretend to come in but at the last Hour, when they had Calls, and Opportunities, and Helps before, are very seldom sincere. I'm afraid Sick Beds and Death Beds are in that respect much alike. Now we actually find Sick-Bed Terrors often wear off, after a Recovery, for want of a real Change of Heart: And we may have just cause to fear, that many that die seeming Penitents after a wicked Life, have not a more true and real Change, than some that recover and are spar'd, and afterwards prove as bad as ever. Get ready therefore now, or it's a thousand to one, whether or no you ever, will. GOD now calls and warns, and is willing to assist you in getting ready: But if you continue repelling his Grace, it will be but just with him at the Last to deny or to withdraw it. And you may as well get ready after you are dead, as do it without the Grace of GOD, even while you are living. Satisfy not your selves therefore with resolving that you will hereafter make? Provision though not now, in a Case where there is so much depending: This is too much for you to promise either on GOD's part or on your own. 'Tis too much for you to promise on your own part, because there is but very little likelihood that you should hereafter be more inclin'd that way than now. 'Tis too much also for you to promise on GOD's part;

19

part; not only because 'tis utterly dubious whether or no he may give you time sufficient to get ready to make your Exit; but also because if there should be sufficient time, yet his Grace is not at your Beck: and sufficient Grace at such a time, after Slights and Abuses long persisted in, may as justly be deny'd in your Case, as time sufficient in the Case of others. Upon these Considerations, I should think you might discern a great force in the Argument, to be always ready, unless you can be willing to run the venture of being endlesly miserable, which to all that are capable of judging rightly, cannot appear any other than the height of Folly and Madness.

But that this matter which is of the Last Moment to every one of us, may affect us yet the more, I shall

3. In the Third Place subjoyn some additional Motives, which well deserve our most serious Thoughts.

1. Then, Consider we are to Dye but once. Where we are to do a thing often, if it be of Importance, we have a great deal of Reason to be careful that we may do it well and as we ought. This is our Case, as to the Publick Worship of GOD in general, and as to the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, in which we are solemnly to renew our Covenant with our GOD and Saviour, which is one of the highest Acts of Worship, in particular. Tho' that Ordinance oft returns, yet it becomes us to be careful and serious in our Preparation; and they that are most so, receive the most Benefit, which is a sufficient Reason. But as

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for Dying, that is a thing that is to be done but once; And because we can Dye but twice, we ought to take the more care to be ready, that so we may Dye well. It should be our great Care to make such Provision, as that we may Dye safely, so as to run no hazard. In some Cases it may be a Relief, to us, to think, that if we don't do a thing so well as we should do now, we may hope to do it better afterwards: But there's not the least room for such a Thought in this Case. If we don't Dye well, when our time is come, there's no returning back to Dye over again, that we may do it better. Because therefore we can Dye but once, let us be the more concern'd to get ready, that we may not have an Eternity to spend in fruitless Lamentations and Complaints.

2. Death is a mighty Change, and therefore we should get ready, for it. It is the greatest Change that can pass upon us. It carries us from all present Enjoyments, to which we have long been accustom'd. It separates between Soul and Body, and leaves one part of ourselves behind. It turns the Body to Dust and Putrefaction, and brings the Soul into the near Presence of GOD. It carries us from Time to Eternity, and from Work to Reward: It opens the Eyes of the Soul, and leaves its State tor ever unchangeable; It brings into a new State, a new Life, a new World, a new Society, a new Employment, and that agreeable to the prevailing Complexion of the Soul before. The Awfulness of the Change that Death carries in it, should make us much the more careful to get ready. Farther,

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21

3. It is no easy thing for us to get ready for a Dying-hour, and therefore the more would Diligence and Application become us. The whole time of our Lives is not more than sufficient for this purpose. We have no Time to lose, and squander away we know not how. We have many Sins to repent of, many Graces to obtain, many Temptations to resist, many Difficulties to break thro', and many Duties to perform; and therefore have no need to loyter. We must get our Guilt remov'd, our Hearts purify'd, our Nature refin'd; the Image of GOD impress'd, and all our Corruptions mortify'd: And this requires great Earnestness and Diligence. And in all this we must expect much Opposition from the Devil, our Grand Enemy; great hindrances from the World, and that both from its smiles and frowns; and much hindrance also from our own backward, treacherous, deceitful Hearts. This being consider'd, it cannot appear easy for us to get ready: and therefore our Concern and Application should be the more earnest and close.

4. Conscience is often then most awaken'd when our LORD comes to Translate us into another World. Then are many rouz'd up, who before let what would be said or done to them, would give way to a drowzy security. Then is Conscience very often most quick and smart in its Charges and Threats, if all be not right within. Then are those Sins many times distinctly remembred, which before were forgotten. Then will Conscience speak freely and lay, These things hast thou done, and those things  
hast

22

hast thou omitted; Thus strong were thy Corruptions; and thus Prevalent Temptations; in this thing thou trifledst with GOD; in that thou wert injurious to thy Fellow Creatures, and Fellow Christians; and here thou shamefully indulgedst thyself, tho' thou knewest that the Law of GOD forbad thee. Then as much as it was before asleep, will it oft warn of approaching consuming Vengeance; and consign us over to an Almighty Wrath. This is very Affecting. We had need therefore get ready for the Hour of our LORD's coming, tho' it be uncertain, that so Conscience upon comparing us with the Word of GOD, may not at such a time condemn us, instead of speaking Peace.

5. All the Mercies and Advantages which GOD is pleas'd to afford us, are design'd to help and assist us in getting ready for Death, when our LORD will come. Therefore have we so many Calls and Invitations, Means and Helps, that Death may not surprize us while we are unprepared. 'Twill be peculiarly sad and dismal for any Man to have many Years Patience and Goodness, and a variety of gracious Means and Helps, coming in at last to witness against him. The Aim of all the Mercies afforded us in the Course of our Lives, is plainly this; To help us to lay-up in store a good Foundation against the time to come, that so when Death carries us off this Earthly Stage, we may be able to lay hold on Eternal Life. If this End be cross'd, these Mercies are lost; which will be a most dismal and uncomfortable Reflection in the Hour of Death.

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23

6. There is a mighty difference when Death once comes, between them ready and the unready. Such as are found ready, are then to receive the End of their Faith, and Hope, and Patience, and Labours, and Sufferings: Whereas Death to them that are unready, will be an end of all their Pleasure and Joy, all their Mercies, and Hopes, and Comforts, and that for ever. To the ready, Death will be but an Entrance into the Joy of their LORD, a Passage into an infinitely Happy Life, a Translation to a state of Bliss, and Rest, and Peace, that never will end: Whereas to the unready, it will be but a sending them to their own Place, a cutting them down as Fuel for everlasting Burnings, a changing them from Earth to Hell, from Light to Darkness, from Pleasure to Pain, and from Delight to Torment; from the Offers of Grace to the Revelation of Wrath, and from Hope to everlasting Despair. These are very Awful Things, and call loudly upon all that Believe them, to prepare and be ready, as they would not wish at last, tho' in vain, that they had never been born.

7. No Care we now can take to get ready for Death will be at last repented of. We shall not at last think that we were capable of too much Pains in providing for an Hour, in which all the Grace that we could before have treasur'd up, will not be found any more than is needful. If we have Labour'd ever so diligently. Walked ever so circumspectly, Deny'd ourselves ever so patiently, and resisted Temptations ever so stedfastly, and so are ever so well prepar'd, we shall find all  
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little enough to support our Spirits at such a time, when Flesh and Heart will fail us, and all sensible Props and Stays will be entirely gon. Our utmost Pains and Care is not more than is needful. The best and the warmest Christians, even they that have walk'd the most closely with GOD, and serv'd him most uprightly, and liv'd most exemplarily, and labour a most unweariedly in the Work of the LORD, upon a near approach of Death, are often heard to complain of their unreadiness. They find their Faith at best but weak, their Hope but faint, their Love but cold, and every Grace but imperfect to what they would have it be; and therefore they reckon themselves but unready in comparison of what they would aim at, and aspire after. But none at such a time think they have kept too close to their GOD and Saviour, been too firm in their adhering to Him, or too earnest in serving of Him. And this ought to encourage us to do all we can to be as ready as may be.

8. Consider that Sickness is a very unfit time to make a beginning of getting ready for the Hour of Death. Often have I thought while I have been by the Beds of some that have been in racking Pain, or under Decays of Nature, or sudden Sickness, that in a little while has put a Period to their Days, of the unfitness of such a time, for them first to begin to look to GOD, or mind their Souls, or make provision for another World. For what with the Hurries of Thought, and Agonies of Spirit that are occasioned by their Pain or Sickness on one Hand, and what with the Diversion given by Medical Prescriptions and Potions, or the Operations of Chyrur-

25

Chyrurgeons, and the attendance they require; which in their Place are necessary, and the matter of plain Duty, on the other hand: What with the officious Tenderness of concern'd Friends and Relations, and what with the interposition of necessary Secular Cares, which will be ever and anon interposing, there is so little room or heart left for an earnest Application to Spiritual Matters, unless it be by little fits or starts, that I cannot but look upon them as the miserablest Creatures upon Earth, that are then to make their first earnest Essay, in that which ought to be the great Business of their Lives. They that have been most Serious before, find they have then enough to do to bear up or behave themselves tolerably. What a sad Case therefore must they be in, who have Knowledge then to get in the Things of GOD; or a whole Life past to rip up, that has been full of Wickedness without any serious and hearty Regard to GOD at all? I think it is not at all to be wondered at, if their Spirits are sunk with Concern, or bewildred in Confusion. Consider this, I beech you, before-hand, and make suitable provision, as you would not have it to be your own Case.

*Lastly*, Consider also how Affecting a thing it is to Dye, even tho' there be the truth of Grace, and real hope of a better Life. At a distance we may think it an easy thing in such a Case to yield to a Dissolution; and yet when it comes to the Point, we may, be hard put to it: At least, it has been so with many, whose Estate I doubt not has in the main been safe. Tho' Persons may conceive they have good Ground to hope that they truly belong to GOD, yet with all our

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Light, we are comparatively such strangers to the Particulars of a Future State, and it is so affecting a thing to shoot the Gulph that parts both Worlds, that tho' Persons may be free to take a solemn Leave of their Friends and dearest Relations, and to relinquish their Bodies, and consign them to the House of Darkness, they may yet start back at the strangeness of the Prospect, when they attempt to look nearly into another World; and it is easily to be accounted for, if they are somewhat appal'd and struck. And if it may be so with truly Gracious Persons, then how dismal is that Man's Case that is altogether unprovided! Who must leave all the Objects of his Love, and Trust, and Hopes behind him; and has none to sustain him in the dark Passage, and none to receive him on the other side the Gulph, but Hellish Fiends, with whom he must abide for ever! This is better conceiv'd than exprest. These things deserve more than meer passing Thoughts.

4. I shall now in the fourth place, add some Directions about providing for a Dying-hour: And I dare undertake for the Consequence, where any have but a Heart to follow them. They are partly Negative, and partly Positive.

The Negative Directions are these that follow:

1. Don't live in any Sin without Repentance. 'Tis dangerous to be under Guilt, without making our Peace with GOD. Sins that seem small before, will in a Dying-hour give great Disturbance. Be afraid of having the Sins of your whole Lives to look back upon at such a time, without Reason to hope that any are pardon'd. Live not  
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27

without often calling yourselves to an Account. If any Duty has been omitted, don't persist in that Omission, but put it in practise. If Temptations to Sin have been comply'd with, draw back, and don't persist. Confess and forsake without delay. If you have dishonour'd GOD, be humbled, and return to him thro' JESUS CHRIST: But don't add Sin to Sin, by any Vindication or Extenuation of your Fault. If you have injur'd your Neighbour, repair the Injury as far as you are able. If you have injur'd him in his Property, make Restitution; if in his Soul and in Spiritual Respects, by a Conjunction in Sin, let him with Grief and Sorrow of Heart know your Trouble, and beg Forgiveness of him, as well as of GOD. And do this in your; Health and Strength, and you'll have the less to do when Sickness shall seize you, and Death shall approach.

2. Cleave not too close to Creature-comforts. Many People that have the truth of Grace in their Hearts, are too incident to this Fault. They give the perishing Comforts of this Life too much room in their Hearts, and then when a time of reparation comes, they are as it were rent from themselves. If you over-love any thing in this World, you'll be apt to receive a Message of Death, as *Hezekiah* did, *turning your Face to the Wall and weeping*. If therefore you would be ready to Dye, let nothing here below have your Hearts; and endeavour with *St. Paul* to Dye *daily*.

<sup>2</sup> Kings 20.  
2, 3.

<sup>1</sup> Cor. 15. 31.

3. Be not over-much incumber'd in the World, so as not to be able to leave your Concerns clear,  
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if GOD should call you hence. Many involve themselves in great Difficulties, thro' the intricateness of their Affairs, as supposing they have a great while to stay here below; and then coming to be cut shorter than they were aware of, they are in miserable Confusion. They know not how to leave this World, because they'll tell you, they shall leave their Matters in such a posture as will be to the Damage of their Families, and it may be a Discredit to Religion, which is very possible, even where the Heart may be truly Upright. But I should think it the part of Wise Men, to quit a wordly Prospect that might be Advantagious, supposing Life were prolong'd, rather than run the hazard of making the last Hours uncomfortable, and a Dying-bed uneasy. Let not your Concerns therefore take too wide a Compass; nor let them remain unsettled, as far as you are able. Live not without a Will and Testament by you; nor let any Trusts that have been committed to you, remain undischarg'd; that so if your LORD should come, and call you away, you may have nothing else to mind, but that World you are passing into; may have no Secular Cares to perplex and harrass you.

4. Live not Softly, Delicately and Voluptuously. If you'd be easy on a Dying-bed, live a Life of Warfare, and Labour, and Watchfulness, and keep your Appetites and Passions within bounds, without too much Indulgence. Affect not to live without something to Exercise you; but endeavour to bear to be cross'd. The more you inure yourselves to Hardships, and to bear Difficulties, the more ready will you be to enter your Graves: But the Death-bed of a Voluptuous

29

ous Man upbraids him for his deceitful Softness, and its Pains are the sharper. He that would Dye both easily and safely, must in this World love Humility, and Self-denial.

The Positive Directions I add, are these:

1. Get and clear up an Interest in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, and live by Faith on him; and that is the best way in the World to get ready for Death. Remember that of the Apostle, *He that hath the Son, hath Life.* 1 Joh. 5. 12. He not only hath a solid and substantial, but a durable and everlasting Life. He hath a Life that cannot expire; a Life that he cannot lose; a Life that Death itself cannot take away, fo as that it should not remain even afterwards. He may triumph even at the last Gasp, when all visible Hopes, and Props, and Comforts are gon; because he is then going to live at the highest Rate, in the midst of the Objects of his greatest Delight, and at a distance from Clogs, Imbarrasments and Imperfections; get united to CHRIST, and tho' you Dye, yet shall you Live; nay. He'll be Life to you in the very Death.

2. Take care to be experimentally Acquainted with the Power of Godliness, without resting in a nicer empty Form, which is the undoing of Thousands, and Millions. Of all things in the World be serious and hearty in Religion, and make that your grand Business, and let all other things give way to it. Don't endeavour so much to appear and be thought to be Good, as really to be so. Take constant care of your Way and Course. *Walk not after the Flesh, but after the Sprit.* Rom. 8. 1. And Remember,

30

ber, that that is the genuine Mark and Badge of such as are in CHRIST, *to whom therefore there is no Condemnation.* Mind the Inwards of Religion much more than the Externals. Let nothing satisfy you that is short of an Universal Holiness of Heart and Life: And secure the *Testimony* of your own *Consciences, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, you have had your Conversation in this World;* and this will be a refreshing Cordial, and a mighty *Rejoycing* to you, even when your Natural Spirits sink and faint, and can no longer be able to support you.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

Phil. 2. 12.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

3. Be diligent and faithful in your proper Work and Business. Be active in the Business of your General Calling as you are Christians. *Work out your own Salvation with fear and trembling. Make your Calling and Election sure.* Mind also with Diligence the Business of your Particular Callings, in the several Stations in which the Providence of GOD has fix'd you in this World. St. Paul having been Diligent and Faithful while he liv'd, found the Comfort of it when he came to dye. And it must necessarily be an unspeakable Consolation to him, to be able thento say, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* If we are but careful to imitate his Example, we may hope it will be the like with us also. Remember therefore what our LORD here says, in the next Verse but one after my Text: *Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.* Be you found Diligent out of a regard to GOD in the Duties of your proper Place and Station when Death comes to give you a

2 Tim. 4. 7,

8.

Ver. 46.

Summons,



31

Summons and you need not fear but you shall be Blessed.

4. Put off no Duty till hereafter; for which you have present Calls and Opportunities. *Make haste, and delay not to keep God's Commandments.* Ps. 119. 60. Take the Wise Man's Advice; *Whatsoever thy Hand finds to do,* whatsoever you are convinc'd is necessary to be done, for GOD, your Souls, or another World, do it out of hand; *do it with thy might: for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave whither thou goest.* Eccl. 9. 10. Now is your only working time, and therefore be speedy.

5. Familiarize to yourselves before-hand that other World into which Death is an Entrance. Endeavour to be in love with the Felicity of Angels and perfected Saints. Set yourselves with the utmost Intention to mind the Concernments of the Future State, the invisible Things of the other World; and direct the main stream of your Thoughts and Desires, Hopes and Joys thitherward, If you have just reason to apprehend that you are of the number of GOD's truly devoted Servants, ever and anon sit down, and compare your present with your expected State; what you are, with what you hope to be. Think of exchanging Infirmary, Pollution, Darkness, Deformity, Trouble and Complaint, for Power, Purity, Light, Beauty, Rest and Praise. View the Map of the *Heavenly Canaan*, as you find it drawn up before you in the Book of GOD: Soar aloft, and see by Faith the Glory and Riches, the Pleasures and Plenty of the Country, and endeavour to get your Hearts suitably affected. This will help  
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32

to abate the fear of Death, and make it tolerable and easy to you.

6. Carefully improve the Helps of GOD'S House, as those that know you must in a little time be taken from them. See to it, that you continue not cumbering the Ground in the Vineyard of GOD: But be fruitful; and that in proportion to your Advantages. Lift up your Hearts to GOD in all publick solemn Addresses. Fall under the Authority of his Word. Sincerely Covenant with him at his Table, to be His without reserves; His in all Estates; His for ever. Be not satisfy'd without Communion with GOD in all his Ordinances. Follow hard after Him; listen to his Calls, and comply with his Demands without demurr. Remember, that you attend on dying Ministers, that must e'er long be separated from you by Death, that others may fill up their room: And that you are dying Hearers, at such uncertainty, that you know not as to any Sermon you hear, but it may be your last. Take heed of Hearing drowzily, as you would not have Matter of Terror to disturb you in a Dying-hour: But Hear as for your Lives; and let your Actions be correspondent; and you may hope that you shall have Peace, even under the Assault of the King of Terrors.

7. Strive to Live much in a little Time. Some live apace in a Natural sense; they hasten themselves out of the World before their time, by their Intemperance and Lewdness: But I would advise you to live apace, in a Moral, a Spiritual, and Religious sense. Our Blessed LORD liv'd not much above Thirty Years in this World; but  
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33

but he liv'd more in that little time, than any others that liv'd their Centuries of Years. 'Tis not a long, but a faithful and useful Life that is most desirable, and most like His Life, who is Life itself. Live much in a few Years. Dispatch the great Business of Life out of hand. Improve your Time to your utmost; and Death may be comfortable let it come ever so soon; and you may be easy under it, instead of being terrify'd upon its approach.

8. And *Lastly*, Endeavour to improve all Providential Warnings that are given by the sudden and unexpected removal of Relations or Acquaintance, Useful Ministers, or Christian Friends. Are such snatch'd away before you thought of it? Think with yourselves that the same might have been your Case, or may yet be yours. We plainly lose the Benefit that GOD intends for us by Strokes of this sort, if we are not thereby put upon serious Enquiry, what Posture we are in for our own Death and Dissolution; which Enquiry, closely pursu'd would much further and promote our Readiness.

We ought to take this as the Voice of GOD to us all, by the late surprizing Death of Good Mr. *Sylvester*. His Decease, and the manner of it, has a Voice to his Family, to his Congregation, to his Brethren in the Ministry, and to the whole City. How happy would it be were the Voice but universally listen'd to!

It has a Voice to his Family, and warns them not to be satisfy'd with being a little affected for  
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<sup>34</sup> the present, with the Loss of such a Relative; who was carry'd off before they were well aware; but to prepare to follow: And to imitate his Life, if they'd be like him in his Death It speaks to his Congregation, not only to improve Spiritual Helps while they have them, but to remember all their Days that they may be snatch'd from under the Ministers they attend upon, or have their Ministers call'd away from them, and therefore to be always ready. It speaks to, his Brethren in the Ministry to be Diligent, and Faithful, and Constant, in their Master's Work, and take care of their own Souls, while they are watching over the Souls of others, for that they may be surpriz'd at unawares, as well as any of the Members of their respective Flocks. It speaks to this whole City, to Value their Ministers more, and to be more careful to Improve by them, since they know not how soon or suddenly their Mouths may be stopp'd with Dust, and they may be call'd Home. It speaks to us all, to be ready at each Watch, since we know not when our LORD may call. And if the so sudden Decease of this Man of GOD may but effectually stir up any in these Respects, it will render it an Happy Providence to others, us I doubt not but it was to him.

It now only remains, that I add a few Words concerning him that is gone, and a little Advice to you that survive, that are nearly concern'd in the Loss of him.

As to my deceas'd Friend and Father, the Reverend Mr. *Matthew Sylvester*, I could with great  
Ease

35

Ease and Pleasure enlarge in his Character; and am much more at a loss what to pass by, than what to say concerning him. He was an able Divine, a good Linguist, no mean Philosopher, an excellent Casuist, an admirable Textuary, and one of uncommon Divine Eloquence in Pleading at the Throne of Grace. He had a Touring Genius, a rich and copious Fancy, and great depth of Thought: To which had there been Joyn'd a Suitable Elocution and Expression, I doubt not but he would have been univerfully esteem'd one of the greatest Men of the Age.

His Parents dy'd when he was young, and left him destitute: But GOD took care of him. He had his Education in St. *John's*-College in *Cambridge*, where tho' his Circumstances were strait, yet his Studiousness in order to future Service was remarkable; and his Diligence and Humility, and affable and obliging Carriage procur'd him Friends, from whom he receiv'd much Kindness. He left the University sooner than his Inclination would have led him, under the force of Necessity: And after some time spent in the Country, where in the midst of other Engagements, he pursu'd his Studies closely, he fix'd in the Living of *Gunworly*, in the County and Diocess of *Lincoln*. There the *Act for Uniformity* found and ejected him in the Year 1662. The Learned Dr. *Sanderson* then Bishop of the Diocess, who was some way Related to him, sent for him, treated him most courteously, and offer'd him considerable Preferment if he would Conform: But after much urging upon some Points, he frankly told him, he could not come into the Church with Satisfac-

<sup>36</sup>dition to his Conscience, and therefore must be excus'd. He has often told me, that the *Unfeign'd Assent and Consent* that was requir'd of him, together with the Declaring that none were bound by the *Solemn League and Covenant* that took it, were two Things that he much stuck at. The *Re-ordination* that was Insisted on, while he was satisfy'd that his former Ordination was agreable to the Word of GOD, he could not take to be any other than'a Mockery: And the *Power of the Church to Decree Rites and Ceremonies* asserted in the Twentieth Article, he could by no means understand. Tho' he knew, and could easily foresee that his Dissent from the National Church (which he yet maintain'd with great Moderation) would expose him to considerable Hardships, yet the Peace of his Conscience bore him up: And he has many times said, That he never had one repenting Thought as to his Non-conformity.

After his being Silenc'd, he liv'd some time with Sir *John Bright* as his Domestick Chaplain, and afterward with *John White* Esquire of *Nottinghamshire*; in both which Families he was an Ornament to his Function, and met with abundant Civilities and Respects. He came to this City, the Year after the Fire, and here had a share in the Hardships on the Dissenters, tho' he never was in a Prison, as several other of his Brethren were. He cultivated however a good Correspondence with several Divines of the Establish'd Church, and was well respected by several of them; especially by the late Archbishop *Tillotson* and Dr. *Whitchcot*.

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37

But no Man ever more valu'd him than the Excellent Mr. *Baxter*, who was a good Judge of Men: And his Esteem for Mr. *Baxter* on the other side ran as high, as it was fit it should towards any Mortal Man: Perhaps he exceeded. He desir'd to be known to Posterity by this Character, as Mr. *Baxter's Friend*: And so I believe he will. The account I have had from himself of some free Conversation that past between them Two, upon some uncommon Subjects, is very pleasant to recollect, and I desire never to forget it. Never was there a greater Harmony between two Colleagues, than between Mr. *Baxter* and him, when they both Preach'd to the same People; tho' Mr. *Sylvester* was the Pastor, and Mr. *Baxter* but the Assistant: And never were People happier in two stated Ministers than they that had the Benefit of their joynt Labours. Mr. *Baxter* shew'd his Respects to him Dying as well as Living; and if he could have influenc'd them, none of his Friends should have deferred him upon his Decease. The going off of so many of them was a Encouragement; but upright Mr. *Sylvester* look'd higher than Man: And yet tho' he was not follow'd, and admir'd, and courted, and flock'd after as some others, he found that Declaration verify'd. *Them that honour me, I will honour*. And therefore he had as great a share of the real Esteem and Respect, of the lovers of GOD and true Goodness, to the last, as most Men.

He has often signify'd it to his Friends to be his earnest Desire, and it was his frequent Request to GOD in his Family-prayers, That his  
Life

38

Life and Usefulness might continue and expire together: And he has many times said, That it was an Happy Thing to slip out of this World into Eternity. Herein GOD gave him his Desire, and answer'd his Request. For when his Usefulness had extended to the Age of Seventy-one, GOD withdrew him on a sudden, and he expir'd without the usual Formalities of Death. And whosoever considers his Natural Temper which was timorous, and the awful Thoughts he had of Death, which few can be strangers to, who Convers'd familiarly with him, must own this to have been a great Mercy to him.

However; thus we lost before we thought of it, as Exemplary a Person as Death could well have fasten'd on, and had not opportunity given so much as of putting up one Prayer to GOD for his continuance yet a while longer among us. When several Years ago, he had a violent Bleeding which brought him so very low, and when he was afterwards endanger'd by other Illnesses, there were many Prayers ascending to Heaven for him: But now his Work was done, and his Race run, and GOD remov'd him without the least warning, that no Intercession might be made for the prolonging his valuable Life. But tho' GOD has now taken him out of our reach and sight, and withdrawn him out of our World, yet his Example is left behind, and ought not to be forgotten by us.

He well deserv'd the Character that Mr. *Baxter* gave of him, in *the History of his Life and Times*, which is this; That he was a *Man of excellent meekness*



39

*meekness of Temper, sound and peaceable Principles, a godly Life, and great Ability in the Ministerial Work.* But that's too short. He was really very Exemplary, as a Christian, as a Minister; as a Husband, as a Father, and as a Friend.

Mr. Baxter's  
Life, in Fol.  
Part III. page  
96.

Take him as a Christian; and how remarkable was his Humility and Meekness! What a warm sense did he discover of his constant Dependance! What a Worm was he in his own esteem! What exalted Thoughts would he often vent of Divine Grace! How close was his Dependance on CHRIST the Mediator! How much was he taken up in the Admiration of Redeeming-Love? How Active was he for GOD; and how resign'd and submissive to his Will! How patient under Difficulties, Exercises and Tryals! How little did he make of this World! How quietly could he see others prefer'd before him! What a Stranger was he to Covetousness! How Temperate was he in all Things! How Charitable in Bearing and Forbearing, and Relieving! How tender was he of the Reputation of all he had to do with! And how cautious of speaking ill of any! And how entirely did he seem to all that knew him, to be made up of Love to GOD and Man! His Religion was all of a Piece. There was nothing of it forc'd or affected; but it was Natural, Free and Vital; and any Man would judge so, that made his Remarks upon him. A number of such Instances would recommend Christianity to the World, in even as Degenerate an Age as ours.

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40

Consider him as a Minister; and he was Well-furnish'd, Ready, Diligent and Faithful. He had Awful Thoughts of his Office, and a great Concern to support the Credit of it. I never yet knew any Man in whom I could discover a greater Veneration for those Two standing Ordinances of GOD, the Magistracy and the Ministry, than he had. No Man more Solemn in all the Parts of Ministerial Service. He was very sensible that there was no way to secure the Respect that was due to the Office of the Ministry, like care to fill it up with Gravity and Seriousness. Never did I observe any one speak to GOD or from him with more solemnity of Spirit than he. How surprisingly have I sometimes known him manage the Office of Infant-Baptism, so as strangely to Instruct, and Affect, and Improve the Standers by, and produce other thoughts of that Ordinance than they had before. And with what a Majesty, and in what an heavenly Strain have I often known him manage the other Sacrament of the LORD's Supper, to the raising the Hearts of the Communicants to an unusual pitch of Devotion! I have observ'd something of this kind, when I had fair Opportunity for it, that I must confess, I desire never to forget. And how ready was he in solving Cases of Confidence? How directly without any long Harangues, and Circumlocutions, would he point out the chief difficulty of the Cases propos'd to him; and then how dexterously would he apply his Solutions to the greatest Difficulties of the Enquirers! His Catholick Spiritedness also was very, remarkable.

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<sup>41</sup>He had no narrow stingy Party Principles. He was no lover of Contentions, but of Peace and Truth: And all that lov'd GOD and true Goodness might be secure of his Respect, and Love, and Assistance, as far as they could desire it, how much soever they differ'd from him. He was studious to the Last, in order to the farther improvement of his own Mind, and encreasing his Furniture, tho' it was very considerable; by which he sham'd those who though they fall vastly short of him, yet Act as if they were past making any farther Advancement. He was most tender in his regard to Younger Ministers. He heartily lov'd them, and rejoyc'd in their hopefulness, and growing Usefulness: was upon all Occasions concern'd for their Reputation, and free and communicative to them without reserve. In him we have lost a Common Father. For my part I cannot but look upon it as a just Debt to his Memory; (which on that Account will ever be previous with me) thankfully to acknowledge, that the freedom he us'd with me and allow'd me with him, when I assisted him one part of the Day for four Years together, at my first setting out in the Ministry, was such an Happiness, that I rank it among the greatest Mercies of my Life. Nor must I forget the great Usefulness of his general Conversation, which was prudent and instructive, and very Ornamental to him as a Minister. I must confess I have sometimes thought (and I have taken the liberty of signifying it even to him) that his Conversation was rather more instructive than his Preaching. The only Reason of which that I can conceive is this, that having a rich and Copious Fancy

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 flowing freely under the conduct of a good Judgment, he too much Hinted it in his set Compositions; while in his Conversation he gave himself free scope to discover his Noble and Uncommon Genius.

Take him as a Husband, he was most Tender and Loving, Free and Open, Obliging and Respectful, Provident and Indulgent. He was a good Instructor, and a Good Pattern: A most agreeable Companion, and a great Helper in the way to Heaven.

As a Father he was also Exemplary. He pray'd heartily for his Children, Instructed them diligently, and educated them carefully: was as ready to encourage them when they did well, as to discourage and rebuke when they did otherwise. He was more concern'd by far for their Souls than their Bodies; and most tenderly Affected with their failures: and yet here it pleas'd GOD he had a severe Exercise.

Finally as a Friend, he was most lovely and Desirable. For he was Free and Communicative, Candid in the last Degree, Faithful and Trusty. Upright and Sincere. He had no Tricks; but hated every thing that was Mean or Base or Sordid. He readily sympathiz'd with those for whom he pretended Respect; he was mindful of them in his Prayers. He was not fickle and inconstant in his Friendship; and it must be some very ill thing indeed, that must make a forfeiture of it. In a word tho' he could very well distinguish between Men and Men, yet it  
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43

was not his fault, either that all the World were not his Friends, or that all his Friends were not the better for him. For wherever he had an Interest, he was for improving it for GOD to the utmost of his Power; and he was ready to do so, whensoever an Opportunity offer'd.

If this put together seem to any to be a great Character, I can only say that if they think it too great, 'tis a sign they did not know him whose Loss we have reason to Lament. They that did know him best. I'm satisfy'd will agree 'twas strictly true. I have not been describing to you what a Man should be, (which is the way of some) but what he actually was, who so lately left this World of ours. I have consulted my Conscience in the Account given; and have fallen short, and not exceeded. And yet he was not without his Defects and Infirmities neither: But they were Lamented and Bewail'd; and no one was so sensible of them as himself.

The more Excellent he was, and the more fit to be a Pattern and Example both to Ministers and private Christians, the greater is the generial Loss by his Removal: and the better he was in each Relation, the greater must the Loss of him in each needs be.

I Grant it a great Loss to have such an Husband taken away. But let my Dear Sister remember, that GOD has taken but what he gave; and he can easily from himself, make up the want of what he has taken; and it may be depended on he will do it, if there be a Sub-

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44

missive and Resigned Spirit, and a suitable concern to make a right improvement of such a Providence.

It's affecting to lose such a Father, and to think that his Counsels, and his Prayers, and his Converse are now lost, and to be had no more in this World: But be thankful for what you have had, and apply the more earnestly to your Heavenly Father, and he'll not fail of conducting you safe thither, where your Natural Father and you may so meet as never to part more.

Jer. 3. 15.

It's affecting to lose such a Pastor as you of this Congregation have done, by the removal of this Faithful Minister of JESUS CHRIST. The greater his worth was, the greater is your Loss. He was one that *Fed you with Knowledge and Understanding*, and therefore was a *Prophet according to God's Heart*. Great were his Abilities; and great the Tenderness of his Spirit towards you. I know not where you'll find another Mr. *Sylvester*. I heartily Sympathize with you, and am concern'd for you; And I should be very ungrateful, considering the Respect and Kindness, I formerly met with among you, should it be otherwise. Will you then bear with me in a few Words?

I beseech you my Friends to bless GOD, that you enjoy'd the Labours of so Excellent a Person so long. Repent of your Non-improvement of so great an Advantage as you had under his Ministry. Be concern'd that, you did not more diligently and assiduously attend upon his Ministrations.

45

strations. You have had Oportunity of *fully knowing his Doctrine, manner of Life, Purpose, Faith, Long-suffering, Charity, and Patience.* Endeavour to shew that you have made some improvement under him. *Remember him that has had the Rule over you, and who has spoken unto you the Word of God; and follow his Faith considering the end of his Conversation.* Follow him, as far as he follow'd Christ. Forget not the Character which he gave of you in his Funeral Sermon for Mr. Baxter: He then told the World, that you were a *Sober, Peaceable and Loving People, and far from Factiousness and Censoriousness.* Let me beg of you to shew it, now he is gone. Consider what will be most for the Honour of GOD and most for the Credit of your Deceased Pastor, and let that influence you in your Motions. We have not so many Societies as deserve that Character which has been given of you in Print, as that we can be content to lose one, if it may be prevented. You are I confess but a small Handful: But if you look through the City, you may find some that were very near as small as you, when they were destitute, who taking right Measures in filling up the Vacancy, are now become flourishing Congregations. And who knows but it may be so with you also? Try what you can do to support another Faithful Minister in his room, and then proceed Unanimously: But do it speedily. Take the first Oportunity of Receiving the Lord's Supper together, and be present at that Solemnity with one Consent, and who knows how the Great Shepherd of the Sheep may then Spirit and Direct, and Assist you, in what may be for his Honour, and for your Benefit and Comfort.

Elisha's Cry  
after Elijah's  
GOD, pag. 16.

And

<sup>46</sup>  
Acts 20. 32. *And now my Brethren, I commend you to God  
and the Word of his Grace, which is able to build  
you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them  
which are sanctifyd.*

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*F I N I S .*

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*The Works of the Reverend Mr. Matthew Sylvester are these:*

A Sermon upon being for ever with the LORD. *Octavo.*

*Elisha's Cry after Elijah's GOD: A Sermon on 2 Kings 2. 14. occasion'd by the Decease of the Reverend Mr. Richard Baxter: Printed at the end of his Life in Folio.*

A Sermon to the Societies for Reformation of Manners.

The Christians Race and Patience, describ'd urg'd and encourag'd in several Sermons from *Hebrews 12.* The first Part *Octavo.* Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst, and J. Robinson.*

The Christians last Redress, Illustrated by some Considerations upon *Revel. 2i. 4.* at the Request of the Relicks of Mrs. *Sarah Petit* lately Deceas'd. *Octob. 1707.*

And he hath also Four Sermons in the Volumes of the Morning-Exercise.

1. One in the Supplement to the Morning-Exercise at *Cripplegate*, about the overcoming the inordinate Love of Life, and Fear of Death.

2. A Second, in the Morning-Exercise against Popery, to prove that Baptism and the LORD'S-Supper, are the only Sacraments of the Covenant of Grace under the *New Testament.*

3. A Third, in the Continuation of the Morning-Exercise; on that Question, How may a Gracious Person from whom GOD hides his Face, trust in the LORD, as his GOD?

4. And a Fourth, in the Last Volume of the Morning-Exercise, upon the Cure of a Luke-warm Temper.