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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

Well friends, according to the sovereign appointment of God, we are called upon again to be brought face to face with the solemn article of death. It is one of the painful things of a minister, to bury his friends, to see people in the pews to whom we speak, and then constantly to follow them to the grave. And we do need on this occasion a particularly solemn exercise of mind. We need to be exercised with a spiritual and prayerful sympathy. And I believe many of us feel that sympathy with our dear sorrowing friends, especially our dear friend, the sorrowing husband, and their dear son. May the Lord very mercifully draw near unto them.

With regard to our dear departed friend, she was not one that was able to say much concerning her spiritual life or experience, and therefore we would in the tender fear of God not attempt to say anything but what would have the divine approval, for these are solemn occasions. And yet speaking for myself, I believe that it is well with our dear departed friend. Her desires were toward the Lord. In my visitations to her during her painful illness, her mind was always in that direction, longing for a word from the Lord, some token for good upon which she could die. It would seem that she did not receive that satisfaction she looked for; but my friends, her life, her love to the house of God, the anxious way in which she heard the truth, are evidences that she leaned in the right direction, and as the tree falls, it shall lie. And she leaned toward the truth and toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and we often sing that verse:

"In the world of endless ruin,
Let it never, Lord, be said,
'Here's a soul that perished, suing
For the boasted Saviour's aid'."

That will never be said, my friends, and our dear friend was one of those suers for divine mercy, and we believe that that satisfaction that she longed for, but did not receive here, she has entered into.

But what of us who are left behind? I do feel that if we are rightly exercised about our end, and are given so to remember our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom, we shall view time things in the perspective of eternity. It is a tremendous sound. The last enemy, we have read, to be destroyed is death, that is for the Lord's people. It is not the last enemy for the wicked. They have another terrible enemy to meet - the wicked. They have to meet a just and holy God as an enemy. Oh that these solemnities of eternity might make us sober people! And also may it be sanctified to us to consider ~~to consider~~ one another while we do live, and to exhort one another daily, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. We can never consider the solemnity of death without the consideration of sin. Sin and death are correlatives. Where there is sin, death must follow. Where there is death, there must have been sin. But oh what glorious things are spoken concerning the saints of God, and spoken because of this sacred and blessed secret - the Father hath made Him, His incarnate eternal Son who know no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. And therefore as sin reigns unto death - yes,

sin will dig our graves, sin is universal in our being - but as sin has reigned in our being, in every fibre of it, and will reign unto death, even so grace shall universally reign, and reign further than sin. It will reign through righteousness, right through the grave, unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Oh then what is of any importance comparatively while we live, than to be made fit to die, and to know something on the way to eternity of the presence of the Lord! Oh may the Lord give us to lay it to heart that we are hastening either to eternal glory or to eternal woe!
