

# **George Muller Sermons**

## **Chapter 14 - An Address at the Interment of Mrs. Muller**

On the following Friday the earthly remains of Mrs. Muller were conveyed to Arno's Vale cemetery, preceded, accompanied, and followed by a large concourse of people. About 1400 orphans from the Five Orphan Houses on Ashley Down followed the remains of their benefactor.

The entire service was conducted by Mr. Muller, who spoke in the chapel at Arno's Vale, as follows:-I shall read a few portions of God's most precious word, and make a few remarks thereon. First, in the fourth chapter of 1 Thessalonians,-But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.

The dead in Christ! Not, all the dead; not, all who died before that time. But, the dead in Christ,-those who had fallen asleep as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And that is it which gives me the peace, the unspeakable joy I have this day in committing to the tomb the earthly remains of my deeply beloved, precious wife,-because I shall spend a happy eternity with her. Whilst we were living most affectionately and unitedly together for thirty-nine years and four months, this was the theme of our conversation, again and again, and thousands of times; and often and often I have taken her hand, and the hand of my beloved daughter, and said, we shall be together throughout eternity, and our hearts thrilled with joy in the prospect of spending a happy eternity together in the presence of our adorable Lord Jesus. And therefore, because the earthly remains are placed in the tomb of one of whom we have hope, and a good scriptural assurance that she is now with Jesus, and that when our adorable Lord comes again, she will have a glorified body, and those who love her here on earth will be united together again with her; therefore we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words,

I do seek to sustain thereby my own heart. Let us read also a few verses of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians.

As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Bright and blessed prospect! My precious wife has borne the image of the earthy Adam, who sinned, who fell: she will bear the image of the heavenly Adam, the Lord from heaven.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, cannot enter into the immediate presence of the Lord; we must first put off this body.

Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

That is, as previously stated in this chapter, those who die in Christ shall be raised incorruptible. Bright, blessed prospect to my own soul regarding that loved one! She will be raised incorruptible-this weak, frail tabernacle, this suffering tabernacle, in which she endured so much pain and agony during the last few days of her earthly pilgrimage-will be raised incorruptible. Each living believer shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting?

O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Let me call on all my beloved Christian friends to lay to heart the words, Be ye steadfast. Let us aim after it, beloved in Christ. Unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

My precious wife died, as it were, in harness. Up to the very last she was at work for the Lord. Even when on her death-bed she gave directions for this thing and another thing to be done connected with the honour of the Lord,-caring about the sick ones outside the house, and sending them refreshments; caring yet for the orphans, and giving directions concerning them. Always abounding in the work of the Lord. It was the very joy and delight of her heart to labour for that blessed Jesus who had bought her by His precious blood, in the full assurance of the blessed fulfilment of this word, Forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

I will read one other passage in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians,-For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

How true regarding her-To me to live is Christ! During all the thirty-nine years and four months that it was the joy and privilege of my heart to be united by conjugal bonds to that loved one, for her to live was Christ. This dear sister in Christ had one single business in life, one single object in life, to live for Christ. As soon as I was united to her by conjugal bonds she became a true helper to me in pastoral work. She went about and worked; she laboured, and laboured abundantly, in the Church at Teignmouth of which I was the pastor. And when it pleased God, thirty-seven years and nine months since, to allow us the honour and privilege to come to Bristol, to labour in this city, she in the fullest way gave herself to work among the children of God, and in every way she could, in order to live for Christ. And when it pleased God to give afterwards, as she clearly and distinctly saw, another sphere of labour on Ashley Down, it was day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, that she laboured in one even, steady course,-for her to live was Christ. Can my heart, then, but rejoice when I think of one whose life was what it was, when there is not so much as the shadow of a question remaining as to where she is now? Oh! how can it be otherwise than that my soul should be filled with unspeakable joy and delight, thinking of that blessed one being with Jesus. For her to live was Christ, and as she put off this her tabernacle, her spirit is now in the presence of

Jesus; therefore to her to die is gain. I might give many reasons why to die to her is gain. For her the weakness and weariness of the tabernacle are at an end. For nearly two years past, when she came home with me, about nine o'clock in the evening, from the Orphan Houses, I could see that she was worn-worn to the utmost. I often said, My darling, work less; my darling, stay at home. But I could not prevail upon her to do so. She still worked and worked. She loved to be at my side, as I loved to be at her side. But I saw that it was becoming too much for her. Now for her this weariness is past-gone for ever. I might mention a number of other things to show that death was gain, but the greatest is this,-it was the desire of her heart to see that lovely One in heaven, our adorable Lord Jesus. She longed to be with Him. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, was continually the theme of her heart. God allowed me to find a most precious jewel the day before yesterday which that loved one had left behind. My darling daughter told me she had seen, about two years since, in a pocket-book of her beloved mother, a sentence written to this effect,-that she longed to be with Jesus; and when her soul was consciously happy in the Lord, she often wished instantly to depart, only that she dreaded the shock to her beloved husband, daughter, and other relatives and friends. But she wound it all up with this, Not my will, but Thine, dear Jesus, be done. That was just the desire of her heart; not, at some particular time only, on Lord's days, or once now and then, but it was the constant desire of her heart to be with the Lord Jesus. Well, to die therefore has been gain to her. Should I wish it to be otherwise? Ah! strange as it may appear to some, what can I say but that I delight in the happiness of my beloved departed one! Oh! the unspeakable peace and joy of my soul as I think she has the desire of her heart. I kiss the hand that has thus laid me low. Do you ask me as a man how I feel? I feel it keenly. Do you ask me as a husband how I feel? I feel it to the utmost. Do you ask me as the director of the Orphan Houses how I feel it? I say again, I feel it to the utmost, and I see no prospect how her loss can be made up. But I kiss the hand that has done it. I rejoice in the joy of my beloved departed one; and if at this moment I could alter it, I would not wish to have her back. The depth of my affection for her is too great to wish her back. She longed to be with Jesus, she has now the desire of her heart, and her joy is my joy! And now in the full assurance of the resurrection of the just, and of all our loved ones who have died as believers in the Lord Jesus meeting together in heaven, I commit these earthly remains to the tomb. But are all here present prepared for eternity? Who will meet that loved one in heaven? None will meet her there, none will meet me there, but believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. We must be born again before we enter heaven; we must be changed in heart by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Let me affectionately ask all present,-Are you prepared for heaven? Only those can enter there who are taken out of the world as believers in the Lord Jesus.-Mr. Muller then prayed,-

O Lord, accept my grateful thanks that Thou didst give to me the precious blessing of such a wife, of such a companion, of such a helper, of such a comforter. Oh! how good hast Thou been to me for thirty-nine years and four months in giving and keeping her to me. And now Lord, it has pleased Thee to take her to Thyself. So it pleased Thee; it is therefore the very best thing. Thou dost withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly; and Thy poor servant-weak and feeble though he is-walks uprightly; and his beloved one walked uprightly, and now Thou hast taken her, and therefore it is the best thing for her, and for Thy poor servant, and for his beloved child, and for the other relatives and friends. Thy poor servant, therefore, believes Thou hast done it in love; and that, if it had been good for him that his dear wife should yet further labour with him, Thou wouldest have caused her, notwithstanding her advanced years and her frail tabernacle, to remain. Thy poor servant therefore bows to Thy will, and would not forget Thy benefits during their happy conjugal life for thirty-nine years and four months. And as Thy servant knows he shall meet her again, and spend a happy eternity with her in Thy presence, he would bless and praise Thee for the comfort given to him, the comfort given to his beloved daughter, the comfort given to the dear sisters and all the other dear relatives and friends. O Lord! do good to us all. And wilt Thou graciously grant, that to us as a Church this may be blessed; and not only to us, but to thousands of Thy dear children in this large city and elsewhere; and in Thy good providence so work, that in the end good may come out of this event to the Orphans. Now, Lord, we go to the grave. Go with us. Help us yet. Bless us yet. And when Thy poor servant and the other dear relatives shall feel their loneliness, because Thou hast taken their loved one to Thyself, help us to remember her joy in Thy presence. We ask it for the sake of our adorable Lord Jesus Christ.

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