

As they now are we shall soon be, if we follow on to know the Lord—if we faint not in the heat of the day—if we fall and perish not in the gloom of night. Heaven is rich with the gathered treasures of thousands of years; and rich as it is it is constantly gaining fresh accessions. Mourn not then that your best and dearest jewels are gathered into the vast, glorious treasure house of your King, prepared to adorn His redemption crown. Your loss is their gain; your seeming loss now is but the preparation for endless gains hereafter.

What ineffable comfort, what abundant hope and consolation have we not even in the presence of death! The "Month of Sorrow" may be a month of holy joy; and the day on which our sanctified ones are called to their everlasting reward may be remembered by us ever after as their birthday into the life of heaven.

But there is another aspect of the case to which we must turn. It is sin that has earned for us death and all our woe; and in our punishment we should always see our sin; we should learn to mourn over it as that which brings upon us the just wrath of our merciful and gracious God. It is sin that has darkened the opening glories of the springtide with the shadow of death. Let us learn to dread that which has involved us in so dismal a doom.

Are you a stranger to Jesus Christ who has the Keys of Death? If so death cannot be to you but terrible. And one of the most solemn lessons which the death of our friends is intended to teach us is that of *preparation*. How many have been called (even from within the narrow circle of your own acquaintance) to meet their God within the last week or two! Some of them have fallen without a moment's warning. Some have had but a day or two to set their houses in order, and go away on that longest of all journeys from which there is no return. Perhaps you are to be called next.

There is therefore urgent and pressing need for preparation. Let us do what our hand findeth to do with all our might, for we may not long enjoy the opportunity. Our friends may be snatched from us, or we from our friends; and this month, this week

may not pass without filling our cup with sorrow or loosing the silver cord. We fall like leaves in autumn, and the next gust of the gale may sweep us away to the land of deep forgetfulness. The seasons, each in its turn, will come as they were wont; but shall we see them? The south wind will come with its genial showers, but these showers may water the grass that waves over our graves. Therefore let us be ready for our passage to our permanent abode, where the good of all ages have gone before us, and where our FORTUNER awaits our arrival. "Lord, cut; Lord, carve; Lord, wound; Lord, do anything that may perfect the Father's image in us, and make us meet for glory."

A SYNOD.

While the Presbyterian Church is happily in the enjoyment of a free and regular government—while our Church Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods can meet whenever occasion requires and without fear of interference from any outside power—while each minister is on a level with his brother and ruling elders have the same standing in our courts as ministers themselves, (thus effectually providing against jealousies between "clergy" and "laity")—other denominations are not equally favoured, and are at this moment convulsed with questions which our fathers settled on a scriptural basis centuries ago. We do not duly appreciate our privileges—even as the man who is accustomed to sunshine and fresh air comes to regard these inestimable blessings as matters of course that scarcely excite an emotion of gratitude to heaven. Our appreciation of common blessings is effectually quickened by being deprived of them for a time; or by the milder regimen of contemplating the condition of those who endure such deprivation.

We have been so accustomed to Synods and other Church courts which neither seek nor receive countenance from the civil power, that we feel surprised when another denomination, or rather the ecclesiastical head of that denomination, goes before the legislature to ask its sanction to a proposed Synod.