

their calmness and heavenly serenity. Is it not desirable then to die as the righteous die ?

3. It is desirable to die the death of the righteous, because of that which comes after death. To the Christian, death is the gateway into immortal bliss. This world is a scene of trial to the Christian. Here he passes through tribulation. He is assailed by temptations at every step which he takes in his heavenward journey. But when, through Jesus, he overcomes death, he passes into a region where is no death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, where blooms the tree of life perpetually, where he shall ever drink from the fountain of the water of life. When the Christian, amid the sorrows and discomforts of earth, anticipates heaven as his eternal home, what joys and raptures does he experience ; and if the anticipation can yield such bliss, what must the reality be fitted to impart ? Now is not a bright and blessed heaven desirable ? Is it not most desirable to escape damnation, and to dwell everlastingly in the region of purity and love, enjoying the unclouded sunshine of God's presence ? The righteous has hope in his death, and this heavenly holiness and happiness is the object of his hope. No wonder that Paul had a desire to depart and to be with Christ.

If, however, we desire to die the death of the righteous, we must become righteous, and live the life of the righteous. Many persons would like very well to die the death of the righteous, who are very much disinclined to live the life of the righteous. Now to desire to die as the righteous die, while you refuse to become righteous, and to live as the righteous live, is impiety. You wish to enjoy the advantages which Christianity confers on those who are truly Christians, without submitting to any of its restraints. If you desire to die like the righteous, while you refuse to come to Jesus and live through faith in his redeeming righteousness, you are infatuated as well as impious. By your manner of living you are fitting yourself for hell, and yet you wish to escape the doom for which you are preparing yourself. Perhaps you think you can die the death of the righteous by calling on God to have mercy on you a short time before you die. But how do you know that your death will be preceded by a time of sickness ? You may be cut down in a moment, or in your last illness your body and mind may be so prostrated that you will be unable to think on the state of your soul. Ah ! beware of trusting to a deathbed repentance.