

Transcription of a letter written to Hannah Farr, published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO HANNAH FARR.

“On the 3rd of December, 1826, in Shrewsbury chapel, when you were expatiating on death from Job xiv. 10, there was a young woman in the concourse, who came for the express purpose of hearing you dispense the words of life, and receive instruction: and her expectations were not disappointed, nor your words suffered to pass without attention. That part of the subject which seemed to affect her mind, was the serious admonitions which you addressed to young people; the generality of whom, you said, ‘were employing their hours in decorating the body, and indulging their body in the imbecility of pride;—the gaudy trifles of temporizing foppery;—accustoming themselves to the dangerous track of procrastination: and delaying the contemplation of death and eternity to some future period. Who assert that youth is not the time to seek the Lord, and knowingly postpone the important duty, for weeks, months, and years; till they are settled in life — till their avaricious gluttony for pleasure is satiated, and then reason themselves into the presumptuous persuasion of a deathbed repentance. While death may be at the doors the blooming, and gay, young, healthy, robust, and affecting, as they may appear, none can tell but what their time is near at an end—that death’s dread silent dart will shortly impede their progress, and lay them with the clod of the vale.’

Many of these observations deeply affected her mind; the deliberation of which seemed to bring death to her view as a passport from a world of sin and folly, to one of glory and happiness. On her return home she conversed with her mother about the things which she heard: and then apparently sat in silent meditation till she retired to bed. On the day following she was taken with an illness, which terminated her existence in the course of ten days.

Here was a striking instance of the uncertainty of life—a visible omen of the truth of your observations. Thus a young woman (whose conduct was amiable) within the space of three weeks, flourishing and gay; appeared as the rose in bloom, was cut down as the green herb, and concealed in the narrow limits of the tomb: called to cease from the bustle and uninteresting caprice of the world, and to bid adieu to the cajolery of this transitory scene. Her soul was called to take its flight.

O solemn thought:—
To death was brought
A girl, we thought .
Would live for years.

But you will be happy to hear that she did not depart without leaving indubitable marks of the divine interposition, and visible indications of a happy and gracious change. Her last expressions were, ‘I am going home, I am going home, I am going to my everlasting home—from whence I came. Take me home, I cannot stop any longer, I must go for I am going to my: Father in heaven, my everlasting father.’ Indeed from the first of her illness she had no desire to recover; but said, ‘I am drowned in iniquity and sin: Jesus, forgive me, and take me, for if I live any longer here I shall sin against thee; it is to be lamented that there are too many such sinners as me in the world: Lord, save them.’ A certain person said to her, ‘You will see many a bright day yet.’ She replied, ‘I hope I shall, but not in this world.’

Now let us consider, (nor, can I impede the gushing tear while I write) how applicable this discourse was to the state of her mind, how strongly calculated to paint death in all its horrors, and fix the inflexible impressions so forcibly upon her mind. But she is not the only one in the family

who was affected: her mother and brethren have been similarly wrought upon, in consequence of her relating some parts of your discourse to them after she went from chapel. And here I am disposed to enquire, Had not God a part in this serious circumstance, so as to direct your mind to that subject which proved to her so interesting, and which was calculated to animate her desires after the possession of that inheritance which remains for his people, Seeing she had accomplished as an hireling her days?

How mysterious are the ways of God! knowing this to be the last time of her existence in the house of prayer before she deceased: the means prescribed were solemn, and the end proposed was answered. The subject treated, was the uncertainty of life, and the impressions which it made were obliterated by death!!

N. B. The family of the deceased, ever since the solemn, event, have regularly attended the chapel.

Approved by the Circuit Committee,

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1827/266