

A
WORD
IN ITS
SEASON

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"ALL MEN"

James T. Brown (Edinburgh)

1 Timothy 2: 1

This scripture affected us on Lord's Day with its reference to "all men". "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings" represent the means whereby heaven can be influenced in relation to men. We would all admit the frailty of our power with God in relation to men; and the weakness of our capacity to influence heaven in their regard. But this dispensation, which is the greatest of all the dispensations, was inaugurated on the basis of the fact that heaven was influenced by a Man, a glorious Man! Joshua in that remarkable passage says, "Sun, stand still upon Gibeon; And thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon!" Josh 10: 12 . And it says, "And the sun remained standing in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a full day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that Jehovah hearkened to the voice of a man ...", v 13, 14. We live in such a day, when the sun is standing still in the midst of heaven, and the world stands provisionally in reconciliation by virtue of the fact that Jehovah hearkened to the voice of the Lord Jesus. In consequence divine grace, in all its blessedness can be distilled to every nook and cranny of the universe. It is available to all men. Propitiation has been made not for our sins alone but for the whole world because Jehovah has hearkened to the voice of a Man. Wonderful thing! The end is that we, too, as having been touched by divine grace, should be concerned about our fellow men, and exercised to speak to God about them as affected by all their needs, their grief and sorrows. The golden altar was foursquare: it was one cubit by one cubit, differing in that respect from the brazen altar. It suggests universality and unity of purpose and has all men in view. Every interest precious to God can be brought to bear at the golden altar. Not only did the golden altar have horns, but the horns were of itself. That implies power Godward. From whence do we have that power? From the Lord Jesus Himself! Revelation speaks about the angel that stood with the golden censer at the altar. It says "and

much incense was given to him, that he might give efficacy to the prayers of all saints" Rev 8: 3.

"Grateful incense this, ascending
Ever to the Father's throne;
Every knee to Jesus bending,
All the mind in heaven is one." (Hymn 14)

How wonderful to think of the prayers of concerned saints rising to heaven, as made efficacious by the glorious One, who has established all for the divine pleasure. He stands there, wonderful Person! available to serve and sustain us, our prayers made efficacious by the incense and by the golden censer in His hand.

I think the four elements in this verse are reflected in the life of the Lord Jesus Himself, as brought out in each of the Gospels. John's Gospel particularly lays emphasis on supplications. There we have, speaking reverently, the great divine Supplicant. Hear Him saying in the midst of His sorrow, "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour" John 12: 27. What supplication that was! Hebrews says, "Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up both supplications and entreaties to him who was able to save him out of death with strong crying and tears ...", chap 5: 7. How deep and intensive were the feelings of the Lord Jesus, when as a perfect Man and the Prince of Life, He was confronted by the horror of death! How affecting to contemplate the Holy Supplicant supplicating the Father in relation to His pathway here and what lay before Him in the will of God. Supplication implies an intensity and concentration of feeling, as perfectly displayed by the Lord Jesus in John's gospel. Then He says in that great chapter, John 17, the golden altar chapter, "And I do not demand for these only, but also for those who believe on me through their word", v 20. His supplications reach out to encompass his loved ones. How arresting to think of the Lord Jesus actually demanding of the Father in relation to His own. How deep were His feelings and His desires that they might be brought into the enjoyment of divine favour. In John 14: 16 these same feelings are reflected when He says "And I will beg the Father and He will give you another comforter". Then in

John 7 it says, "In the last, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink", v 27. These same feelings reach out to men in their need to thirsty souls. "He that believes on me as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water", v 38. How the Lord Jesus desires that men should come into blessing and our desires are to be likewise on the basis of supplication. Daniel brings out this feature. There was a praying man, a suppliant, if there ever was one. In chapter 9 there he was about the time of the evening oblation, when the man Gabriel, the priestly angel, came and touched him. He said, "At the beginning of thy supplications the word went forth ...", v 23. That is a remarkable expression because if you read the supplication itself, it extends for over a page of the Bible, and yet the angel said, "At the beginning of thy supplications ...". Such was the man's power with God that at the very beginning of his supplication the word went forth. What an example Daniel is in that regard! How profound were the feelings he bore and carried into the divine presence and his supplication was answered. "The word went forth", said the angel Gabriel, and I am come to declare it; for thou art one greatly beloved". Men like this are greatly beloved in heaven. James speaks about "The fervent supplication of the righteous man has much power", chap 5: 16. Daniel was one who had power with God. John's gospel particularly brings out this feature of supplication and its results.

In respect of "prayers", one's mind went to Matthew's gospel. Matthew uniquely records that, in Gethsemane, the Lord Jesus prayed a third time to His Father in relation to the great matter that lay before Him. Prayer in scripture is often placed in the context of perseverance and combat, suggesting that we are in no way to become slack or discouraged, even if an answer is not immediately forthcoming. So Paul exhorts the Colossians to "persevere in prayer", Col 4: 12. This attribute is seen in Matthew's gospel in the Lord Jesus Himself in the pressure of Gethsemane. Then Matthew brings out at the end of his gospel that the disciples are to go and make disciples of all nations. All men are in mind, you see. That is

the great end of prayer that all men should be blest and brought under the influence of Christ.

As to "intercessions" the link is surely with Luke's gospel. There we have the great Intercessor; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do", chap 23: 34. Luke, the priestly gospel, brings out the glory of the Intercessor. We have that reference in Isaiah to a time when there was no intercessor. He said, "And he saw that there was no man, and he wondered that there was no intercessor; and his arm brought him salvation", chap. 59: 16. Thank God we live in a day when there is an Intercessor, an Intercessor for men, an Intercessor for you and an Intercessor for me. "Therefore will I assign him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and was reckoned with the transgressors; and he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors", Isa 53: 12. The transgressors are you and I, and He made intercession for us. At Calvary supremely when He who knew no sin was made sin for us, He made intercession for the transgressors. But that blessed intercessory service continues still. We had a reference to it in the prayer meeting last evening:

"Blessed Lord, in love unceasing
Thou dost live to intercede." (Hymn 176)

Hebrews brings out the glory of the great High Priest, the One who is "priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec", chap. 7: 21. Melchisedec, as described in that passage, refers to the Lord Jesus and alludes to His deity in a most attractive way. The priests of old were hindered from continuing by death but He "because of his continuing for ever, has the priesthood unchangeable", v 24. The order of His priesthood is represented in Melchisedec but the manner of His service now is seen in Aaron. "Whence also he is able to save completely those who approach by him to God, always living to intercede for them", Heb 7: 24,25. That wonderful service is available now. The Lord Jesus said in relation to Peter, "I have besought for thee that thy faith fail not", Luke 22: 32. How affecting that is! Even at such a time of pressure in His pathway, and with

Peter's aberration and failure impending, the Lord was considering for His own. That wonderful intercessory service of the Lord Jesus continues still, and the same kind of Spirit is to be continued in the saints so that there are "... intercessions ... made for all men".

Finally, "thanksgivings". Men are characteristically unthankful and the saints, in their measure, should compensate for that. The Lord sets the pattern in Mark's gospel. In chapter 8 He has compassion for the crowd. He was thinking about their needs, and concerned that they might faint if they had to make the long journey home, after having been with Him for three days. So the seven loaves were produced, and He gave thanks on their behalf. That would be a remarkable sight. The Lord Jesus surrounded by about 4000 people and giving thanks on their behalf for the loaves. They might not have done that themselves. But the Lord Jesus in His perfection shows how things are to be done. How much men have to be thankful to God for! They may not appreciate it. The very air they breathe is part of the providential goodness of God bestowed daily upon them. Then, too, He preserves them. God is the "preserver of all men, specially of those that believe", 1 Tim 4: 10. Think of God sparing men's lives that they might be given a further opportunity to have to do with the Lord Jesus as Saviour. One thinks often of the fishermen and the sailors. There they are, subject to the vagaries of wind and wave. The Psalm speaks about "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, These see the works of Jehovah, and his wonders in the deep", Ps 107: 23,24. How awesome is the power of the sea but, by and large, the ships reach port safely! There is the occasional disaster in God's ways, but usually the harbour is safely won. God in His care and mercy continues to preserve men, despite their ingratitude. Then, too, there are all these aircraft flights, and yet an air disaster is, relatively speaking, an infrequent occurrence. Why that? It is God's care for men, preserving them that they might be retained in the area of blessing, God "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance", 2 Pet 3: 9. How right it is therefore that we should render thanksgivings to God for men.

Let us thus be imbued with a spirit that considers, "for all men"! Let our minds, our hearts and our affections go out to men in their need, knowing that the only thing that will satisfy them is a link with the precious Saviour Himself. Let our prayer be that they should be brought into the great realm of true joy and satisfaction into which, through sovereign grace and mercy, all we here have been introduced!

EDINBURGH

6 June 1995

ENJOYMENT

Jim Marshall

Revelation 21: 21 - 23

I would like to say a word, brethren, about enjoyment. Our brother has referred to "all men" and I believe that God has nothing else in mind for all men than that they should be brought into enjoyment. We sang:

"... of that world of bliss,
Where nought of sin can enter,
Where joy eternal is." (Hymn 259)

When the Lord Jesus came here, there was a message from the angel, and the announcement was, "I announce to you glad tidings of great joy" for all men (Luke 2: 10) and Luke's gospel finishes with great joy. When you are first converted, you feel it is a great thing to be clear of your sins, and that is a great joy. But there is far greater enjoyment in mind for us. It is not only peace with God but there is the enjoyment of what is eternal. In this world all that you see is what is spoken of in Revelation: grief, cry and distress. But what is in mind is wonderful enjoyment and it is open for everyone: from the youngest to the oldest, from the poorest to the richest, all can experience this enjoyment.

Where we have read we have transparency. I think that, if we are established in transparency, it is a great contributor to enjoyment. We not only enjoy divine Persons, but we enjoy relationships with one another. It says in Psalm 133 where it speaks about unity, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! ... for there hath Jehovah commanded the blessing ..." - you might say, He commanded the enjoyment - "... life for evermore".

And here we have the one pearl: no doubt, that would speak of the assembly. It speaks of many pearls, but they all seem to have their resource from the one pearl. Think of what the one pearl is as

joy for the Lord Jesus, "a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; and having found one pearl of great value, he went and sold all whatever he had and bought it", Matt.13: 45,46. We want to know, not only what it is to enjoy divine Persons, but to enjoy what we have in the enjoyment of the assembly. The Psalmist could say,"... let my tongue cleave to my palate: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy", Ps 137: 6 - his chief joy. And it is not only the joy of the assembly, but the joy of sonship.

But it goes on to speak of the street of the city as being of pure gold. It does not stop there: it says, "as transparent glass". It is wonderful to experience clearness. Think of the man who was blind and did not see clearly and the Lord touched him again and it says he "saw all things clearly", Mark 8: 25. I think that is what would be experienced in "the street of the city pure gold, as transparent glass". This is what the Lord Jesus is wanting, amongst us, clearness, transparency with one another, and if we have transparency with one another, you can rest assured, we will have nearness with one another. Transparency and nearness go together and make way for divine Persons. There are no blemishes or obstacles in this street. It is a clear way. It is what John the Baptist preached. When John the Baptist came, his whole bent was to make a clear way, to make a straight way. That is where Ananias found Saul, in a street called Straight - no crooked path. Our brother has referred to John 7 where the Lord speaks about thirsty souls and His cry was in relation to the Spirit. I believe that the Spirit had this street as He descended and came amongst those gathered and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe He had a clear way as they were sitting waiting.

This is a challenge: are we presenting the Lord Jesus with a clear way for His return? Are we presenting Him with a clear way for coming in amongst us? I believe the conditions that we see here involve further activities of divine Persons amongst us. The prayer of Jesus in John 17, "that they may be one, as we are one". That prayer was answered in the beginning, and we want to keep that beginning before us. Oneness comes through transparency and nearness.

In this Scripture the Lamb is there. "And I saw no temple in it; for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon, that they should shine for it; for the glory of God has enlightened it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb". It was the Lamb who took away our sins, who was sacrificed for our sins. I feel it is very touching, that the one who was forsaken of God was the Lamb of God. One has thought of when we first got clear of our sins. I never forget that night, beloved. The hymn was given out:

"Just as I am - without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!" (Hymn 446)

Think of that, beloved brethren, "But that Thy blood was shed for me" and think about where He is now. What joy, what enjoyment, enjoyment that never ceases! It goes on to eternity. The Lamb that was slain, the exalted Lamb, the One that was found worthy to open the book! And the Lamb is the light as well. There is no need of the sun, no need of the moon, it is the world of bliss of which we sung and we all need to enjoy it. There is no need to wait until the Lord takes you! You can enjoy it now. What is temporal will cease, but we can experience eternal enjoyment now.

I present these few simple words that they might help us to experience more enjoyment. There is much around us that would make us sad and make us downcast, but let us go over to the other side where joy is never ending, where love never ends, and where divine Persons ' joys never end either, and we can enjoy it now. May the Lord just bless these few words.

EDINBURGH

6 June 1995

"ALL THE SAINTS"

David Hutson

Numbers 23: 13, 16, 18-23; Ephesians 5: 25 ("Christ also ...") - 27

I was encouraged by the hymn and our brother's prayer to bring forward an impression that I have been carrying for a little while. I have thought of this word of Balak's, "thou shalt see only the extremity of them and shalt not see them all". I suppose it is like the time in which we are, that we see only the extremity of what the Lord has on earth at the present time. Indeed, to take it further, we see only the extremity of the assembly as we take account of the dead in Christ, the thousands that have gone before, and those that are alive at the present time - how few we know. But, "The Lord knows those that are his", 2 Tim 2: 19, and I believe the enemy would occupy us with the extremity, that is, occupy us with the weakness and the scattering, and our own failure in responsibility which has led to the reductions under the Lord's hand. Let us remind ourselves that what has come in, though not to absolve ourselves from responsibility in relation to it, has all been allowed under the Lord's hand in view of securing something of a pure character for Himself; that is itself a challenge to us as to what there is of the character that answers to His heart.

But it does not alter the fact of what God has on earth at the present time and what He has in view as He looks at the assembly. It says, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen wrong in Israel". We speak of what is abstract in a day like this, but one has been thinking of the nearness of the Lord's return, the imminence of the Lord Jesus coming to receive the assembly to Himself, and there is that here on earth which He will be able to take immediately and "present ... to himself glorious, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any of such things". Do we believe that? Do I believe that, that it is here at the present time? There might be much which is otherwise related to it. We speak of the "great house", and how

many of our brethren in this city, thousands of them, are not available to us, but in them is the indestructible work of God and, because it is God's work, it is pure, it is not capable of failure. As John, writing, as we say for these days, said as to the one who "has been begotten of God", "his seed abides in him, and he cannot sin", 1 John 3: 9. These are wonderful things, but I think we should be reminded of them and we should hold them and they would, I would suggest, be of the character of the word that the Lord Jesus would bring to us.

And so it says there, He "has delivered himself up for it", and, as we are reminded, the tense involves that that committal, which was seen in an absolute way in His death, continues, and He is still committed to the assembly. What He sees is what is of Himself, of Him and like Him and for Him, and He is active in relation to it, Himself and by the Spirit, "purifying it by the washing of water by the word". We have often been reminded that that is a preventative service. It is preventative because the assembly in itself is pure. The Holy Spirit could not dwell in the assembly if it were not pure, for He does not attach Himself to the flesh, to the failings, the breakdown, the weakness, but He attaches Himself to that which is pure. Wonderful grace that He goes on with what is otherwise! We have to acknowledge that in ourselves, but the Lord Jesus is acting in this preventative way and I believe the character of the word for purifying would be to keep before us what the assembly is to Himself. We sang of "Precious things to Christ belonging" (hymn 351). There is what is peculiar to Himself, His own glory, which the Holy Spirit would bring to us: "He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall announce it to you", John 16: 14, but one of the precious things that belongs to Him, beloved, is the assembly, and I believe He would keep before us what it is for Him, and this in itself would have a purifying effect because we would seek the help of the Holy Spirit that we might be kept in accord with it. Soon He is going to "present the assembly to himself glorious, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any of such things; but that it might be holy and blameless". I just was impressed with the fact, as we speak of the

imminence of the Lord's return - do we believe that He might come today? - that there is that here which He can take immediately and present to Himself glorious, fruit of His death, fruit of His own service, fruit of the patient service of the Holy Spirit, and all that is extraneous will be left behind? As far as the dead in Christ are concerned, it is already left behind, responsible history ended, and what is with Christ is what is after Himself, but there is also that in each one of us which is after Himself, and it is that which He will take and together all will form that glorious vessel which He will present to Himself "having no spot, or wrinkle, or any of such things". So let us, as I say, lift our eyes from the extremity of things as they are in their weakness and smallness publicly and let us see what God has committed Himself to. That is what Balaam had to come to that God had committed Himself. He has committed Himself now in relation to the assembly. Our brother referred in prayer to His purpose from which He cannot be turned aside. Let us keep our eye on it! And so it says, "At this time it shall be said" - "At this time". If the Lord were to come immediately now, it would immediately be manifest there would be that which Christ can present to Himself glorious.

We speak of these things as abstract, but they are real. The work of God is real; it is substantial; it is pure. There is much of which we have to speak sorrowfully in the mixed condition. None of us would absolve ourselves from it, but let us keep this view before us, let us keep Christ's view before us, His nourishing and cherishing the assembly in view of the time so soon when He will present it to Himself glorious. May He encourage us in it for His Name's sake!

LONDON

4 June 1996

FOLLOWING, SERVING, WAITING

Robert Renton

John 21: 21,22; 12: 1,2; 1 Thess 4: 15-18

As we gather together for a meeting of this character, we lay ourselves open for impressions. We may not come with a word, but we may often get a quickening touch when we are together. We sang in our opening hymn:

"So may we undistracted be
To follow, serve, and wait for Thee." (Hymn 328)

I want to speak just a little about these three things: following, serving and waiting. How full our time should be with so much to go in for, so much to enjoy, particularly when we are among the saints! I suppose, as we follow, we have our eye on Christ. We could not rightly follow otherwise.

So this passage in John 21, I notice the Lord says twice, "Follow me." In verse 19, "But he said this signifying by what death he should glorify God. And having said this, he says to him, Follow me". And then where we read in verse 21 "Peter seeing him, says to Jesus, Lord, and what of this man?" That is just our tendency, dear brethren, to have our eye on others. But the Lord would speak specifically to each of us as He did to Peter, "If I will that he abide until I come, what is that to thee?" as if to say, That is not your affair: that is not your business. Then He says, "Follow thou me." Oh, beloved brethren, are we following? Have we our eyes on the Leader? Have we our eyes on Jesus as our objective, as our object, as our ideal? That is what the Lord Jesus is meant to be so that we follow Him in affection. It is affection for Him that allows us to follow. May we not be distracted from following! That is what we have sung. How easily we are! Peter must have been distracted. He wondered about John? What about him? The Lord says, "If I will that he abide until I come, what is that to thee?" That is not your business. "Follow thou me." I think that is the word for us tonight, beloved brethren.

We have already had a word, but I think the Lord would say to us, "Follow thou me". It is personal and it affects each one of us.

Now, we have eternal life conditions in chapter 12. What a wonderful scene it must have been. In Luke, you will remember, it says that "Martha was distracted with much serving", chap 10: 40. Do not let us be distracted! Let us be simple! Let us be dependent! Let us just lean on the Lord and the Spirit and He will help us in service. How many ways there are that we may serve! We can serve one another tonight. We can serve by visitation. Sisters unable to get to meetings, oh how they love to have a visit from us. That is part of service, one of the privileges we have, particularly those of us who are retired. We can take up this service and visit the saints. So, as I have said, here we have eternal life conditions. "Jesus therefore, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where was the dead man Lazarus ..." What a time that must have been! "The dead man Lazarus" dead as to everything here but alive as to everything connected with the Lord Jesus. "There therefore they made him a supper, and Martha served", everything in its right order; she is not distracted now, not saying the wrong thing, not charging the Lord Jesus as she did in Luke's account, but she is serving in tranquillity, in restfulness, and it made for ideal conditions. May we all be found in this attitude!

Now, just a word on waiting for the Lord Jesus. I suppose the older we become, the more what we call the rapture is before us which will mean our emancipation from this scene. That is our outlook, that is our one desire. What a time it will be when we *actually, literally, physically* see Jesus. I think we shall just worship and adore Him, not only because of what He has done, and how much He has done for us, but because of the moral glory and excellent beauty that we will find adoringly and eternally in the Lord Jesus. We read "That we, the living, who remain to the coming of the Lord, are in no way to anticipate those who have fallen asleep; for the Lord himself ..." - I think that is a beautiful touch. He will not leave it to an angel to take us or Gabriel, or Michael, but "the Lord himself". This is our immediate outlook, it cannot be long, it cannot

be long. While we see the worsening of conditions around us, there is that among the saints continually saying, Lord Jesus, come. That is our hope, our one hope, and our objective, not only to be with the Lord Jesus, but to be like Him. Oh, may it lift our sights, may it encourage our hearts! Our brother has sought to encourage us. I think if there is one passage in the whole of scripture that is meant to encourage us, it is 1 Thessalonians 4, "for the Lord himself, with an assembling shout, with archangel's voice and with trump of God, shall descend from heaven; and the dead in Christ shall rise first." How right it is that they, the dead in Christ, should have priority! They have gone through the article; we have not as yet. But the dead in Christ have gone through the physical article of death and they have the priority. "The dead in Christ shall rise first; then we, the living who remain ..." How are we remaining, dear brethren? Are we distracted? Are we taken up with other things? May the Lord Himself be our whole, consuming object! It makes life really worthwhile when Christ is the ideal of the heart. "Then we, the living who remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds ..." - that is those who have died and the living who remain - "to meet the Lord in the air" - what a meeting that will be! What the first sight of Jesus will be, when we meet Him in the air! I think we shall just adore Him. I used to wonder, there will be so many there, there will be millions there, millions, and I picture myself - maybe this is fanciful - I would be away at the back. That is where I should be anyway! But I do not think so. I think we will all be in closest proximity to Jesus and we will see Him as He is. May the hope brighten us! May we not be distracted:

"So may we undistracted be
To follow, serve, and wait for Thee."

For His Name's sake.

EDINBURGH

20 June 1995

"TO NUMBER OUR DAYS"

Robert Taylor

Psalm 90: 1-6, 12

There is nothing more sobering than to be in the presence of death - a life has finished. God in His wisdom has limited the life of men. It tells us in this passage that God has limited it to threescore years and ten; and if, by reason of strength, it may be longer; but it is limited, there comes an end to our lives whether they be long or short. Moses himself was a man who had lived a considerable time, longer than men would live nowadays, but he lived that life and he is writing about it. And he says, "Teach us to number our days". That is all that we have, a day at a time, and God would have us to be sobered as we are in the presence of death as to what our days are like. Job speaks of them as being swifter than a weaver's shuttle (Job 7: 6); they pass away very quickly. One day comes and another day comes and much of it may be spent in an aimless kind of way, but God would, as I said, sober us that our days may be spent wisely, may be spent rightly. Here Moses speaks of God as being from eternity to eternity. He has made time and He has come into it in the Person of His Son. It says in Scripture "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son", Gal 4: 4. He came into time to give it meaning. He came into the days of the life of our brother to give it some meaning; his days were spent in relation to the Lord. Man's days without Christ are spent in relation to himself. We live to ourselves and spend our life in our own circumstances, our own things and doing our own will. But the Lord Jesus came into time to teach us the value of what can be accomplished in a lifetime as we number our days in relation to the will of God. The Lord Jesus showed us how to live day by day. He lived in dependence upon His Father; not pleasing Himself but lived here in the service of others. His days were guided by heaven. The Lord Jesus as He was here speaks of morning by morning (Isa 50: 4), He had the Father's word for the day and each day was filled out pleasurable to heaven. So He has shown us how to number our

days, how to fill out our lives in relation to God's will. Peter says that the time past has been sufficient to please ourselves (1 Peter 4: 3); he says henceforth we are to spend our time in relation to the will of God. Our brother came to that and for the rest of the time he sought to be for the pleasure of God. The Lord Jesus in His grace had touched his heart and touched the hearts of many here and He would seek to touch your heart. As He was here in relation to God's will He gave His life, shed His blood to cleanse us from our sins that our lives may take on a definite character. Instead of being carried along in the stream of man's will and the pleasures of sin and the deceitfulness of it the Lord Jesus would touch our hearts that we may turn in relation to serving Him in His grace. What love, what grace He has shown to take away the guilt and the burden of sin that we labour under, that in His grace He would draw us in relation to Himself. So Moses would teach us here that we may number our days. A day has come in our brother's life when those days have ceased and he is now with Christ. His life has not been empty, or aimless. The death of the wicked, the death of the sinner how empty it is; a life has been spent and what has been accomplished in it? A life spent in relation to man's will ends in a sorrowful death, but a life that has been spent in relation to the will of God ends in being put to sleep in Jesus. Our brother's life here is finished but there has been worked out in that life some thing that is going to be gathered up. When the Lord comes our brother will be raised, something there has been wrought in him that will be suited to find its place in those heavenly courts above. Our brother's days have been counted, not only by him but by those who have known him and have been counted by heaven, and the Lord has ended those days to gather him to Himself. So those of us who are left still have today. How is today going to be spent? Is it going to be that we are brought under the Saviour's touch, to be in relation to the will of God? It says, "that we may acquire a wise heart".

May it sober our hearts that a life has been finished, the days have been ended, but there is something being gathered up from those days that the Lord has gathered to Himself and it will be raised

to shine in those heavenly courts. Well, what about our days? Can we look back on our lives - most of us would have regrets and sorrows - but there would be in it for those who have committed themselves to the Lord Jesus days in which we have learned something of His grace, and of His love. And today those of us who know Him would rest in the comfort of His love. Our dear sister sorrowing, but not as those who have no hope; she is resting in the comfort that those days have been spent in relation to God's will. And in the day of sorrow that we may be facing today we prove the comfort and the grace of Christ. May our hearts be strengthened in it that for the rest of the time, our days may be under the will of God for His pleasure, by His grace and for His glory. May it be so.

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Burial of A.G.Spooner