

Obituary Mr. William Cubitt

Mr. William Cubitt was born May 21, 1769, at Neatishead, in the county of Norfolk. He was brought up a strict churchman, but having a brother-in-law a dissenter, a deacon of a Baptist church, he frequently went with him the distance of seven miles to worship among dissenters. By this means the Lord was pleased to shine into his soul, and to discover to him his state as breaker of that law which is "holy, just, and good." Thus taught of God, he could say -

"Till now I saw no danger nigh,
I lived at ease, nor fear'd to die:
Wrapt up in self-conceit and pride,
I shall have peace at last, I cried.
But when, great God, thy light divine,
Had shone on this dark soul of mine,
Then I beheld, with trembling awe,
The tenors of thy holy law."

Through mercy it was not long before he saw, that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and in him he trusted for salvation the remnant of his days. In the year 1792 he was baptized, and joined the Baptist church at Ingham, Norfolk. Living in a dark village, he soon felt a warm desire to be useful to his neighbours, and was very earnest in prayer to God for their salvation. With a view to their good, and God's glory, he opened his school room on Saturday evenings, and read to them Mr. Burder's Village Sermons &c.; frequently dropping very interesting sentences as he read. Not having a talent for preaching, he invited two or three ministers, who lived in the neighbourhood, to preach in his school room when they had opportunity;* and much did it rejoice his heart to see several persons attend. But it was several years after, before the gospel was preached there on Lord's-days; as those ministers were engaged with their respective churches and congregations. In the year 1808, he heard of Mr. Allen, of Norwich, who was at that time disengaged: he came; and by his preaching a larger congregation was collected. This sight much rejoiced the heart of our friend, as he had often prayed that the Lord would raise a cause for Christ in his native village. For several years he found it difficult to support the preacher, as he had to do it chiefly himself; afterwards, it pleased the Lord to send a person of considerable property to live in the neighbourhood, who constantly attended, and was very useful; other persons also of respectability, came to and the school-room became too small for the congregation. Frequently did our friend solicit the advice and assistance of with whom he was acquainted, relative to building a house for Lord. To the joy of his heart, in the spring of the year 1810, a few relatives and friends were collected, who consulted on what was best be done in reference to the of a place of worship. Prayer was offered to God for his direction and blessing; a subscription of eighty-seven pounds was made, and a plan formed for building a meeting-house, by those persons, some of whom were members of a neighbouring Baptist church. A double concern for the inhabitants of that village was felt by individuals, it being their native place. And here another proof of the love of our friend to Redeemer's interest was manifested, who, though he had a weak constitution,

and a school to attend, took all the concerns upon himself to procure teams to convey the materials for the place of worship to the ground appointed for its erection, &c., and much did it rejoice his heart, to find many of his neighbours very friendly in assisting to get the materials together. When the day arrived that the building was finished, great was the happiness that he experienced. A church was formed; a minister (Mr. William Spurgeon**) ordained; and himself a deacon in the little society. For several years before his death, he had been attacked with a disorder on his lungs; and in the summer of the year 1814, he was so sharply seized, that he was obliged to give up his school, not being able to speak without injuring himself. From this attack, he a little recovered, so that he was enabled to get to the house of the Lord. On the 29th of November, 1814, early in the morning, he was suddenly seized with a pain in his chest, and could scarcely speak without a groan. He requested his pastor, and his friends, to be sent for, who came and prayed with him; but it was seldom that he could speak, except a little in the forenoon, at which time he requested his minister to preach a funeral from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8, "I fought a good fight," &c. A friend, who visited him, was noticing usefulness in the cause of the Saviour: to which he replied, with tears in his eyes (which were expressive of the humility of his mind,) "I have done nothing! I have done nothing! I am an unprofitable servant; yet I bless the Lord that he gave me a heart for these things; and Oh! that many may have to bless God on this account when I am dead." At another time, when he was asked what was the state his mind: he said, "Calm and easy." During the forenoon, he called his children around his bed, and lifted up his eyes and heart to God on their behalf; but could only a little. At one time, when looking at his dear wife, he said, "I wish it were over! I am dying, but am calm." After this, a friend said to him, "Though you cannot speak, you can signify Jesus is precious to you, by squeezing my hand;" which he did, and looked very happy. And when one said to him, You will soon be with your Lord; he replied, "I hope I shall." As it respects his experience in general, though he had at all times a good hope, through grace, yet he had many fears of his interest in Christ. Frequently, during his health, he was as if tossed about upon the ocean; but when he was dying, the wind ceased, and there was a calm. After conflicting with the pangs of death from one o'clock in the morning till half-past five in the evening, he breathed his last, on Tuesday, November 29, 1814, in the fifty-sixth year of his age.

Thus died this useful servant of the Lord, whom he had raised up to aid the cause of the Saviour in a benighted village. May others, by this example, be stimulated to "go and do likewise." He was buried in the ground belonging to the meeting, according to his request; at which time his pastor preached on the occasion, from Matthew, xxiv. 44, "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

*The Rev. J. Hooke, of Ingham; J.T. Beard, of Worsted; and Charles Chamberlain, of Warwick.

**Spurgeon is probably the correct spelling.

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