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# ANDREW FULLER'S HEAVENLY-MINDED PIETY: THE BLESSEDNESS OF REST AND REWARDS FOR THE DEAD IN CHRIST

*Evan D. Burns*

*The Baptist pastor, Andrew Fuller, (1754–1815), preached a funeral sermon on Revelation 14:13 in 1792. This sermon provides a delightful insight into the heavenly rest and rewards promised to believers. Here it is unpacked in the context of Fuller's wider theology, thus showcasing his abilities as a gifted preacher and pastor-theologian.*

A vision of heaven and the promised reward of being forever with the Lord captivated Andrew Fuller's soul. From the sweetness of his heavenly meditations he penned the funeral sermon for Beeby Wallis at Kettering in April 1792. Wallis was a deacon of the Baptist church in Kettering. He served as the first treasurer of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS). Fuller preached on 'The Blessedness of the Dead Who Die in the Lord.' Though intending to eulogise and memorialise Wallis, Fuller spent the majority of his sermon expounding on biblical themes such as the need for Christian perseverance, the promise of rewards, heavenly rest, earthly labour, true blessedness, and the inevitability of death. Echoing the authorial intent of the passage, Revelation 14:13, Fuller sought to strengthen the hearts of his mourning hearers who had followed Christ even amidst affliction. He did this by elucidating the aforementioned themes, specifically the promises of heavenly rest and rewards.

This sermon serves as a helpful window into Fuller's heavenly-minded piety that pervades many of his other writings as well. Fuller argued that heavenly rest is not the cessation of labour; rather, it is the presence of labour in pure worship, unhindered by the curse. And heavenly rewards are ultimately rewards of grace over and against rewards of merit. The believer's greatest reward is God himself. For Fuller, the centre of heavenly bliss, in rest and rewards, is God alone.

## Fuller's Observations on Revelation 14:13

Fuller's chief text upon which he meditated for this sermon was Revelation 14:13, which says, 'And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'<sup>1</sup> Fuller began by stating the original *telos* of this passage: 'The original design of the passage seems to have been to support the

<sup>1</sup> KJV.

afflicted followers of Christ in times of persecution.<sup>2</sup> Yet, he said that though this passage was originally intended 'to arm the holy martyrs against the terrors of death,'<sup>3</sup> it does seem that it could be generally applied to Christians under other degrees of affliction as well.

First, he discussed the character of those 'who die in the Lord.' They are necessarily united to Christ, as in a marriage union where two parties are united by mutual affection, common pursuits, and identical causes. So, death is the introduction of the believer's full union with Christ. And being in this union, he described believers who die as abounding in good works just as a branch necessarily bears fruit since it is united to the vine. Second, Fuller said that part of the blessedness observed in this passage comes from the voice from heaven, which demonstrates that heaven values the saints' homecoming whereas fallen man values worldly prosperity and security. Third, that John was commanded to write down this verse indicates the enduring blessedness of its promise for believers of all ensuing generations. Fourth, Fuller said that the phrase, 'from henceforth,' refers to the time of their souls' departure from the body in physical death. Fifth, two aspects of this post-death blessedness are rest from labours and the glorious reward of good works. And, it is in this fifth observation that Fuller expounded two predominant themes: rest from labour and rewards of grace.

## Theme 1: Rest from Labours

Fuller's theology of heavenly rest should not be understood as 'a mere cessation from exercise in the grave,'<sup>4</sup> and neither should labour be understood as the mere presence of exercise, since the saints will be actively 'serving God day and night in his temple'<sup>5</sup> and priestly-kingly work is part of heavenly blessedness. Rather, his theology of heavenly rest entails the elimination of striving against 'the course of this world'<sup>6</sup> with its relentless river of wickedness and worldliness. Simply put, 'to oppose

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<sup>2</sup> Andrew Fuller, *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller with a Memoir of His Life by Andrew Gunton Fuller* (3 vols.; ed. J. Belcher; Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1845; repr., Harrisonburg, Va.: Sprinkle, 1988), 1: p. 152.

<sup>3</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 152.

<sup>4</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 154.

<sup>5</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 154. Fuller was referencing, 'Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them' (Rev 7:15 KJV).

<sup>6</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 154. Fuller was referencing, 'Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience' (Eph 2:2 KJV).

this current is labour.' To be at rest from 'the temptations of the world,' 'the natural infirmities and afflictions...in the last stages of life,' and most grievously, 'our own native depravity,' would be 'heaven indeed!'<sup>7</sup>

Fuller viewed work as a great blessing from the Lord as long as it was not laborious under the weight of sin and the curse. Certainly, activism to Fuller was his God-given responsibility, and he worked for God with 'indefatigable zeal.'<sup>8</sup> To be liberated from such striving in order to serve God unhindered would be rest of the purest kind. Yet in other writings, he also demonstrated the necessity of such labour against sin and its effects in order to more fully appreciate heaven's rest.<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere Fuller compared this heavenly rest to seasons of peace in Israel's history under the reigns of David and Solomon, where there was no war and where *shalom* filled the nation. Likewise, heaven will radiate *pax aeterna*, and the true and better David will reign over his people in perfect *shalom*.<sup>10</sup> Demonstrating his

<sup>7</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 155.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Gunton Fuller, *Andrew Fuller* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1882), p. 92. Fuller's son and biographer, Andrew Gunton Fuller, well-portrayed Fuller's heavy workload and his thirst for heavenly rest: 'Mr. Fuller remained at Kettering until the time of his death, his ministry in that town extending over a period of thirty-three years. They were years spent in hard and continual toil, the fruits of which are now enjoyed to a greater or less degree in almost every part of the civilized world. It seems almost incredible that any man could have accomplished so much as he did; sometimes, nay often, his duties were so numerous and so varied, that his work became a burden almost too heavy to be borne. In March, 1800, when engaged in controversy, compiling his memoirs of Mr. Pearce, and discharging all his regular duties, he was solicited to give his assistance to a new periodical work, and being compelled to decline, excused himself as follows: "My labours will increase, without any consent on my part. As to magazines, there are several to which I contribute, for the sake of the mission and other public interests; and through such a number of objects as press upon me daily, my own vineyard, my own soul, my own family, and congregation are neglected...Pearce's memoirs are now loudly called for. I sit down almost in despair, and say, 'That which is crooked cannot be made straight, and that which is lacking cannot be numbered.' My wife looks at me with a tear ready to drop, and says, 'My dear, you have hardly time to speak to me.' My friends at home are kind, but they also say, 'You have no time to see or know us, and you will soon be worn out.' Amidst all this there is, 'Come again to Scotland—come to Portsmouth—come to Plymouth—come to Bristol.'...Under this complicated load my heart has often of late groaned for rest, longing to finish my days in comparative retirement.'" pp. 90–92.

<sup>9</sup> 'What is rest to him that is never weary, or peace to one that is a stranger to trouble? Heaven itself would not be that to us which it will be, if we came not out of great tribulation to the possession of it' (Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 461).

<sup>10</sup> Fuller was citing, 'And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious' (Isa 11:10 KJV). See the following for Fuller's exposition of this verse: Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: pp. 602–603.

value for hard work for the kingdom, Fuller commended Beeby Wallis at the end of his funeral message for Wallis' 'indefatigable industry, patience, and perseverance.'<sup>11</sup>

Fuller's doctrine of heavenly rest did not necessarily begin upon departing the body at death and arriving in heaven. But, he warned of the danger of seeking false rest in false assurance outside of the objective atoning work of Christ. Elsewhere, he taught,

The fountain is open; the Spirit saith, Come, and the bride saith, Come, and whosoever will may come, and partake of the water of life freely. God's word directs him to the good way, and counsels him to walk in it, promising that in so doing he shall find rest to his soul. Nothing hinders his coming but a secret attachment to his idols, which on coming he is aware must be relinquished. The only comfort that we are warranted to hold up to one in such circumstances is that of Jesus Christ having come into the world to save sinners, and of his being able and willing to save all them that come unto God by him. If this afford no consolation, it is at our peril to console him from what he feels in himself, which, till he falls as a sinner ready to perish at the feet of Jesus, is nothing better than the impenitent distress of a Cain, a Saul, or a Judas. It *may* terminate in a better issue, and it may not. Our business is to point to the gospel refuge; teaching, entreating, and warning him to flee thither from the wrath to come. If once a sinner derives comfort from any thing short of Christ, he from thence falls asleep in security; and it is well if he awakes in this world. He has obtained a kind of 'rest for his soul' without 'coming to him for it,' which must needs therefore be delusive. Stupified by the intoxicating potion, he dreams of being a favourite of Heaven, and if any attempt to disturb his repose, it is commonly without effect. 'They have smitten me, (saith he,) and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.' Such, or nearly such, is very frequently the beginning of Antinomian religion.<sup>12</sup>

In another place, Fuller similarly contended that,

The first operations of true religion in the mind are in this way. Christ may not be the first object to which a sinner's thoughts are turned; this may be his sin and exposedness to the wrath of God; but let our thoughts of sin and misery be as pungent as they may, if they lead us not to Christ for salvation, there is no true religion in them. He is 'the way' to God: 'no man cometh unto the Father but by him.' We may be burdened under guilt and fear; but, till we *come* to him with our burden, there will be no

<sup>11</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 159.

<sup>12</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 2: p. 740.

gospel rest for our souls. The promise is not made to us as burdened, but as coming to Christ with our burdens, Matt. 11:28.<sup>13</sup>

Fuller argued that those emotive experiences or impressions of the mind that too easily pass for conversion are merely anaesthetising earthly comforts with no guarantee of actual peace with God. In other writings he warned,

Longing for ease to his troubled spirit, he is in the most imminent danger of taking up his rest in any thing that will afford him a present relief; and if in such a state of mind he receive an impression that God has forgiven and accepted him, or read a book or hear a sermon favourable to such a mode of obtaining comfort, he will very probably imbibe it, and become inebriated with the delicious draught. And now he thinks he has discovered the light of life, and feels to have lost his burden.<sup>14</sup>

## Theme 2: Rewards of Grace

Arguing against the notion of righteous works serving as the ‘ground of justification’<sup>15</sup> on the last day, Fuller demonstrated that good works will follow Christians and serve among the ‘causes of their felicity...[And] they will contribute to augment our bliss.’<sup>16</sup> He argued with tight logic and Scriptural proofs that degrees of happiness in heaven (as well as degrees of misery in hell) correspond directly to the degrees of loving obedience (as well as rebellious disobedience) in this life.<sup>17</sup> Citing numerous promises of

<sup>13</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 433, italics original.

<sup>14</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 2: pp. 739–740.

<sup>15</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 155.

<sup>16</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 155.

<sup>17</sup> Fuller elaborated more on this notion of degrees of happiness in other works. ‘It is an unscriptural and irrational notion, that all will have an equal degree of happiness in heaven. All will be perfectly happy, but some will not have so large a capacity for happiness as others. Every vessel will be full, but some vessels will contain more than others. ‘One star differeth from another star in glory.’ The apostle Paul must enjoy more in heaven than a soul caught up from infancy; since part of the happiness of heaven will consist of remembrance of the past...But the diversity most important for *our* consideration is that which will arise from the manner in which we have performed our trust. In proportion to the degree of fidelity with which we have discharged the trust committed to us in this world will be the honour and happiness conferred upon us in the next...*You will participate in that joy of which your Lord partakes:*—‘Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ You will ‘sit down with him on his throne.’ Whatever the joy is that was ‘set before him,’ and for which he ‘endured the cross, despising the shame,’ in that joy, if you have ‘run with patience the race which is set before you, looking unto him,’ you shall partake. That which rejoices Christ’s heart will rejoice yours—the glory of

Christ to store up treasures in heaven, to sow to the Spirit, and to rejoice in tribulation in light of future reward, Fuller contended 'that everlasting life is a harvest that will grow out of the seed sown to the Spirit.'<sup>18</sup> Moreover, he pre-empted the objection that he is promoting meritorious rewards by arguing that it is 'the Lord who has *wrought all our works in us*, and if the reward with which he is pleased to crown them be a matter of grace and not of debt, where then is boasting? It is only God's graciously rewarding his own work.'<sup>19</sup> In other writings, Fuller explained, 'Rewards contain nothing inconsistent with the doctrine of grace, because those very works which it pleased God to honour are *the effects of his own operation*. He rewards the works of which he is the author and proper cause. He who "ordains peace for us"—"hath wrought all our works in us."<sup>20</sup>

Additionally, Fuller grounded God's pleasure in rewarding his works within us in our union with Christ. Not only are Christians accepted in Christ, 'but what they do for Christ is accepted also, and rewarded for

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God in the salvation of sinners. He will not rejoice alone; but admit to his joy all those who have had any share in the great work to accomplish which he humbled himself unto death. My brother, let this thought encourage you amidst all your trials—that you are to enter into the joy of your Lord. 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.'" (Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: pp. 500–501). See also what he said in his sermon on the doctrine of rewards: 'This doctrine will receive further confirmation if we consider *wherein the nature of heavenly felicity consists*. There can be no doubt but that an essential part of it will consist in the *Divine approbation*; and this not merely on account of what we shall then be, but of what we have been and done in the present world. So far as we have sown to the Spirit, so far we shall reap the approbation of God; and this will be a harvest that will infinitely exceed all our toils. We are assured that for those who fear the Lord, and are concerned for his name in times of general declension, 'a book of remembrance is written;' and, from the account given us by our Lord, it appears that its contents will be published in the presence of an assembled world. 'The King will say unto those at his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father.'—"I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.' Another essential part of the heavenly felicity will consist in 'ascribing glory to God and the Lamb.' It will be a source of joy unspeakable to perceive the abundance of glory which will redound to the best of beings from all the works of his hands. But if we rejoice that God is glorified, we cannot but rejoice in the recollection that we have been instrumental in glorifying him. It belongs to the nature of love to rejoice in an opportunity of expressing itself; and when those opportunities have occurred, to rejoice in recollection of them.' (Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: pp. 179–180, italics original).

<sup>18</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1:p. 156.

<sup>19</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 156, italics original.

<sup>20</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 3: p. 743, italics original.

his sake.<sup>21</sup> That God loves his chosen sons in Christ compels him to give, and those works of love and holiness induce him to reward ‘in such a manner.’<sup>22</sup> Heaven will be a land of increasing joy, for we are not only saved from God’s wrath by his grace but are also rewarded for his gracious power working in our good deeds. In other writings Fuller explained that the underlying motive of faithful service to God is the reward of hearing, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’ Writing for young ministers, Fuller instructed,

...in some cases men may say, ‘Well done,’ when, in the sight of Him who judges the heart, and recognizes the springs of action, our work may be ill done. And even if we have done comparatively well, we must not rest satisfied with the approbation of our friends. Many have sat down contented with the plaudits of their hearers, spoiled and ruined. It is the ‘Well done’ *at the last day* which we should seek, and with which only we should be satisfied. There have been young ministers, of very promising talents, who have been absolutely nursed to death with human applause, and the hopes they inspired blighted and blasted by the flattery of the weak and inconsiderate. The sound of ‘Well done’ has been reiterated in their ears so often, that at last (poor little minds!) they have thought, Surely it *was* well done; they have inhaled the delicious draught, they have sat down to enjoy it, they have relaxed their efforts, and, after their little hour of popular applause, they have retired behind the scenes, and

<sup>21</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 156. For a further explanation of rewards, see: ‘The best services we can render are mingled with sin, and therefore, instead of *deserving* a reward, need forgiveness. The reward we shall receive will be a reward of grace, not of debt. Were it not for the sake of Christ, nothing we do could be accepted, there being so much sin cleaving even to our best services. The Lord accepted Abel and his offering. First he accepts our persons for the sake of Christ, and then our services. And our services, being accepted, become also rewardable for his sake: our future honours are a part of Christ’s reward. If you are instrumental in saving a soul, it will be impossible for you to meet that soul in heaven, and not rejoice over it; it will, in fact, be your crown of rejoicing. So your honour and blessedness will form a part of Christ’s reward.’ (*The Complete Works*, 1: p. 500, italics original). Also, Fuller’s biographer, John Webster Morris, elaborated well on what Fuller was saying: ‘[God] now accepts believing sinners for the sake of his beloved Son, and not only blesses them with all spiritual blessings ‘in him, through him, and for his sake,’ but also rewards their services—in his kingdom, through the same medium—their services become impregnated with his worthiness, their petitions also being offered up with the ‘much incense’ of his intercession. Thus God in approving the services of believers, approves of the obedience and sacrifice of his Son, of which they are the fruits; and in rewarding them, continues to reward him, or to express his good pleasure in his mediation.’ (John Webster Morris, *Memoirs of Andrew Fuller* (Boston: Lincoln & Edmands, 1830), p. 146).

<sup>22</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 157.

become of little or no account in the Christian world; and, what is worse, their spirituality has declined, and they have sunk down into a state of desertion, dispiritedness, and inactivity, as regards this world, and of uncertainty, if not of fearful forebodings, as to another...My brother, you *may* sit down when *God* says, 'Well done!' for then your trust will be discharged; but it is at your peril that you rest satisfied with any thing short of this. Keep *that* reward in view, and you will not, I trust, be unfaithful in the service of your Lord.<sup>23</sup>

Elsewhere he masterfully elucidated how we will find our greatest reward in God being glorified:

Another essential part of the heavenly felicity will consist in 'ascribing glory to God and the Lamb.' It will be a source of joy unspeakable to perceive the abundance of glory which will redound to the best of beings from all the works of his hands. But if we rejoice that God is glorified, we cannot but rejoice in the recollection that we have been instrumental in glorifying him.<sup>24</sup>

In Fuller's broader theology of heavenly rewards, God himself is the Christian's highest joy and thus greatest reward. He argued that the 'grand source of spiritual enjoyment,' according to John 17:3, is that 'knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent...an epitome of the gospel, and the faith of it.'<sup>25</sup> More explicitly, expositing Ephesians 3:14–21, Fuller said that even the knowledge of Christ's love was not the end of our experience of joy. The purpose of Paul's petitions in Ephesians 3 is, according to Fuller,

that ye may be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge...In proportion as we comprehend the love of Christ, we are supposed to be 'filled with all the fulness of God.' If there be a sentence in the Bible expressive of ultimate bliss, I say again, surely it is this.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: pp. 499–50, italics original.

<sup>24</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 180.

<sup>25</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 3: p. 727. Fuller referred to John 17:3, which says, 'And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent' (KJV).

<sup>26</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 3: p. 731. Fuller was commenting on Ephesians 3:14–21, which says, 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ,

God is the source from which all streams of joy and reward flow.<sup>27</sup> The unremitting heavenly delight of Christ's inexhaustible love will compel 'the tide of celestial bliss to rise higher and higher...Knowledge and happiness must be eternally progressive.'<sup>28</sup> He said, 'even supposing that our prayers should not be granted, yet prayer to God is its own reward.'<sup>29</sup> What can be lacking for those who have God for their 'exceeding great reward?'<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, his heavenly-minded theology contended that heavenly bliss is not a new river from which believers have never drunk; rather, it is a greater effulgence of that salvation which they presently experience in part:

What is heaven?...It is the same that we have already received. We have received the end of our faith, the salvation of our souls...In short, the joys of heaven will consist in loving and praising the Lamb, and exploring the system of redemption, and that is the chief joy of the present state.<sup>31</sup>

The joy believers experience in treasuring the gospel is the same joy that they will experience in heaven. The main distinction of heavenly bliss and earthly gospel-enjoyment is the difference of degrees of happiness.

As he was about to begin recalling the godly life of Beeby Wallis, Fuller concluded his exposition by promoting the usefulness of the doctrine of rewards. He said that because those who die in the Lord enter in to the eternal blessedness of heavenly rest and reward, those left behind who mourn should rejoice on their account. Second, he challenged Christians to press on and not give up, knowing that the labour of this life will be

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which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen' (KJV).

<sup>27</sup> Many of Fuller's descriptions of heaven and rewards sound reminiscent of Jonathan Edwards' treatment of heaven and eternal happiness in God. See Jonathan Edwards, *Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 2 (ed. Edward Hickman; with a Memoir by Sereno E. Dwight; Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), pp. 243–246. For an authoritative treatment of Edwards' influence in Fuller's theology, see Chris Chun, *The Legacy of Jonathan Edwards in the Theology of Andrew Fuller* (Studies in the History of Christian Traditions; Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 3: p. 732.

<sup>29</sup> John Ryland, *The Work of Faith, the Labour of Love, and the Patience of Hope, Illustrated; in the Life and Death of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, Late Pastor of the Baptist Church at Kettering, and Secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society, from Its Commencement in 1792, Chiefly Extracted from His Own Papers, Extracted by John Ryland, D.D.* (London: Button & Son, Paternoster Row, 1816), p. 167.

<sup>30</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 3: p. 61.

<sup>31</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 394.

over and only remembered with joy and gratitude. Third, he cast the hard struggle of temptation as an opportunity to invest in heavenly reward. 'Every temptation to evil that accosts us is a price put into our hands; it affords us an opportunity of proving our love to God, by denying ourselves in that instance for his sake.'<sup>32</sup> And fourth, Christians ought to tremble that the works of the unregenerate also follow them to hell wherein they will receive their harvest.

## Conclusion

Fuller designed this funeral sermon to mirror the original intention of the Apostle John in Revelation 14:13, to encourage afflicted Christians to hope in future reward and to rejoice for those who have died and entered in to that eternal joy. This sermon is just one of many tributaries within Fuller's wider theology of heaven. Fuller carefully knit pastoral application with theological specificity, validating his pre-eminence as a pastor-theologian. He successfully demonstrated how rest from labour and reward for grace-empowered work are heavenly realities, which Christians should joyfully anticipate. In heaven, Christians will rest from all the labour they experience in this life in opposition to sin and the curse. But, their work will not cease; they will be perfected and supremely worshipful as they serve God with infinite gladness. Christians are saved not only from God's just wrath but are also saved for eternal joy in God. Fuller longed for this heavenly rest in God, and even in his dying hours, he entered the reward through prayer to God:

When under great anguish, he one day said to his son, 'All misery is concentrated in me!'—'Bodily misery only, I suppose, father?'—'Yes: nothing else.' But the expression which he used to Mr. Blundell of Northampton, was the most characteristic of any of which I have been informed—'My hope is such that I am not afraid to plunge into eternity!' On the Lord's-day morning on which he died, May 7, 1815, he said to his daughter Sarah, 'I wish I had strength enough... She asked, 'To do what?' He replied, 'To worship, child.' Soon after, his daughter Mary entering the room, as soon as he understood who it was, he said 'Come, Mary, come and help me.' He was then raised up in bed, and for the last half-hour appeared to be engaged in prayer. His children surrounded his bed, listening attentively, to catch, if possible, the last words of their dying parent: but nothing could be distinctly heard, but, 'Help me!' Then, with his hands clasped, and his eyes fixed upwards, he sunk back and expired.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Fuller, *The Complete Works*, 1: p. 157.

<sup>33</sup> Ryland, *Work of Faith*, p. 550.

His doctrine of heavenly rest and rewards surely gives a warm expression to the burning flame of Fuller's love to God. Joy in the fullness of God is the believer's great reward. And, the crackling sound of this burning fire is the sound of Fuller's rejoicing in the blessedness of the eternal weight of glory for all those who overcome.

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