

Faithful unto Death

Arthur Hildersham (1647)

THE believer's chief care is to end well, as we may see in Paul, Acts 20:24, "that I might finish my course with joy":

1. If we should live a thousand years, we can never finish our work, nor do all the service we owe to God and his church, until we can say with the Lord Jesus Christ, "It is finished." (John 19:30)

2. God will judge and reward us, not according to our first, but our last works: "Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (Matthew 24:46). "Be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless" (2 Peter 3:14).

3. A man never did any service to God in sincerity, if he continues not to the end. Such as are "planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts

of our God. They shall bring forth fruit in old age." (Psalm 92:13, 14)

4. The better a man was at the beginning of his days, the worse shall his case be, if he hold not out to the end, if he finish not his course well. "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." (2 Peter 2:21)

5. It is a great honour to a man, both with God and men, when he is better in his old age, or toward his end, than he was before; when it may be said of him as of Ruth: "Thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning." (Ruth 3:10) "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." (Proverbs 16:31)