

Longtown 17<sup>th</sup> April 1835

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Josiah B. Furman

1795-1842

Dear James

With what reluctance & pain I take up my pen to inform you of the death of our dear, dear Susan, you may judge from the bitterness which now comes over your feelings, stunned by the stroke I scarcely know how to realize the calamity. It came upon us here almost as suddenly as it will here to come upon you. One hour & a half before his removal I was fondly cherishing the hope that she might yet recover, that her pure & noble spirit would long continue, in a renovated body, to cheer & to bless the circle of the family & friends - But God has appointed otherwise, and it is our duty to submit to his will & to seek a sanctified use of this sore affliction. I have felt, deeply felt, & now show painfully, feel, that my heart is tuned, <sup>to long for</sup> and if there was a being on Earth & I could, it was that spirit, so attractive in all that could enchain the affections, command the respect, & excite the admiration. She lived in my heart, & now she is entombed there. From the moment I learnt that she would come up to visit me how did she become associated with every thing around. If I looked upon the fine prospect which our habitation affords it had a tenfold interest with me from the thought, how Susan's fine taste & exquisite sensibility to the beauties of nature, would enjoy the scene. Thus every thing - our garden, our fields spreading out in gentle undulations from the very house; our poultry, every thing, became in my mind associated with her, as the occasion of affording her recreation & amusement - Judge then what are my feelings when I now contemplate nothing but hills of hopes, cherished hopes, blasted - desolation & despair as written upon all around me, & thus every thing without is contributing to augment the anguish within.

But while I feel thus overwhelmed, yet I do not sorrow as those who have no hope. I feel that I have more than hope - I have a promise, that our beloved sister is in the bosom of that precious Saviour she so much loved, & to whom she devoted herself from the very budding of life. I know that it is better for her to be with Christ than to live here in this vale of tears, even if she had been freed from disease & suffering. These thoughts console me, & I bless my heavenly Father that his grace <sup>has infused</sup> so much surpassing merit in the cup of bitterness. O the richness of that consecrated Home which brought hope & salvation <sup>eternal</sup> glory to poor, helpless, sinful men. Thus that grace can we now believe that them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him, & know that the released, the transported spirit of Susan is pouring out its tribute of grateful praise to Him whose blood has redeemed her & whose grace has admitted her into the number of God's dear children: and now that my body is lonely, & I know, but as suffering, will be raised at the resurrection day, a glorious, a spiritual, an incorruptible body in the likeness of Jesus, no more to suffer pain, sorrow, or distress, or death. If we shall be so happy as to meet

For other kindred in that day on the right hand of the judge, shall we know them? Yes. Yes.  
It will derogate nothing from the excellency of our Lord - it will not diminish one particle of our  
Love to him, to find that we are not only the gratitude & praises due for our own salvation,  
but for the salvation of kindred dear to us as our own souls. And O. methinks,  
a pious interest, we will have in our hearts towards them than we can feel on  
Earth. You Susan, my Sister, my departed Sister, torn from the arms of my  
Loving, we shall meet again - we shall know each other - we shall talk together of  
the wonders of that love, of which thus we have had so poor a conception - tho'  
it be enough to see the seal. Now we see through a glass darkly, but then we  
shall see face to face.

But you are doubtless desirous of being informed of all the circumstances which attended the  
last hours of our Sister. A few days after you had gone for Mass, I received the intelligence of Susan  
having been at Sister Walker's a friend kindly offering me the loan of a Carriage & horses. I set  
off for Mass. Perhaps it was unpleasant at seeing me again after so long an absence &  
going to visit Wrentham myself at our own house, but she appeared very amiable & cheerful  
upon my going there & remained with us from Monday the day I got there  
till Saturday, when we set off, & the evening on which she arrived at my house would be all  
the days she seemed to enjoy herself, but after that those dreadful visitations from which  
I afterwards heard she had been suffering much at Sister Walker's, returned with great  
violence. We did all we could for her gratification & relief, tho' she not the Consumption  
was then almost accomplished its fatal work, she might have got better, for her digestion improved  
& the operation in a good degree subdued. I kept a horse & sledge at her command to be  
used when she pleased, in which she did ride 8 or 10 miles every day when the weather  
would admit. I also had a joggling-board made, on which she took exercise in the  
afternoon. I had begun fondly to hope that this summer would find her with  
renovated health; I expected to see my opinion that she seemed to get something better - she  
showed she had found herself daily weaker. On Tuesday Morning the  
14<sup>th</sup> Inst. at a few minutes before 9 o'clock God took her to himself. Up to that day she had  
rode out daily & the evening before took her exercise on the joggling-board till sunset. She sat  
up later than usual - our fears here by no means excited. She said however on going to bed  
that she had frequently felt on lying down that she might never rise again. And informed  
me that she slept not very soundly, being much disturbed with a cough, but about a day before  
she subsided, & after a little conversation which arose from some drawing the covering more  
carefully about her feet, she fell into a sweet sleep. At the usual hour when the family  
assembled for worship, I was astonished to find she had not come out & my heart sunk

This one, for she had been immovably an early riser; but upon enquiring respecting certain  
 points which I have related above. We agreed it would not do to disturb her, & we  
 proceeded to our family business, & was sitting in the Room with Jesus, which opened into  
 the Parlour, with a view to be ready if she should awake & give any alarm. Almost  
 immediately upon the close of service Jesus came out in uniform & himself  
 that an unusual feeling had come over his features; We ran into the Room & found  
 her sadly that the hour of the last conflict had come on. She lay composed & more  
 like herself with regard to the peacefulness of her expressions than she had been for some  
 years. We spoke to her, but could get no answer. I think she had no power to articulate.  
 We thought she made the attempt once or twice - but she lay so quiet, that we were  
 in doubt, whether she was sensible to earthly objects or the work that was going  
 on. I asked her whether she enjoyed the presence of Jesus. I found him precious,  
 & that it was evident that she made 2 or 3 slight affirmative movements of the head  
 raised her eyes & partially closed them & immediately opened them again. I think she  
 wanted to tell us from how long she enjoyed  
 within that our spirits might be cheered under the affliction of her  
 removal - but she could not utter a word nor move a hand.

I have not said any thing about her expressions respecting the  
 proper the maintenance of her views of gospel truth - for in the first place  
 I do not think a death bed the place to look for the evidence of  
 religion being the choir of the departed - for it is the past life which ought  
 to furnish these evidences - but they may be confirmed - and secondly, because  
 I should have time to repeat almost all the commentaries held with her - some part of  
 which, if not the whole, was made up of the topics which lay nearest her heart. You  
 know her spirit, & faith, & how. In accordance with these, was her observation to me,  
 I never feel satisfied a single day, unless I feel Jesus to be the strongest object of  
 desire with me. unless he is to see the faintest among ten thousand & altogether

On yesterday at 12 o'clock we committed her dear remains to the Earth. I am  
 here I had to try a service <sup>to</sup> perform as to perform the last office for this dear sister - and  
 yet I could hardly have yielded it to another. Maria arrived last night in company with  
 We are a sad mourning family & poor Maria almost makes us forget our sorrows to  
 death has. Harriet & the children are all, I have gone on in company with Mr. Foster  
 Mr. Stone & his father. We kept the remains of poor dear Susan, as long as we could,  
 thinking Maria perhaps yourself, would come in time, but would be a melancholy satisfaction  
 to behold those dear features even in death, as they could no more be looked upon in life.  
 Dear James Jr aff. affected Brother  
 Richard B. Furman

I cannot say how I feel for my  
 poor sister - Let your prayers mingle  
 with mine that God may sustain &  
 comfort them

1834

The Rev. James C. Sturman  
Richmond  
Virginia



Rev. J. C. Sturman  
Aurora, Ga.

1835: 12 April

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