

Tabitha Alder's Testimony

(Died at approximately 8 to 9 years of age)

Tabitha Alder was the daughter of a minister in Kent, who lived near Gravesend. She was instructed in the Holy Scriptures, by her father and mother; but there appeared nothing extraordinary in her, till she was between seven and eight years old. About which time, when she was sick, one asked her, what she thought would become of her, if she should die? She answered, that she was greatly afraid she should go to hell. Being asked, why she was afraid she should go to hell? She answered, because she did not love God. Again: being asked how she knew that she did not love God? She replied, "What have I done for God ever since I was born? And besides this, I have been taught that he that loves God, keeps his commandments; but I have kept none of them." Being further demanded, if she would not fain love God? She answered, "Yes, with all my heart if I could, but I find it a hard thing to love one I do not see."

She was advised to beg of God a heart to love him: she answered, "I am afraid it is too late." Upon this, seeing her in such a desponding condition, a friend of her's spent the next day in fasting and prayer for her. After this, that friend asked her how she did now? She answered with a great deal of joy, "Now I bless the Lord; I love the Lord Jesus dearly; I feel I do love him. O, I love him dearly." "Why, said her friend, did you not say yesterday, you did not love the Lord, and that you could not?" "Sure, said she, it was Satan hindered me. But now I love him: O blessed be God for the Lord Jesus Christ." After this she had a discovery of her approaching dissolution, which was no small comfort to her: "Anon, said she (with a holy triumph,) I shall be with Jesus. I am married to him, he is my husband. I am his bride; I have given myself to him, and he hath given himself to me, and I shall live with him for ever." This language struck the hearers with astonishment: she still continued in a kind of ecstasy of joy, admiring the excellency of Christ, rejoicing in her interest in him, and longing to be with him.

After a while, some of her friends, who stood near her, observed a more than ordinary earnestness and fixedness in her countenance; they said one to another, "Look how earnestly she looks, sure she sees something!" One asked her, what it was that she fixed her eyes upon, so eagerly? "I warrant, says one, she saw death coming." "No, said she, it is the glory that I saw, it is that on which my eyes were fixed." One demanded of her, what the glory was like? She replied, "I cannot tell what, but I am going to it: will you go with me? I am going to glory. O that you all were going with me to that glory!" With these words her soul took wings, and went to the possession of that glory.

She died when she was between eight and nine years of age.