

## “Wheelock, You Need Not Fear To Die, For You Have Been A Good Boy”

The following account is culled from the *Memoirs of Mrs. Ruth Patten* (1740 – 1831) of Hartford, CT.

Not long before Mrs. Patten's little son died, “. . . a respectable neighbor called on a visit, and was surprised to see him so emaciated and pale. But among other things for his consolation, he said, "Wheelock, you need not be in fear to die, for you have been a very good boy." Mrs. Patten accompanied the gentleman to the door, and on her return, found that her son had covered his face, and was weeping. She inquired if he were in pain. As soon as he could compose himself, he drew the covering from his face, with his eyes glistening with surprise and tears, replied, "No, mother; but only think, that Mr. S. should say, I need not be afraid to die, because I have been a good boy!" His mother observed, "You know better than that my son." He answered, "Yes, mother. I know that Christ died for sinners; and that I need not be in fear to die, because I love him." The account of the child's death goes on and then reads, "Beyond the force of language, this instance teaches the necessity and blessedness of trusting in Christ for salvation. As Christ is the only way of salvation, it is much more easy to lead a child to a knowledge of this way, than convince it of its own goodness. By flattery, a child may become self conceited, and its fears may be lulled; but it cannot be conscious of goodness, or be a subject of the peace of God." This little work is filled with spiritual illustrations of sound piety drawn from the piety and providences of God as they surrounded the subject of this biography. It breaths of heavenliness and holiness. So much for a childhood education that trains up a little one in a Christless “self-esteem.” “Suffer the little children to come unto me.”

Dear Reader, you may read the entire account of Ruth Patten's life on line by going to <http://archive.org/details/memoirsofmrsruth00pattiala>