

*The Rev John Dart died while out walking on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2007 The following were words spoken at the grave side.*

As we think of John, his memory bids us think of Jesus

Think John

Think of his love of walking - Think of his walks with God on which he talked with God.. The story goes that God said one day after his customary long walk with Enoch - 'Enoch, you have come so far with me today you may as well come all the way' - and 'Enoch was not, for God took him'. **Why** dear John on a walk was taken all the way to heaven on a motor way, will remain a dark shadow till resurrection morning. But we shall see you in the morning John when shadows flee away!.

Think John – think of his walks with others as he talked with them of Jesus. To think John is to be drawn into memories of the fellowship of the Lord Jesus. 'It was like a visit from heaven' said a Christian from Abergavenny whom he had called to see. John was that rare man who constantly brought heaven closer

Think John - think warmth, think welcome, think of the lovely voice : its gentleness and firm assurance. In prayer its richness seemed to take us all into God's peaceful presence without barriers. On times he 'touched God' as Peter put it.

Think John - think God's godly gentleman, and at the same time a humorous pal, a playful maker of puns, a chum at a cricket or rigger match, a friend in need for those who needed encouragement, a counsellor of people in pain. He spent himself and his many gifts in constant availability to his Lord

Those who knew him well will think John 'the divine' – 'a partaker of the divine nature', divine in the excellence of a beautiful humility he wore so unobtrusively. People simply loved him. Did we not? He was held in the highest esteem. And God was glorified in it.

Think John - If you're family you can say all this, and so much more He's my dad, and what a dad!, he's my granddad, and what a granddad! He's my brother and what a bro! This is my husband and what a priceless treasure!

And now we have to lay his body to rest, because last week John walked too far, but not too far for God Why, we know not, but he walked violently into the presence of God. So, we gather on this hurting day of tragedy with a sense of **victory for this is where we think Christianly**

– For John, Time became eternity, faith gave way to sight.

John departed to be with Christ which is far better.

John is absent from the body and present with the Lord

John has been brought as a son to glory .

John has entered into the joy of his Lord.

He walked with God and was not, for God took him- all the way