

SERMON 28

THE KNOWLEDGE OF FUTURE GLORY: THE SUPPORT OF THE SAINTS, IN PRESENT
TROUBLES
1759

*A SERMON OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF THE REVEREND AND
LEARNED MR. CLENDON DAUKES; WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
DECEMBER THE 12TH.*

*Preached at Hemel- Hempstead, December 17, 1758. Published at the Request of
the Church.*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1

*“For we know, that if the earthly House of this our Tabernacle were dissolved, we
have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.”*

MY honored, and very much esteemed Brother, your worthy Pastor, now deceased, desired me to improve, the mournful Occasion, of his Death, in an Endeavour to explain among you, the Words, which I have read. The Connection of the Text with what is expressed in the preceding Chapter, is so evident, that it cannot escape the Observation of an attentive Reader. The Apostle mentions the Difficulties, Hardships, and Sufferings, unto which, he, and his Fellow-Laboure’s were exposed for the Gospel’s Sake. And declares, that they did not *faint*, or sink under them. They were not intimidated by the cruel Persecutions, which they suffered. But bore them with Patience, Courage, and Fortitude, being animated, by Prospects of future Blessedness: *For which Cause we faint not; but though our outward Man perish, yet the inward Man is renewed Day by Day. For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. While we look not at the Things which are seen, but at the Things which are not seen: For the Things which are seen are temporal; but the Things which are not seen are eternal. Then the Words of my Text are introduced, wherein, are three Things, in general, to be observed,*

I. A present *House*, or *Building*.

II. A future one.

III. The Apostle knew that there is a future Building, and that he had a Title to it. This was not a Conjecture, or a probable Opinion only. But he had a certain Knowledge, and Persuasion of it.

I. A present House, or Building, is spoken of, For we know that if the earthly House of this our Tabernacle were dissolved. This House is our Body, wherein our Soul subsists and acts, at present. In the Formation whereof, the infinite Wisdom and Power of God are dearly seen. It is admirable for its Beauty, and the important Purposes, unto which it is designed, in subservience to the Mind, which is united to it. The various Mediums, for Senses are fitly adapted, as the Soul's acquiring a Stock of Ideas, *viz.* Sight, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Feeling. By the Impressions, which Objects about us make on our Senses, the Soul acquires its Ideas of Things, and becomes acquainted with their Nature, and perceives their Agreement, or Difference. And being endowed with the Faculty of Speech, we are capable of communicating our Ideas, one to another, which is unspeakably to our mutual Advantage and Pleasure, as we are Creatures formed for Converse and Society. Concerning the curious Machine of our Body, we may justly say, that we *are fearfully and wonderfully made.* Three Particulars are expressed of our Body.: It is earthly — It is a Tabernacle — And is to be dissolved.

1. The human Body is *earthly.* This constituent Part of Man was *formed of the Dust of the Ground. The first Man was of the Earth, earthy.* Our Original, therefore, was Dust. A very humbling Thought, this. But we too little take it, into Consideration. And are strangely apt to forget from whence we sprung. Besides, the Produce of the Earth is the Matter of the Nutriment and Sustentation of our Body. The admirable Variety of rich and delicate Food, which we eat for our Nourishment, and the Recruit of our continually wasting Spirits and Juices, is no other than what the Earth supplies us with. And without which, we could not long subsist. Again, we must soon be reduced to Dust. We are always tending unto it, and we must quickly be lodged in the Earth, and crumble into Dust.

2. Our Body is called a Tabernacle. which suggests the short Duration of our mortal Frame. Tabernacles, or Tents, are not designed for long Continuance. They are soon pitched, and are soon taken down. They were in Use, therefore, by the Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,* who frequently removed from one Place to another. And the People of *Israel,* also used them, in their travelling through the Wilderness. We are in the Body, not as in a Mansion-House, which is erected, for a considerable Duration; but as in a Tabernacle, which must shortly be taken down. Our Life is like a *Vapor,* which suddenly vanishes, and disappears. But alas! we are often forgetful of its Brevity, and therefore, we are either perplexed with anxious Fears, or vainly puffed up, and elated with those Things, which we cannot but know, will not long be Matter, either of Grief, or of Satisfaction and Joy to us. This is an Instance of the egregious Folly of our depraved Minds.

3. The Body must suffer a Dissolution. By Sin we are subjected to Death. And it is vain to hope for an Exemption from its fatal Stroke. It *is appointed unto Man, once to die.* Which is the Separation of the Soul from the Body. immediately, whereupon,

the Body turns to Corruption, its various Members are disunited, it is resolved into its first Original, and we mingle with vile Dust, whereon we now tread. Should not this pull down our Pride, abase our haughty Minds, and make us ashamed of our high Looks? Unto this base Condition we must all be reduced, without Exception. What Madness, therefore, is it, in us, to cherish Pride, who must unavoidably sink into the dark Region, of the Grave, and therein molder to Pieces! This Subject, gloomy as it is, does not terrify the Saints, when they have in View, the heavenly State, which the Apostle had.

II. *There is a future House, or Building.* This some interpret of the Body, when raised from the Dead, as it certainly will be. And the Bodies of Believers will, at their Resurrection, be rendered *immortal, spiritual, and glorious. For this Corruption shall put on Incorruption. And this mortal shall put on Immortality.* The Bodies of Believers are now sown in Corruption; Out they shall be raised in Incorruption. They are sown in Dishonor: They shall be raised in Glory. They are sown natural Bodies: They shall be raised spiritual Bodies. Christ will change their vile Bodies, and fashion them like his glorious Body, according to the working, whereby he is able, even to subdue all Things unto Himself. Then their Bodies will be fit Receptacles for their perfected Minds.

I apprehend, that the eternal Felicity of the Saints is included, in this future House, or Building; but not to the Exclusion of their Happiness, in the intermediate State, between Death, and their Resurrection. And, therefore, it is best to understand it of that blissful State, into which they immediately enter, upon their Decease, Three Things I would endeavor to prove, *viz.* That the Soul is distinct from the Body That it is capable of existing and acting without it That the Souls of the pious, will be in a happy State, immediately upon Death.

1. The Soul is distinct from the Body. If the Body is a House to the Soul, as the Text represents it, the Soul cannot be the same with the Body; but it must really be distinct from it, though' in the strictest Union with it. For, it is unreasonable to suppose, that the Soul is not distinguishable from that, wherein it is, as its House, or Tabernacle, and in which, it subsists and acts. Besides, the Body is the present *Home* of the Soul. And the Soul is capable of being *absent* from it, which it is impossible it should ever be, if it is the same with the Body, and not distinct from it. *We are confident, I say, and willing, rather to be absent from the Body.* Now that which may be absent from the Body, must be some other Thing than the Body, and not the same with it. If there is nothing subsisting in us, which is distinct from our Body, with no Propriety, it can be said of us, that at Death, we become absent from it. The Soul and the Body therefore, are properly distinguishable, and not the same. I add, there is something in the Saints, which becomes *present* with the Lord, upon their being *absent* from the Body and while they are so. *Willing rather to be absent from the Body, and*

present with the Lord. That must be the Soul, in Distinction from the Body, for the Body cannot be absent from itself.

2. The Soul is capable of subsisting and acting without the Body. This receives very dear Proof from what the Apostle *Paul*, expresses concerning himself. Who speaks thus: *I knew a Man in Christ above fourteen Years ago (whether in the Body or whether out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) such an one caught up to the third Heaven. And I knew such a Man (whether in the Body, or out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable Words, which it is not lawful for a Man to utter.* From hence, it is most evident, that, in the Opinion of the Apostle, there was something in him distinct from his Body. For, if he had thought, that there was nothing in him, distinct from his Body, he could never say, whether in the Body, or whether out of the Body, I cannot tell. Because, he must necessarily have concluded, that nothing of him could be out of, or separate from his Body. Not having any Thing distinct therefrom. And it is equally manifest, that, in his Opinion, that which is capable of being separate from the Body, is the Subject of Reason and Knowledge. Which must be the Soul, or our reasonable Nature. It is likewise, as clear, that he thought the Soul capable, not only of subsisting without the Body, but also of exerting itself, in Thought, if out of, or separate from the Body. He could not, therefore, have any Notion of the Soul's sleeping, or becoming inactive, and losing its Consciousness, by its Separation from the Body. That is no other than, *a foolish Chimera* of some *Dreamers*; who sleep with their Eyes open. Whereof, they will be convinced, when once their Eyes are closed by Death.

Again, this is fully proved from his Desire, to *depart and be with Christ*, which, he says, *is far better.* For, sinking into a State of Slumber, and Inactivity, he would never have preferred, unto his present Enjoyment of Communion, with a dear Redeemer, which afforded him, a Pleasure, that far over-balanced all his present Sufferings, great as they were. Besides, the Existence and Activity of the Soul, after Death, is confirmed, by the Declaration, of our Saviour, to the penitent Thief, on the Cross. *I say unto thee, this Day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.* Slumbering in the Grave, is not being with Christ in Paradise, surely. The Soul, therefore, does not cease to exist, or act, when the Body is dead. It continues to exist, and retains its Activity, after Death. Once more, *the Spirits of just Men are made perfect*: Who are deceased. If, therefore, Perfection does not consist, in Loss of Consciousness, and in Insensibility, we cannot reasonably think, that the Souls of good Men, become unconscious, upon Death. This leads me to observe,

3. That the Souls of the pious, will be in a happy State, immediately after Death. As they will continue to exist, and remain active, they will certainly be happy. This cannot be doubted of, if Happiness consists, *in being present with the Lord.* *In whole Presence* is fulness of Joy. If Felicity consists *in being with Christ.* If to be *with him,*

in Paradise, is Happiness, which, who can scruple? If *to be made perfect*, is to become happy. Which surely none will deny. The Saints, will not only, continue to exist, and remain active, while their Bodies are in the silent Grave; but they will be in a State of consummate Bliss. *Blessed are the Dead, who die in the Lord*. It is this, raises the Minds of sanctified Persons, above the Fear of Death, and even renders it desirable to them.

(1.) The Souls of departed Saints are absolutely free from Sin. During their Abode in this mortal State, they are Subjects of *Flesh*, as well as *Spirit*. *Evil* is ever *present* with them, as an *active* Principle, opposing the Acting's of the spiritual Principle, which is in them. By it, they are indisposed unto, and greatly interrupted, in Duties of the most solemn Nature. It often mars their best Meditations, wherein, they enjoy the highest Satisfaction. Through its Presence and Activity, their Minds, are frequently diverted from attending, in a proper Manner, to the Object of their devotional Acts, even in the solemn Duty of Prayer. All their religious Services are defiled, by this corrupt Fountain and Spring of Action, which is in them. From hence, arise sinful Thoughts, disorderly Desires, and evil Tendencies, in the Affections, even of the *best*. This *Plague of the Heart* is *the Plague of the Believer's Life*. And it is the continual Occasion of inexpressible Vexation, and Grief, unto every Saint in this World. But immediately upon Death, the Souls of the pious, are freed from all those depraved Habits, which have Being in them here, they are at once delivered from that Law of Sin, which now disturbs, and perplexes, them, above Measure. As the Bodies of the Saints, who shall *remain, and be alive, at the Coming of Christ*, will be, in an instantaneous Manner, *changed*, and freed from those corrupt Qualities, which attend them, by the Exertion of his Power: So the Souls of Believers, in an instantaneous Manner, immediately upon Death, are absolutely freed from all those evil Habits, which are now in them, by the Exertion of the Power of Christ. The former will be effected, in a *Moment, in the twinkling of an Eye*. And so is the latter. This Thought, I met with in that excellent Divine, Dr. *Goodwin*, long since. And it hath often afforded me much Pleasure. It may greatly serve to help our Faith, concerning the immediate Expulsion of Sin, out of our Souls, in their Separation, from our Bodies, by Death. This complete Deliverance from Sin is most desirable to every sanctified Person, and the Hope of it, yields some Relief, to the Saints, while they groan, under the heavy Weight of that *Body of Death*, which depresses them.

(2.) Grace will be perfected. That good Work, which is begun in Believers, is not imperfect, in its Nature; for God cannot be the Author of any Thing, which is imperfect, in its Kind. That gracious Principle, whereof the Saints are the happy Subjects, is a *good*, and a *perfect Gift, which cometh down from above, from the Father of Lights*. But it is not yet complete in its Degrees. And it is at present liable to an Abatement, in the Vigor of its Acting's. It suffers a Decline at one Time, or

another, in most, if not, in all the Saints for a Season, through various Causes. Faith becomes weak, Hope is shaken, and Love to Christ and heavenly Things, grows Chill. Hereafter, no Imperfection will attend the Saints in their Knowledge, or Love to the infinitely glorious Objects, which they will view, with a Delight not at present to be conceived of by us. In this State, *we know but in Part: When that which is perfect is come, that which, is in Part shall be done away. Here we see through' a Glass darkly; hereafter, we shall see Face to Face.* And Love will then be raised to its highest Pitch, unto God and a dear Redeemer. Then the gracious Design of God, in the Choice of our Persons, will be fully accomplished, in us. Who chose us, that *we might be holy and without Blame, before him, in Love.* Christ will present us *Faultless, before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy.* On his own Part, on the Part of his Father, unto whom he will present us, and on ours. The Happiness of the future grate, therefore, will be consummate. As we shall have no Sin dwelling in us, which now we have. So, not the least Languor, will ever attend the holy Acting of our perfected Minds. But the Vigor of Grace will eternally be the same, without Abatement, or any Decline.

(3.) The Saints will enjoy most near, uninterrupted, and endless Communion with the Father, Son, and blessed Spirit. Here they enjoy Fellowship, with the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ. The Satisfaction and Pleasure attending which, nothing can possibly equal. But alas! what Interruptions, do now take Place therein, to the unspeakable Grief of pious Souls, whole chief Joy, consists in Communion with God. In the heavenly State they will have clear Views of the Love of the Divine Father, in its adorable Properties, Of the Designs and Acting's thereof, in their Favor. Even from Everlasting. And of those amazing Acts of Grace and Mercy, which he put forth in Time, in order to bring them unto the Fruition of himself. The Gift of his Son to and for them. And the Gift of his Spirit unto them, to regenerate, sanctify, and safely to conduct them, unto that blissful State, they will constantly contemplate upon, and adore, his sovereign Goodness, which so conspicuously shines forth, therein. And, this Fellowship, with the Father, will never, thro' any Cause whatever, be interrupted, nor shall it ever have an End. Again, they will enjoy Communion with Christ. His Glory they will have clear, and steady Prospects of. For it is *his Will, that they may be with him, where he is, that they may behold the Glory, which the Father bath given him.* A Sense of his unparalleled Love to them, will perpetually possess their Souls. They will always be employed in contemplating on, those unequalled Acts of Goodness and Compassion, which he exerted, in order to their Pardon, Justification, and eternal Salvation. And no Breach will ever be made upon this Fellowship, with their dear Saviour. Nor shall a Period ever be put unto it. As their Communion with Christ, will be most intimate, it will never be interrupted, nor have an End.

Further, they shall also enjoy Communion with the blessed Spirit, who is the Author of their Regeneration, and Sanctification, and who safely conducts them, through this mortal State. Their Views of that Part, which he bears, in the Oeconomy of their Salvation, will then, be most clear, distinct, and heady. He is the Glorifier of Christ, and the Sanctifier of his Church. He forms us for Heaven: Or works a Meetness in us to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints, in Light. He instructs us in the Knowledge of heavenly Things, as a *Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation*. Gives us an Acquaintance with ourselves. Shews us the absolute Necessity of an Interest, in Christ. Discovers to us his Suitableness and Ability, as a Saviour. Encourages us to look to him, and by his Aid, we make Application unto him, to be saved by him. In Temptations, he succors us, in Distress he graciously comforts us. Under Afflictions, he supports us. In Darkness, he enlightens us. Under Deadness, he quickens us. And when we backslide, he mercifully convinces us of our Folly, and restores unto us, those spiritual Consolations, which we were deprived of thereby. In a word, he is efficiently, our Life, Light, Strength, and all our Consolation. In Heaven the Saints will held the most near and intimate Communion with him, in his Love, and in all his Acts of infinite Compassion, towards them, in their dangerous Passage, through this militant State. Unto whole kind Care, and Protection, we owe our Safety. Now, the Saints in the future State, will constantly enjoy a Sense of his Love to their Persons, which is the Cause of. his beginning carrying on, and perfecting that good Work in them, which is their Meetness, for Heaven. And this their Fellowship, with him, will be endless. This is a most blessed State indeed! All Believers have a present Title to it, and certainly shall be introduced into it. Faith being acted on it, animates them to *fight the good Fight*, and to endure present Afflictions, with Patience, Courage, and Fortitude.

Several Things are predicated concerning this State. It is a *Building of God* — *Not made with Hands* — Its *eternal in the Heavens*,

1. This State is a *Building of God*. The Design, and Erection of it, is wholly his. And it is the Effect of his sovereign and immense Love. And the Contrivance of his infinite Wisdom.

(1.) He removes all Impediments, which lye in the Way of our coming to the Enjoyment thereof. Sin would have proved an eternal Bar to our Happiness, had not God, in infinite Wisdom, and Mercy, provided for its Removal. Blessed be his Name, he hath effectually done this for us. For, *He hath made Christ, to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin. Laid our Iniquities upon him. And he bore them in his own Body on the Tree. In bearing them, he bore them away. Once in the End of the World, he appeared to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself* The Messiah who was *cut off; but not for himself, finished Transgression, and made an End of Sin. He removed our Transgressions from us, as far as the East is from the West.* So that, this Obstruction to our Happiness, is entirely taken away. Our Guilt being expiated, by

the Death of Christ, it can be no Obstacle, to our Fruition of future Felicity. Sin, which is pardoned, cannot hinder our becoming happy. This Impediment is effectually removed, by the Grace of God, through the atoning Blood of his Son. *Which cleanseth from all Sin.* Again, He hath fully provided, for the Satisfaction of his violated Laws, which, without a Satisfaction, would not allow of our Happiness. It was the sovereign Determination of God, that his Son should be made under the Law, suffer its Curse, and thereby redeem us from it. That so, that just Constitution, might not have any Thing to object, unto our Admission, into Heaven, taken from our Breach of its Commands. Farther, Divine Justice could not permit of the Happiness of guilty Men, without its Demands were answered. Sovereign Grace, and infinite Wisdom have provided for this also, in the Atonement of Christ. By his Sufferings and Death, full Satisfaction is made, to infinite Justice, which was offended, by our Sins. So that, it can have nothing to object, to our Enjoyment of future Blessedness. But, on this Foundation, the Grace and Justice of God, concur and unite, in raising us unto that State of Dignity and Glory, which we shall possess, in the immediate Presence of God. *Mercy and Truth meet together, Righteousness and Peace kiss each other.* There is a perfect Harmony, between sovereign Goodness, and inflexible Justice, in the Design of bringing us to Heaven, through the Blood and Righteousness of Christ. Once more, effectual Provision is made for the Removal of Sin, out of our Souls. Which is absolutely necessary to the blissful Enjoyment of God. Almighty Grace takes away the Dominion of Sin, by implanting a holy Principle, in the Heart, and it will entirely expel Evil out of the Minds of the Saints, at Death, in order to their Admission into the immediate Presence of their heavenly Father.

(2.) A Right and Title to future Glory is of God. Right to eternal Blessedness, arises from Adoption. For, *if we are Children, then we are Heirs, Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ.* The Act of God, by which, we were constituted Sons, was sovereign, and it is to *the Praise of the Glory of his Grace.* Again, the Saints have a *legal* Title to Heaven, by Virtue of the Righteousness of Christ, which is a *Gift*, and a *Gift by Grace.* And that Righteousness, is *properly deserving of infinite Good*, by Reason of the infinite Dignity of the Person of Christ. As Sin is properly deserving of the Loss of infinite Good, because of the Infinity of the Object, against whom it is committed. *That being justified by his Grace we might be made Heirs, according to the Hope of eternal Life* (Titus 3:7.). And, therefore *whom God justifies, them he also glorifies.* For Justification, entitles us, unto Glorification. The former Right to the heavenly State, does not supersede the latter, or render it unnecessary. Neither, are they inconsistent. The former Right, is founded, in absolute Sovereignty, without Respect to Justice: The latter, must also be attributed to sovereign Grace, as to the Appointment of Christ's Righteousness to be ours, wherein we are Justified: But Divine Justice assigns the Reward of eternal Life, unto the Obedience of Christ, as

what is justly due to it; because of the infinitely intrinsic Value of it, arising from the infinite Greatness of his Person. This is a mighty Support to the Faith of the Saints, and is a precious Ground of *strong Consolation* to them: When they view how sovereign Grace, and infinite Justice, are at once, and equally displayed, in their Title to everlasting Life.

(3.) God in infinite Goodness prepares us for the Enjoyment of future Glory. it is impossible, that an unsanctified Person should possess the Glory of Heaven. *Without Holiness, no Man shall see the Lord.* A Mind that is *carnal*, is incapable of holding Fellowship with God. Of viewing with the least Satisfaction, the Objects, which are beheld with blissful Adoration, in the heavenly State. Neither, will the Soul, destitute of Holiness, ever be disposed unto that pure Service, wherein, glorified Saints, are perpetually employed. And, therefore, Regeneration, is absolutely necessary for the Fruition of God. And that Preparative for Heaven, he is the Author of. *Giving Thanks alway to the Father, who hath made us meet, to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in our Lord Jesus Christ, who, of his abundant Mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively Hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, from the Dead. To an Inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you.* This is, his *calling us unto his eternal Glory.* In the Character of the *God of all Grace.*

(4.) He preserves the Saints until their Arrival unto this State of Blessedness. Divine Grace maintains the good Work, which is begun in them. Infinite Wisdom directs them. Immense Mercy shields them. Everlasting Strength sustains them. In all their Exigences they are supplied, out of those inexhaustible Treasures of Grace, which are laid up, for that Purpose, in the Covenant of Grace. Thus, God is their Director, Upholder, liberal Benefactor, and constant Preserver, in this mortal, militant, and dangerous State. *Who are kept by the Power of God, through Faith unto Salvation. Now unto him, that is able to keep you from falling.* His Love to their Persons, his Purposes about them, and his precious Promises made unto them, may justly beget, and keep up, in their Minds, a firm Persuasion, of a safe Conduct, in all the *Mazes of Temptations*, Distresses, Dangers, and Difficulties, through which they pass, in their travelling towards the heavenly World.

(5.) God is the Fountain and Object of future Glory. He is the Spring, of eternal Life, whereof they will be the happy. Subjects hereafter. For, their *Life is hid with Christ in God.* Their perfect Purity is from him. And his Grace will render them forever *impeccable*: Or raise them above a Possibility of Sinning for evermore. His infinite Goodness will be a never- failing Source, of refined, ineffable, and inconceivable Joys, when they shall be admitted into his immediate Presence. *Where is Fulness of Joy, and at his right Hand, are Pleasures for ever- more.* Thus, God will be the Fountain of future Happiness, subjectively considered. And he will be their Glory, objectively considered. For their future Felicity will consist, in Beholding, in a

perfect Manner, the infinitely glorious Perfections of God, as they are displayed, in the Design, and Accomplishment of their Salvation, by the Incarnation, Obedience, Sufferings, and Death of his Son. And, in viewing the holy Properties of his Nature, as they shine forth, through the Person of Christ. So that, God will eternally be the Happiness of the Saints, *subjectively*, and *objectively* considered. This *Building*, therefore, where into, Believers enter, at Death, is the *Building of God*.

2. It is *not made with Hands*. This negative Phrase, plainly imports, that human Wisdom, Will, and Power, have no causal Influence into it. A created Understanding could never have devised it. The Will of a Creature cannot have any effective Influence into it. Finite Power could not possibly acquire it.

(1.) None could remove the Impediments, which lay in the Way of its Enjoyment. No Creature whatever could atone for our Guilt, and bear it away. That is such a Load, which would have pressed down a mere Creature, into the *lowest Hell*. And no Merit can possibly attend the Sufferings of a mere Creature, how great so ever. Guilt, therefore, as to us, must be eternally *inexpiable*. No Criminal can satisfy the Divine Law, which he hath violated, for his Breach thereof. Its Curse, which Sin demerits, is insupportable, in its Weight, by the Transgressor. And no Man is able to answer the Demands of infinite Justice, which is offended by his Sins. *None*, therefore, *can redeem his Soul, and give to God a Ransomed for it*. No Man is able to shake off the Dominion of sin, or free himself from its reigning Power. Nor, can any Saint expel, those corrupt Habits, whereof his Mind is the Subject. Lusts are so deeply rooted in their Hearts, that they cannot possibly eradicate them. The Removal of the Hinderances, and Obstructions, to our future Happiness, is impossible to us all, and everyone. Infinite Wisdom, Grace, and Power alone could do this for us. Blessed be God, he hath, and will, fully effect it, in our Favor.

(2.) No Man is able to acquire a Right to future Happiness. In order to that, the Law, must be perfectly obeyed. For, without complete Obedience, unto its righteous Precepts, it will not allow of the Enjoyment of Life. The Want of such Obedience, subjects us, to Condemnation, and Death. As, therefore, we are all depraved, and enfeebled, in our Powers, it is impossible to every Man, to keep the holy Law of God, so as to obtain a Title to Happiness, according to that just Constitution. *The Law is weak, through the Flesh*. And no *Law is given, which can give Life*.

(3.) We cannot prepare ourselves, for the Enjoyment of the heavenly State. Naturally, we are *under the Dominion of Sin*. *Are dead in Trespasses, and Sins*. *Our Minds are alienated from the Life of God*. And, *Enmity itself, against him*, And, therefore, we are absolutely unable to put forth holy Acts, whereby, holy Habits, might be acquired. A real *Preparative*, or *Meetness*, for the Fruition of God, is internal Holiness, whereof, every Man is naturally destitute. And, not having a Spring of spiritual Action, no spiritual Acts, can be exerted, by us, previous unto the

Production of such a Principle in our Hearts, by the Grace of God. Consequently, no Man is able, to prepare himself for the future State of Glory.

(4.) It is not in our Power to preserve ourselves, unto that happy State. We are the Subjects of such Lusts, which would, inevitably ruin us, if left to oppose them, in our own Strength. Satan, the unwearied Enemy of our Souls, we are unable to resist, and overcome, in his ensnaring Temptations, violent Oppositions, and furious Assaults, in ourselves. The World, in its Allurements, Distresses, or in its Enmity against us, would prove our Ruin, by engaging our Affections, by sinking us in Sorrow, or, by raising our Fears, unto an excessive Pitch.

3. This State is *eternal in the Heavens*. The Blessedness and Glory of the Saints, hereafter, will have no End. As, no Change can possibly take Place in it: So, no Period will be put unto it. And, it will be in the Heavens. In the immediate Presence of God. Where Jesus Christ, as Man, will eternally be.

III. The Apostle knew, that there is a future House, or Building, and that, he had a Title to it. It was not a Conjecture, or probable Opinion only. But a certain Knowledge, and Persuasion thereof, which he had.

1. He had a certain Knowledge, that there is such a State of Felicity. There are undoubted Evidences of it, in the Christian Revelation. The Divine Promise of eternal Life. The Resurrection of Christ from the Dead: His Entrance into Heaven, as the Fore-runner of his People. And the Promise of his second Appearance; in order to their final and complete Salvation, are incontestable Proofs, of that State of consummate Bliss. *Life and Immortality are brought to Light, by the Gospel.*

2. The Apostle knew, that he had a Title to the future State of Glory. It was not a Conjecture, or probable Opinion, which he entertained, concerning his Right to Heaven; but he had a certain Knowledge, and Persuasion of it. And common Christians, may also arrive unto such a Knowledge, and Persuasion: By the following Mediums.

(1.) *A Meetness* for its Enjoyment is a certain Evidence of a Title to it. That *Meetness* is a holy, spiritual Principle in the Soul, which, in its Nature, is suited to heavenly Things. The Understanding discerns their Excellency and Glory. The Will makes Choice of them. And the Affections tend and adhere unto them: Upon this Principle being produced, in the Heart. An Approbation of the heavenly State is a *sure* Evidence of a Right unto it. They are but *few*, who have a *real Liking of Heaven*. No Man, who is *unmeet* for it, *in Reality*, desires to enjoy it. All those in whom, God works this *Meetness* for the Fruition of his eternal Glory, have an unalienable Title to it, and shall certainly possess it. For, *He hath wrought them for this self-same Thing*. Better Evidence, of a Right to Heaven, and of the certain Enjoyment of it, *need* not be desired, than a present Delight in, and a holy Adoration of heavenly Things, is.

(2.) This may be known by the *First Fruits* of it. Which the Graces, Consolations, and Joys of the holy Spirit are. Not *only they, but ourselves also, who have the, First-Fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for the Adoption, to wit, the Redemption of our Body,* (Romans 8:23.) From Fore-Views, and Fore-Tastes, by Faith, of heavenly Objects, and celestial Pleasures, the Saints may safely conclude upon their Title to the future State of Blessedness.

(3.) The *Earnest* of Heaven is a *sure Evidence* of a Right unto it. That *Earnest is the holy Spirit of Promise, by whom Believers are sealed* (Ephesians 1:13, 14.) If *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son, into our Hearts,* to convince us of Sin, our Misery, and Helplessness: And to reveal Christ to us, as a suitable Saviour: And he hath directed us to *fee to him for Refuge:* If under his gracious Influence, we have ventured upon Christ, for Life and Salvation, and we repose our entire Trust in him, for Pardon, Peace, Acceptance with God, Holiness, and eternal Life. We may from thence, draw this Conclusion, without the least Fear of being mistaken, in this important Matter, that the holy Spirit is in us, as an *Earnest of the heavenly Inheritance.* And, that we shall most assuredly enjoy it.

4. By the *Witness* of the Spirit we may obtain this Knowledge and Persuasion. *The Spirit himself beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God* (Romans 8:16.) He doth this, by a powerful Application of Divine Promises, by *shedding abroad the Love of God, into our Hearts,* and by enabling us, to discern that good Work, which he *hath begun in us,* as an Effect of everlasting Love to our Persons, and as the Result of our *Ordination to everlasting Life.*

Thus, I have endeavored, according to the Desire, of my very worthy deceased Brother, to explain to you, the Words, which he chose, for the Subject of his Funeral Discourse. It may now, be expected, that I should give a Character of him. And a beautiful Representation, might have been given of him. But I must inform you, that he laid an Injunction upon me, not to enlarge on his Character. And, that he expressed a Dislike of bestowing Encomiums, on the Dead. However, a few Words, concerning him, may surely be allowed. He was *meek, humble,* and modest, perhaps, too modest, wise and learned, Diligent in Study, there is Reason to think, to the Prejudice of his Constitution. He had an enlarged Acquaintance, with the evangelical Scheme, and a spiritual Savour of the Truths of the Gospel. In his last, long Illness, which issued in his Death, he was remarkably favored, with the gracious Presence of God, and filled with a holy Adoration of sovereign Grace and Mercy. Those glorious Truths, which in the Course of his Ministry, he recommended to you, were the Matter, of his Support, Consolation and unspeakable Joy, in the Views, of his Dissolution.

An Address to his surviving Relations; on this *sad* Occasion, is a Subject, so very *tender,* and *delicate,* that I think, I may be excused, if I decline it. May the Lord sanctify, this mournful Providence, unto them, support them under it, and be their

Guide through Life! One Thing, I must: beg Leave to acquaint you, the Members of this Church, with. It is this, your worthy deceased Pastor, was much concerned for your future Welfare, as a Community. And desired me to recommend it to you, to endeavor, by all possible Means, to cultivate Love, Christian Friendship, and Harmony, among yourselves. Which will be very much conducive to your mutual Advantage. *Study, therefore, the Things, which make for Peace, whereby one may edify another.* May the Lord help you, to deny yourselves, and cordially to unite, in an Endeavour, to promote his Glory, and the Edification of one another! I desire, *to commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance, among them, that are sanctified.*