

<https://mountzionpbc.org>

DEATH AND DYING, CHAPTERS 5 AND 6,

CHAPTER 5. On Eternity. What we should conceive concerning it. How it differs from God's Eternity. Some Gospel Truths proposed to sustain the Mind in the contemplations of it.

BY SAMUEL PIERCE,

WHAT is written and expressed in the following words, If God set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust. {Job 34: 14, 15}, is realized in our bodies in our dying moments. It is in the Lord's gathering unto himself the spirit and the breath from us, that the body drops, and becomes lifeless. The spirit is removed first, then the breathing stops, and the body becomes a corpse; it is then eternity begins with each and every disembodied spirit. All the while believers in Christ remain in the body, it may be written over their heads, The saved of the Lord. When they are about to die in Christ, they may then be well entitled, the preserved in Christ Jesus. When they are actually dead in their bodies, it may then be said of them, they sleep in Jesus. It is by it they enter an eternal world, and on an eternal state. Some style Death crossing the gulf which separates time and eternity. When the bodies of saints are in their graves, they are the dead in Christ.

To many persons, the thought of entering eternity on the very moment of leaving the body, is solemn, confounding, and awful. When we consider eternity, we are to conceive of it as it concerns us: as such, it is a continual flux of time, or the continuation of a creature's existence, a stop to which is not to be. It is a

procrastination of our existence: it is in God we live, and move, and have our being; it is so now, whilst we are in our bodies in a time state; it is in God we shall have the continuation of our beings in the eternal state; it is by his will and power that our faculties will be kept up to all eternity. When we have proper ideas of it, I conceive there is nothing to cause the believer in Jesus to tremble in the prospect of it; he may consider it so as to afford relief to his mind, and real consolation to his heart; yet it is too often the case, that persons cry out, O eternity! Eternity! How tremendous the thought! I would ask why? Wherefore is it so? Surely it is sweet to consider that we shall never cease to be. It would damp our prospect of joy and life everlasting, to conceive any end put to the same; it must serve to animate our minds, to consider that the state we enter on at the dissolution of our bodies, is fixed, permanent, and everlasting. It well becomes us to receive all our ideas from the revelation the Lord hath made of these subjects, in his most holy, written, and blessed word. We understand from it that time is the measure of a creature's being, existence, and continuation in this present evil world; and eternity, as it respects us, is the prolongation of being and existence in an eternal and invisible state. As it respects the saints of the Most High, God's will is, to uphold them in being for ever, in the state of glory, that he may display in them, and on them, the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards them in Christ Jesus.; and this is all we are to conceive and apprehend concerning it, there is, therefore, nothing in the subject, as thus stated, to be in the least distressing to real believers, when they are about to enter on their commencement of it.

God's eternity, and our eternity, are vastly different subjects; yet I conceive we so confound them, as not to have proper and distinct apprehensions formed in our minds from the scriptures of truths respecting them. Jehovah's eternity is an everlasting now; he is his own eternity; he is being without beginning, succession, or end of duration; all which is contained in his self-existence. Jehovah comprehends the knowledge of all things in his infinite

understanding, and all time in his own eternity. God's eternity is expressed in his being from everlasting to everlasting. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. {Psalm 90: 1,}. He, speaking of himself, says, I am that I am. He proclaims himself to be the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity. He saith, I am the first, and I am the last. He is the Eternity of Israel: he is so entitled, {1st Samuel 15: 29. Look into the margin. When the scriptures ascribe the terms of Eternal, Everlasting, and Eternity, to God, they denote his being, without beginning, succession, or end of duration; for he who is self-existent can admit of no supposable period in which he is not the same. But the manner of the divine duration, and of Jehovah's coexistence with time, is no more comprehensible than the co-existence of his infinity with particular places. He liveth for ever and ever. God's eternity is essential to himself; our eternity entirely depends on his will. We shall be continued every moment in eternity, or in an eternal state, by his power alone, not by any act of ours. God's eternity may afford us matter of comfort; it did the Prophet. He, when contemplating his own frailty and mortality, says, My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever, and thy remembrance throughout all generations. {Psalm 102: 11, 12}. God says, I am Jehovah, I change not. We may well consider what follows, as all sufficient to sustain our minds whilst we are either in living or dying circumstances, in the contemplations of God's eternity, and our duration in being to, what we style, eternity. It may well be styled gospel consolation.

The love of the Three in Jehovah is everlasting. His mercy unto us is from everlasting to everlasting. The covenant of the Three in Jehovah is an everlasting one. The Lord embraces his people, and lays underneath them his everlasting arms; he remembers them with everlasting kindness; he is their everlasting life; he gives them everlasting consolation. He, the eternal God, is their refuge; he receives them at death into everlasting habitations. The kingdom

they are received into, when they enter eternity, is styled the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; heaven is entitled, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When an account is given of the final sentence pronounced by Christ on all flesh, it is added, And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. The gospel is styled the everlasting gospel. Christ hath brought in everlasting righteousness; his sacrifice is of everlasting virtue and perfection; he is yesterday, to-day, and the same forever. In all these substantial realities there is a great and glorious all-sufficiency to bear up, and sustain the minds of the Lord's believing people, under the views of an immediate entrance into eternity, both as it respects the state we then enter upon, and the duration thereof.

In the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, eternity, as it concerns us, is set forth by the following terms: Ever, evermore, daily, always, to eternity. Thus, The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out. {Leviticus. 6: 13}. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. {Ephesians. 3: 20, 21}. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. {1st Thessalonian's. 4: 17}. I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. {Revelation. 1: 18}.

As the soul disunited from the body, being clothed with immortality and eternal glory, enters on eternity, which is an endless flux of time, and hath no period; so the very apprehension of it is, as spiritually looked at, very comfortable and relieving. It is no more nor less than our entrance on our state of glory, which is permanent and fixed. It is not that it will never alter, so as that we shall not have farther and farther revelations and manifestations of the divine goodness unto us. We shall have such. Our souls will be without their bodies for a

season, whilst their happiness will be complete, so far as suited to the separate state; yet joys will more fully and abundantly abound at the resurrection of the body, on the soul's entrance into it, and reunion with it. The glories of the resurrection state will exceed the glory which the saints are partaker's of now in heaven: it will be then eternity, yet this will be an increase of happiness unto them. And even this will be put down by the ultimate state, when God shall be all in all; and in sights and views of the personal glory of Christ, saints will be so swallowed up as to forget all past discoveries of what they have enjoyed. These are so many gradations in the state of glory, in which the elect of God will be perfectly conformed to Christ. He was in his state of humiliation whilst he dwelt here below: his last and lowest state of humiliation was death and the grave. He went to heaven in his soul first, in a private way and manner, as we also must; he rose again from death to life immortal, by the reunion and entrance of his soul into his body; he lived in his resurrection state a certain period on our earth; he then ascended body and soul into heaven, and is now in his state of glory. So with respect to us, who are his; we die in our bodies, and go privately to heaven in our souls, and enjoy what is most exactly suited to our disembodied state. We are, and live, with Christ. When the resurrection shall take place, he will descend from heaven, and we shall descend with him. He will raise our bodies, and make them like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself; we shall then live in our bodies with him in the resurrection state, and have most intimate communion with him. The apostle John, speaking of saints in the new Jerusalem state, says: And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever. {Revelation. 22: 3, 4, 5}. All this will be in eternity; after which will follow the ultimate glory, which will consist in the open vision of Christ in his personal glory: so that, whilst we enter on our

fixed and durable state of glory by death, yet there are successions and fresh glories which belong to that state; which, when we have scriptural views and apprehensions of, must remove all fears and concerns from us about what we style eternity.

To be absent for a season from the body, and present with the Lord, will be very advantageous to us. A duration of being will be a blessing to us; to be continued in a state of immortality and eternal glory, must be most truly desirable; to be for ever with the Lord, must give us endless satisfaction: so that these truths, properly received into our minds, and digested in our thoughts, must make eternity, the term, and what we understand by it, very comfortable to our view. Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's we shall live together with him, we shall reign with him, we shall reign for, ever and ever. Here, then, is support for us, and consolation, derived from the glorious gospel of the blessed God; in that eternal state and world into which we, as the Lord's, are about to enter, we shall be present with the Lord. This very consideration is all-sufficient to take away all our cares and fears concerning entering on our eternal state. The Lord Christ was set up from everlasting, from the beginning or ever the earth was. We are entering on that state in which we shall have some blessed knowledge of the life he lived, as our head, before the foundation of the world. We shall lay aside our bodies, and all the animality, sense, and reason, which belong to them; we shall be as truly fitted in our minds, for the sight, worship, and enjoyment of Christ, as we can be. We shall find the disembodied state well suited to us. All our intellectual faculties will be fixed and properly exercised on Christ, when we are admitted to see him as he is, therefore we need no concern or fear about eternity. In due time, our bodies will be as truly fitted to live with Christ, and enjoy him, as our minds will be in heaven before the resurrection. We shall be all life, all activity, no darkness in our minds; we shall be like unto the angels; we shall be their companions, and they will be ours; we and they shall worship together, in the utmost perfection of love and delight, our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever.

O my soul! Let me speak to thee, and turn this, subject on eternity into sweet meditation. Of the, eternity of God, who can conceive! It is the very essence and perfection of Deity. Jehovah lives in the everlasting enjoyment of his essential blessedness, in his persons and perfections. Christ lived an eternity before time, in exercising his de lights in his bride and church: he now lives after the power of an endless life. His eternity is thy security. O my soul! Thou art shortly to enter on an eternal state, and into, eternal glory. Thou hast nothing in the prospect hereof, but what is most truly divine and encouraging. There will be no sin nor sorrow in thy mind, notwithstanding thy continuance to an eternal duration; and thy views of Christ, thy delight in Christ, thy communion with Christ, will increase with thy continuation in being and existence. This, O my soul, will be eternity to thee! This will be thy blessedness. O what support is there in these gospel apprehensions of the subject! I really find my mind fed and encouraged by them. In the presence of the Holy Three in the one incomprehensible Jehovah, and as they reflect their everlasting love upon my mind, in the person of Christ on me, I shall have fullness of joy, and pleasures for evermore. It is the immutability of their love to my person in Christ, and the continuation of it forever, which will be the perfection of my felicity. I may well long for this; the gospel gives me ground and warrant to expect life, immortality, and glory, to break in upon my soul, with inconceivable brightness, as soon as I enter eternity. Blessed be the Lord, I have, though in a very small measure and degree, experienced at times what is contained in these words of the apostle, who, speaking to saints concerning the appearing of Jesus Christ, saith, Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory {1st Peter. 1: 8}. I have eternal life in my soul; I have at seasons had some real apprehensions and foretastes thereof. Blessed be the Lord for it. I will now, having in the gospel every thing to support my faith on views of eternity, turn the substance of my meditation and soliloquy into prayer.

O Lord Jesus Christ, I am thine; save me. Thou hast saved me in thyself with an everlasting salvation: I am in thine eye; I am on thy heart; it is before thee, when and where thou wilt call me hence, and what shall be my personal circumstances in the article of death.

Thou art pleased to save me from all fears concerning the same. Blessed be thy name, it is all of grace. I would request thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, to increase my views and prospects of eternity, so as that I may be favored with most blessed scriptural apprehensions of the same. Lord Jesus Christ, bestow on me afresh the spirit of glory and of God, that by the inward teachings of the Holy Spirit, I may have an increasing knowledge of the glory which awaits me, and which will be revealed in me immediately on my entrance into eternity. Holy Father, holy Son, Holy Spirit, which art, and wast, and art to come, who liveth for ever and ever, help me to rejoice in views of that exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which will be bestowed on me, and all the elect in Christ, and be continued for ever and ever. Exercise my mind very expressly and particularly thereon, to the glory of your grace, as displayed in each of the offices you engaged in before all time. This is what I would particularly request, as I must soon enter eternity. Grant it me, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who liveth for ever and ever, to the praise of the glory of free, sovereign, and reigning grace, and for the honor of Christ, to whom be glory throughout all ages-world without end. Amen.

CHAPTER VI. Of our actual Entrance into Heaven, and how we shall be received there. An Account of which is given from the Scriptures of Truth.

IT is conceivable, that the moment we expire in the body, the soul of the believer enters into glory, by which I mean heaven, which is rather the seat or place where we are glorified, than the glory with which we are in our souls invested. Our Lord is pleased thus to speak to us concerning this subject in the word: Let not your heart be

troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. {John 14: 1, 2, 3}. These are the gracious words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he spake in his incarnate state, and are upon record for our consolation. Death is an instantaneous act on the body; by it the soul leaves it, and departs out of this world. An eternal change passes on the mind, by which it is clothed with immortality and eternal glory, it goes to the Father, and is received by Christ, and admitted into heaven. It is said of our Lord, when he knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father; having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. John 13: 1. Our Jesus loved his people from everlasting; he loved them all the while he was in his incarnate state; he loved them to the end of his own life; he loves them now that he is in heaven; he loves them all the while they remain in this world; he loves them when heart and flesh fail; he loves them in their dying moments; he has then such an opportunity of exercising his love as he never had before. Our Lord is pleased to support some of his dying saints very remarkably; but it is not always his pleasure so to do; yet, be this as it may, our Lord is very particularly present with all his saints whilst their bodies are dissolving. This is for the most part concealed from us. We know he hath said, I will never, never, never leave you; I will not; no, I will never, never forsake you; therefore he must be present with his saints at death he being at that season, when all the springs of natural life fail and expire, about to open to them the springs of eternal life, glory, and immortality. The apostle Jude closes his epistle with the following doxology: Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. From which we learn what the Lord Christ hath yet to do, and of what he will do for all his saints immediately on their departure from their

bodies. He will, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, deliver them from the whole in-being of sin; he will receive them to himself; he will introduce them into heaven. His first act there will be to present them faultless. Their souls will be as pure as the light; their minds perfectly cleansed from every spot and stain. He will keep up their minds, so as that under immediate views of his righteousness, sacrifice, and presentation of them, they shall be sustained in his immediate sight, and under their immediate views of him in his glorious person and majesty; he will present them faultless. This is a most blessed subject for consideration: this he will do before the presence of his glory; this he will do with exceeding joy. We here see what awaits us, on our actual entrance into heaven. We shall not die alone; we cannot die out of Christ; we cannot die without him. It is he must set us at liberty from our bodies; it is he must open heaven to us; it is he must admit us; it is he must receive us; it is he must present us before our heavenly Father ;this he will do with exceeding joy. All which yields strong consolation to the mind, which is enlightened with clear scriptural apprehensions hereof. With respect to heaven and eternal glory, and the hope of a blessed immortality, the apostle Paul thus expresses himself: For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God. an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; which is very expressive, that as soon as our bodies drop by death, we have a house ready to receive us, and we shall be received immediately into it. The same apostle, speaking of heaven, entitles us citizens thereof. We have our conversation or citizenship in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, {Philippines. 3: 20}. Heaven is the very place where all saints are to be admitted: it was prepared for us before the foundation of the world. Hence our Lord says: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, {Matthew. 25: 34}. It is there the general assembly and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, are to meet; and in the issue, all to live and unite together in one glorious and perpetual act of worship to God and the Lamb. It

is a place fitted for bodies and minds both. There are Enoch and Elijah, Moses, Christ, and the saints, who were raised up from the grave, after his resurrection, in their bodies of glory; there are an innumerable company of angels and disembodied saints. These converse with Christ, and saints who are glorified in their bodies, and there is the most perfect communion with them. Without all doubt, the admission, of every saint into glory increases the joy of all the glorified. Our Lord expresses his love to every particular heir of glory on their entrance into heaven, in a way beyond what he ever did before. It is, indeed, a day of the gladness of his heart; he is more pleased to receive each of his to the everlasting embraces of his love, than can ever enter into our minds. Were we truly sensible of this from the scriptures of truth, it would make our hearts dance for joy? I confess, I should tremble to enter heaven, and the state of glory, were it not for Christ. He is to have the presenting me; I am only safe, blessed, holy, and happy in him now; I shall only be safe, blessed, holy; and happy in him, then. From eternity he loved me, and undertook for me; he engaged to save me from all my sins; he came down from his Father's bosom to accomplish this. He loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. This is now a subject for faith to contemplate. When we are first admitted into heaven, it will then be the subject of sense, and for us to enjoy in our minds to all eternity. We shall see Christ visibly with the eyes of our minds; he will receive us into his presence with all the love of his heart; he will behold us with joy and complete satisfaction ; he will view us as he did in the everlasting settlements of his Father's gracious will towards us; he will view and review us ; he will present us before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. As righteous in him, who is the Lord our righteousness; as pure in him, without all spot or wrinkle; yea, glorious as though we had never been the subject of the least defilement. We shall be received into heaven by Christ himself; he will rejoice in us; he will rejoice

over us; he will present us before the three in Jehovah with exceeding joy. Thus, we have some blessed supports from the word of revelation, and from it may learn what we may expect when we enter into heaven. We shall be present with the Lord; Christ will receive us to the glory of God; all the love of the Eternal Three will be afresh displayed before us, and manifested unto us in such a way as we can at present have no conceptions of. Our Lord's ascension into heaven, and glorification there, may give us some faint ideas and apprehensions of the subject. He was received up into glory; he entered with the utmost pomp and majesty within the Vail; he sat on the right-hand of God. All heaven was illumined with his presence and glory; an everlasting triumph was ascribed unto him; and all the saints, both angels and men, who saw him enter, fell down and worshipped him. Christ entered as the head, surety, saviour, and representative of all his saints. He entered heaven in his own right; we enter in his right. He is the first-born among many brethren; we, as children of God, are heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ; and we are to be conformed to Christ in glory, in such a measure and degree as will suit us, as members in him our glorified head.

The apostle says, speaking of God in the person of the divine Father: For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. {Romans. 8: 29, 30}. As Christ entered into heaven as our forerunner, we shall enter by him as the medium of our access, and with boldness and liberty through him into heaven, and enjoy the immediate presence of God. As Christ entered triumphantly, we shall also; as Christ, when he entered heaven, took possession of it, and sanctified it by his living there, so he will admit us to our respective mansions, and give us the most perfect happiness and contentment in them. We shall no sooner be admitted, and blessed with the shine of Christ on our immortal and glorified minds, but the place will be as natural and as well suited to our spiritual senses and faculties as if we had been there for a thousand

years. We shall be before the throne of God; we, shall serve him day and night in his temple; we shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on us, nor any heat; for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed us, and shall lead us to living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears, from our eyes. No doubt, but as all the hosts of saints and angels rejoiced at the entrance of our Lord into heaven, so there will be universal joy when the elect are individually admitted into glory. It is the coronation of saints: their crowns are eternal glory, for which they praise God and the Lamb, The everlasting love of the Father, the person and glories, and salvation of Christ, the eternal indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the mind, constitute the feast in glory. Heaven will consist in the perpetual shine of God's favor upon us, so as for the mind to have an unspeakable enjoyment of the same; we shall there be filled with all the fullness of God. This must consist in having our understandings so enlarged, to comprehend God in Christ, as to be wholly satisfied with him, and in the enjoyment of him. Our wills will then be perfectly satisfied with the will of God; we shall rejoice in his essential blessedness; we shall have a clear and proper idea of the essence and persons in Jehovah, so, as to give glorious praise to Father, Son, and Spirit, for all their love to us, and vast and eternal designs towards us in the person of Christ. In heaven we shall be forever clothed with immutable holiness; we shall be blessed with immediate communion with God; we shall shine in Christ; we shall be as so many jewels in his Mediatorial crown. He will shine on us and within us, and we shall reflect his shine back again on him. He will be our everlasting heaven of light and glory, of perfection and bliss. We shall be swallowed up in him, so as for him to dwell supremely, transcendently, and inexpressibly in all the faculties of our minds. It is hereby we shall be transformed into his glorious image, and be made completely happy and blessed in our souls. It is good to have right, clear, and scriptural apprehensions of these sublime verities: it is only as we truly apprehend them, that we can have any holy longing and desire after the enjoyment of them. It would be well to have our minds properly impressed with the

blessed thought, that heaven is prepared for us, and we are prepared for it; that it is open to receive us; and that we shall enter it the moment we leave the body. We shall find, every thing there suited to our spiritual taste: we shall have free admittance, a joyful entrance, a most blessed acceptance. Our Lord will shine on us as he never yet did; he will present us to the whole company of saints, to unite with them in their worship of him; he will open the glories of heaven to our view; he will place us where we are to be, and shine with such splendor on us as will fill our minds with immortal bliss and satisfaction. He will say: Come, ye blessed, enter ye into the joy of your Lord. It is not to be wondered at that saints are described by the apostle as earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with glory and immortality; to be swallowed up of life; to be in heaven; to enjoy eternal glory. He knew these subjects well: they had their existence in his mind; they were in him, and to him, eternal realities; he therefore prays thus on the behalf of the saints at Ephesus, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, might give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they might know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. He would they should know as much of glory and heaven, before they entered it, as possible. He requests the Lord on their behalf, that they might know the grounds of their calling; what they were called unto; and what they were to expect. God himself is the inheritance of his people; they are also his inheritance. His riches of grace and glory are in the saints; they are all to shine forth in them; they are all to be displayed on them ; they are all to be made known unto them; they are all to be enjoyed by them God himself, will be their glory. If God can make them happy, they shall be as completely happy as he can make them.

I would now, O my soul! Turn this subject into meditation and prayer. I expect and believe that I shall soon be in heaven. How art thou, O my soul, affected with this? Dost thou, from the scriptures and the light of the Holy Spirit, apprehend spiritually and

intellectually what heaven is? It is a supernatural world, a state of blessedness and glory. There are no joys and pleasures there, but such as are suited to a heaven-born soul, to a holy and spiritual mind. Saints there live, wholly on Christ; he is their immediate life of glory. Art thou, O my soul! fitted for this place and state? Will it suit thee to be wholly swallowed up in Christ? To have him for thy immediate object, and perpetual subject? Hast thou an inward spiritual conception of its being real blessedness, to be wholly living out of thyself, and off thyself, in continual sights of Christ, so as never to reflect on thyself forever? The happiness of saints in heaven does not arise within, or from themselves: it is wholly without them; it flows from God and the Lamb into them, through the indwelling of the Lord the Spirit. They are not admitted to think one moment of themselves; all their thoughts flow into their immortal minds, as glorified, from Christ their head, and are formed in them by the Lord the Spirit, who fully possesses them as his true and proper temples. Will such a state, such a place, such a life, so continued a dependence on Christ for glory everlasting, as this amounts to, suit thee? If so, think much on it. Let it be the constant subject of thy mind. If the Holy Spirit makes it plain and clear to thee, thou wilt not be unwilling to die in thy body, that thou mayest live with Christ in glory. I will turn this, O my soul, into prayer.

O thou, who art the God of glory, the Father of glory, the God of all grace, who hast called thy people unto eternal glory by Christ Jesus, I beseech thee to give me some supernatural views of it. Create in my mind such conceptions of heaven, glory, and immortal life, as may cause me to desire to depart out of this body and world, and be with Christ, which is far better than to be in it. I pray thee to grant me to be looking out for heaven; to be expecting a city which hath foundations, which thou hast built and art the maker of; into which thou dost admit thy saints immediately on their leaving their bodies. Thou, O God, art not ashamed to be called their God, for whom thou hast prepared this city. Grant, holy Father, that my mind may be so enlightened from thy word, and by thy Spirit, into a knowledge of

what is revealed in thy holy gospel concerning the inheritance of the saints in light, that my views and prospects of it may abound. O that it may please thee, so to let down from thy blessed self-such supernatural views of heaven and heavenly glory into my mind, as may increase my longings and desires after it! O Lord Jesus, there I am to see thee face to face! There I am to live as thou dost. There I am to live, in thee, and to thee, thou living in me forever. O blessed Spirit, do thou, as the Spirit of glory and of God, rest upon me, and reveal a real sense of this glory in me. Amen.