

“ ABSENT
FROM THE BODY ”
(INTERMEDIATE STATE)

“ PRESENT
WITH THE LORD. ”

A S E R M O N

PREACHED BY THE

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In the 5th Chapter of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians, and at the 8th verse, you will read:

“ WE ARE CONFIDENT AND WILLING RATHER TO BE
ABSENT FROM THE BODY, AND TO BE PRESENT
WITH THE LORD. ”

In the concluding part of the preceding chapter, the Apostle draws a very striking contrast between the things which are temporal and those things which are eternal. The former are transient and pass away, but the latter continue and abide for ever. The superiority of the one over the other, is not only strikingly, but beautifully set forth for the comfort and encouragement of the afflicted, troubled, perplexed, persecuted and cast down children of God. In the opening of the 5th chapter, the Apostle not only continues his contrast,

but illustrates his meaning in a most interesting manner. The time state of the child of God is dwelling in an "earthly house" which must soon be dissolved. The future and happy state of the believer, is dwelling in heaven in eternal glory, "a building of God, a house not made with hands." In our earthly tabernacle we groan, being burdened, and although we have the earnest of the Spirit dwelling in our hearts, as the pledge of a glorious future, yet, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We walk by faith in our time state, but when present with the Lord, we shall walk by sight. The Apostle is not backward in expressing his confident assurance as to the future, he is of good courage, and declares his readiness rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. The wonderful influence which these truths had upon the Apostle and others, is thus stated:—"Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him." The subject which I purpose bringing before you this evening, is one of very great importance, and I hope, that it will be, to some extent at least, both interesting, useful, and profitable. Our order is as follows:—

First, the state of the believer whilst at home in the body; secondly, the state of the believer's soul when at home with the Lord; and thirdly, the state of the believer, body, soul, and spirit, after the Resurrection. You will require to follow me closely in order to obtain and retain a full grasp of our subject. May the Divine Spirit guide us into all truth for Christ's sake.

Consider first, the state of the believer whilst at home in the body. This is the time state of the child of God. Various expressions are used by the Apostle to denote the temporary and frail condition of our mortal bodies. The body is likened to an "earthly house," which though beautiful and wonderful in its construction, is but dust and ashes. Out of dust was it taken, dust it is, and unto dust it shall return. (Gen. iii. 19.) The body, notwithstanding, is the house which the "living soul" occupies for a short time, and then passes away.

The soul is a tenant at will. Its Creator and Sovereign may remove it whenever He pleases from its earthly to its heavenly abode. The body is a "tabernacle" or a "tent" in which the soul sojourns for a night. This "tabernacle" has to be dissolved, unpinned, and taken down. The Owner thereof does it with care. He separates body and soul for awhile, but preserves both, that He may hereafter unite them in resurrection glory and beauty.

Whilst at home in the body, the believer groans, being burdened. Those saints of God, whose bodies lie in the grave, and whose souls are with the Lord, have done with all sighs and "groans," for they are "unburdened." The believer, as long as he remains here, is "burdened" with a "body of death"—a "dead body"—which is a most loathsome thing to have as a daily companion. He is "burdened" with the inward workings of corruption, with the fiery darts of the wicked one, with the cares of this world, with afflictions, labours, and sufferings for the truth's sake. Well, but this is not for long, and it is "light" when compared with the "eternal weight of glory." God has appointed a *set time* for remembering and delivering His servants. Like Job we may exclaim, "If a man die shall he live"? Of course he will, and no one knew this better than Job did, for he knew that his Redeemer lived, and that he should hereafter see him as his God. But Job had to bow to his Lord and to abide His time, and so have we. "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." (Job xiv. 14; xix.)

The believer whilst at home in the body has received a pledge that when he leaves it, he shall be present with the Lord. "God has given us the earnest of His Spirit." This is something in hand as a "pledge" or "surety," that He will give us all that He has promised us. "We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." (Eph. i.) This sealing pledge is put into our hearts. God graciously anoints us and consecrates us to His service. He seals us and makes us *feel sure* of our salvation. And this He does

by giving us the *earnest* of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Cor. i. 21, 22.) The sinner saved is a very sacred thing, for the Holy Ghost has made him so. The Spirit of God quickened him when he was dead in trespasses and sins. He led him to Christ for cleansing and salvation. He now dwells in him as his Guide, Sanctifier, and Comforter. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ." The Holy Ghost has vitally joined you to the Lord. Your bodies are not to be used for common or unholy purposes. "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Cor. iii. 16; vi.) We need be careful of our bodies in our time state, and in no sense abuse them. They are God's, and are to be devoted entirely to His service. What other meaning can the words of St. Paul have? "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your *bodies* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

The believer whilst at home in the body walks by faith. "We walk by faith, not by sight." I would impress upon you, that where there is real faith, there you have real spiritual life. The Spirit of Christ is the principle of eternal life in the believer. This Spirit flows as freely and as effectually through every faculty of the soul, as the blood of a healthy person circulates through every vein of his body. Christ lives in him, and he lives by the faith of the Son of God. (Gal. ii. 20.) Christ is the bread of his life, the joy of his life, the hope of his life, and the end of his life. If he walks, it is by faith; if he runs, it is by faith; if he flies, it is by faith—"Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of his faith."

The believer though at home in the body and absent from the Lord, has certain marks by which he may be known.

He has the knowledge of assurance. "We know that if our earthly house," *i.e.* our bodily frame be dissolved, we have a better house, one which can never be taken down, eternal in the heavens. St. John could say, "And we know." And it is the privilege of every child of God to be able to say, "And I know." The Apostle "earnestly desired" to be at home with the Lord, clothed upon with glory and immortality. He was "confident" that He Who had begun the good work in him would perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. He laboured always, as a man who believed what he preached, to be accepted of God. Shew us these marks, and we will shew you persons, who, when "absent from the body will be present with the Lord." Consider:—

Secondly, the state of the believer's soul when at home with the Lord. "Absent from the body, present with the Lord." I believe that it is an acknowledged fact, that in every system of religion, except in that of the Bible, a "*middle state*" has been recognized, in which the soul, after death, is purged of its guilt, and thereby fitted for the enjoyment of everlasting felicity. This doctrine has been designated "Purgatory," a name which it bears to this day. Plato, the wisest among the Greeks, inculcated this doctrine. (Phædrus.) Virgil among the Romans described its tortures. (Dryden's Virgil, book vi. 995—1012.) In Egypt, substantially the same doctrine was taught. The Brahmin's transmigration of souls is Purgatory in another aspect. The Church of Rome has adopted the heathen doctrine of Purgatory, and anathematizes every one who denies it. (Council of Trent, Session vi., Canon 30.) The Mahometans have their Limbo or Al Arâb. The Church of England rejects the idea of a Purgatory as "repugnant to the Word of God." (Art. xxii.) Well, but where is the soul of the believer when it has departed out of its "earthly house"? Our text answers this question plainly and sufficiently—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord." But here, an interesting question may be raised. Is the soul of the believer present with the Lord from the time of its departure out of the body

until the resurrection morning? And if so, is not this an "INTERMEDIATE STATE"?

I must here define what we mean by an "Intermediate State." Theologically this term is used to denote the state of the soul between death and the resurrection. I shall abide by this definition, which necessarily implies the belief of certain doctrines, which I shall not be required to prove, such as the doctrine of a future state, of the immortality of the soul, of the resurrection of the dead, of judgment to come, of heaven and hell, of happiness and misery, and of rewards and punishments. These doctrines have been received from the earliest times. (Dr. Geikie, Hours with the Bible, page 310.) In the time of our Lord and of His followers, these doctrines were more clearly revealed by the Spirit of God than they had ever been before. (Eph. iii. 5.) In the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Christian Era, there arose a desire in the professing Church of Christ, on the part of some, to go beyond what the Scriptures had revealed respecting "*the intermediate state.*" Tertullian would speak of *four* different places of future happiness or misery. "The inferi, Abraham's bosom, Paradise, and Gehenna." At a later date, and in a darker age of the Christian Church, Thomas Aquinas spoke of *five* places to which the souls of the dead are allotted. "Paradise, Limbus Patrum, Purgatory, Hell, and Limbus Puerorum." (See Eadie's Ecclē: Cyclo: Art. Limbo.) I simply mention these things as the opinions of eminent men, not that they will be of any real value in enlightening us into the true state of the soul between death and the resurrection. Our unerring and infallible guide in all points both in doctrine and practice, must be "THE WORD OF GOD WRITTEN."

Some distinguished Writers have spoken of the soul, as if it were *unconscious, insensible, and asleep* between death and the resurrection. I shall have to shew you what Scriptures are quoted by them in favour of their theory. The following are specimens:—"David shall sleep with his fathers." "And he slept with his fathers, and was buried." (2 Sam. vii. 12; 1 Kings i. 21; ii. 10.)

“For now shall I sleep in dust.” (Job. vii. 21.) “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.” (Dan. xii. 2.) “They that are fallen asleep.” “We shall not all sleep.” (1 Cor. xv.) “Them which sleep in Jesus.” (1 Thess. iv.) Those who rely upon these expressions in proof of their opinion that the soul *sleeps* between death and the resurrection, seem not to have sufficiently considered the context in which these passages occur, for without exception each and all refer to the death of the body and not to the soul. “To fall asleep,” is to die. (Acts vii. 60.) And to be asleep, is to be in a state of death, as regards the body. That it is the body which sleeps, is evident from the following passages:—“Many bodies of the saints which slept arose.” (Mat. xxvii. 52.) “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,” *i.e.* Lazarus is dead. (John xi.) “David fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption.” (Acts xiii. 36.) If David in this verse includes both body and soul, then his soul died and saw corruption. I have not met with anyone rash enough to assert, that this is the meaning of the Apostle.

Again, passages which speak of the dead as being unable to praise God, are urged in support of the view, that the soul is unconscious, insensible, and asleep after death. “Shall the dust praise Thee”? (Psm. xxx. 9.) “Shall the dead arise and praise Thee”? (Psalm lxxx. 10.) “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.” (Psm. cxv. 17.) “The grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee.” (Isaiah xxxviii. 18.) It will be seen by a very cursory glance, at the context of these passages, that they are either *figurative*, or refer to the death of the body, and not to the soul after death, unless it should be contended that body and soul after death are buried and mingle together with the dust of the earth. It would be difficult to deal with a theory of this sort.

Again, it is said, that in the day of death, “the thoughts of man perish,” and that afterwards, “the dead know not anything.” (Psm. cxvi. 4; Eccles. ix. v.) If we read and examine these verses, we shall find that the former

verse is speaking of the *plans, purposes and designs* of the *great* in this life, which come to an end in the day of death. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth: in that very day his *thoughts,*" *plans,* "perish." And as to the latter verse, the dead "know not anything," stands in contrast with "the living who know that they shall die." The most that these verses prove is this, that death is the lot of all. Man in this respect, "has no pre-eminence above a beast." (Eccles. iii. 19.)

Again, in the 12th of Ecclesiastes there is a verse which I shall read and note. "Then shall the dust return to the earth, as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it." There is a reference in this verse to the original creation of man. The body of man was formed of the dust of the ground, and the living soul was the breath of life, which God breathed into it. Solomon saw, that in death, the body returns to dust, and the soul returns to Him Who gave it. And for what purpose? Surely, not to be absorbed into the Godhead, for such an idea would be derogatory to the perfection of Deity. The soul returns to its Creator, Who is the Sovereign Lord of all, and Who will dispose of and assign the soul to its rightful place in happiness, heaven and glory, or otherwise, according to its deserts. The Judge of all the earth will do right.

Again, it has been contended, that because the REWARD of the righteous and the PUNISHMENT of the wicked do not take place until after the resurrection and the day of judgment, therefore the soul is inactive and in abeyance, and that its faculties are suspended after death until the resurrection. The passages generally quoted in support of this opinion, are the following:—"Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." (Luke xiv. 14.) "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." (Mat. xxv. 46.) They shall be judged out of the books according to their works. (Rev. xx.) I fail, myself, to see anything in these and such passages to *disprove the conscious, sensible, separate and distinct existence* of the soul between death and the resurrection. Nor do they disprove

the *immediate* happiness or misery of the soul after its departure from the body. Those Scriptures which clearly prove the resurrection of the body and its reunion with the soul, which clearly prove that all men shall be judged according to their deeds done in the body, which clearly prove that every person shall be either eternally happy and present with the Lord, or eternally banished from His presence, can never, in fairness, be quoted to *disprove* the *conscious, sensible, separate, and distinct existence* of the soul between death and the resurrection. They may be quoted in *confirmation* of the views of those who hold, that what takes place after the resurrection and the day of judgment, will be but a *continuation* of that happiness or misery which the soul has *experienced* in "*the intermediate state.*" I will not, however, linger longer on this aspect of my subject, but proceed to examine the Scriptures, which give us *definite* views respecting the state of the soul after its absence from the body. The righteous enter into peace and rest.

"*Present with the Lord.*" These are the words of our text. What is it that is present with the Lord? It is not the body, but something which has left it. And this something is called the soul, or that which constitutes the spiritual part of the believer. I use these terms to describe that part of man which is dislodged from its "earthly house" in the day of death. The great Head of the Church taught that the soul survives the body. He said to His Apostles: "Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." (Matt. x. 28.) Here we have a contrast between the mortal life of the body and the immortal life of the soul. The former may be taken away by man, but not the latter. That the soul survives the death of the body, is the teaching of our Lord.

Again, Jesus proved the resurrection of the body from the surviving life of the soul after death. He quotes Moses, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, and the

God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; God is not the God of the dead but of the *living*." "For all live unto Him." (Matt. xxii. 32; Luke xx. 38.) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been long dead in the time of Moses. And hence that which survived and was alive, must have been the soul. These worthies were living somewhere, though not in their bodies. They had a distinct existence and were not annihilated, for how could God be the God of that which had no existence? The Sadducees said, there was neither resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit. (Acts xxiii. 8.) But our Lord proved the existence of the spirit after death, and by inference the resurrection of the body. Moses had shewn at the bush, that the dead are raised, because Abraham's God is the God of the *living*.

Let us notice our Lord's words to the penitent thief on the cross. The thief cried:—"Lord remember me when Thou comest in Thy kingdom." Jesus said unto him, "Verily, I say unto thee." This is the language of certainty. The promise which I am about to make to thee will be most assuredly fulfilled. "*To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.*" (Luke xxiii. 42, 43.) The time is fixed. "*To-day.*" Sudden and great is to be the change—from a cross to a crown. "Thou shalt be with Me." Absent from the body present with the Lord. The *place* is named, which is *Paradise*. St. Paul calls this Paradise the third heaven. (2 Cor. xii. 2-4.) The word for Paradise is rendered in the Old Testament "*forest*" and "*orchard.*" (Neh. ii. 8; Eccle. ii. 5; Song iv. 13.) Paradise is a word of Eastern origin and denotes a park, or garden ground, or other valuable enclosure in which are precious objects to regale the senses. When the word refers to the heavenly Paradise of God, then it denotes a place of inexpressible pleasure, happiness, and delight. Paradise is the palace grounds of the King of saints. In this heavenly land the saints have freedom, they breathe a pure atmosphere, live on precious fruits, and drink at the fountain of God's pleasures for evermore. I am aware of the gross idea of some who say, that Paradise

was the garden in which our Lord was buried. But the thief was not buried with Him, and if he had been, what comfort would this have afforded him? Others say, that our Lord only declared a truth unto the thief, but did not fix the time of his being with Him in Paradise. They read the words thus: "Verily, I say unto thee to day, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." This reading is considered by Critics weak and contemptible. I think, that our Lord's words establish these facts, that both His Own soul and the soul of the thief, were *immediately* after death in the Paradise of bliss and glory.

Again, "*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours: and their works do follow them.*" (Rev. xiv. 13.) This verse contains many precious truths. Those who die in the Lord, are blessed with the rich enjoyment of every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. But how could this be, if their souls were *unconscious, insensible, and asleep* after death? The happiness of the soul is *immediate*. "From henceforth." From the *moment of departure* the souls of the saints abound in joy and pleasure. "They rest from their labours," their sorrows, their griefs, and their vexatious troubles, in a holy, sensible, and peaceable habitation of delight and glory. "And their works do follow them" testimonially, like Abel's, Noah's, Abraham's, and others.

Again, *Parable as proof*. If Parable can be taken as proof, and I am prepared to do so myself, of the soul's *consciousness, sensibility, and activity* after death, then the whole subject is not only fully proved, but illustrated by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The condition of each is described both before and after death. We have only to do with the state of each after death. The beggar dies and is escorted by angels into "Abraham's bosom," where he enjoys rest and comfort in peace and security. What a change from poverty to riches, from misery to happiness. Lazarus in his lifetime had his evil things, but in heaven, he receives his

good things. The rich man also dies and is buried, and in hell he lifts up his eyes being in torments. He can see, pray, remember, reflect, and feel—He is tormented. A great gulf is fixed between the two which can never be passed. It is God's irrevocable decree. Once accept this Parable as proof, and the whole question of the *soul's separate and distinct existence* after death is settled for ever. And not only so, but the *soul's consciousness, sensibility, and activity immediately* after death are settled also. But does the soul retain its *individuality* after death? Well, what constitutes its *individuality* but its *distinct existence*? The soul in the "*Intermediate state*" knows, thinks, remembers, compares, and so forth. (Luke xvi.) And if the soul can do these things in its separate state, then its faculties are not suspended, but on the contrary, they are more freely exercised, because the soul has escaped from its earthly prison house. The soul shall not know less after its departure, but more. We shall all know even as we are known. And as the soul will have its *individuality* after death, so will it have its *locality*. Christ will *localize* it, for it will be *with Him*. He is in heaven and has prepared a *place* for it. All redeemed souls are now *with Him*, waiting for the resurrection of their bodies. (Rev. vi. 9-11; vii. 9, 10.) When the Lord comes again He will bring His saints with Him, that they may receive their bodies. (1 Thes. iv. 14.) The soul has its distinct existence in a place. Christ is in the high and holy place. Judas and his followers went to their "*own place*." The Devil and his angels have their own place prepared for them. The souls of the righteous when absent from the body are present with the Lord—and this is their place for ever and ever.

Again, before the Lord left his disciples, He inspired them with the hope of being with Him and beholding His glory. Hear His Own words: "Where I am there shall My servant be." (John xii. 26.) "Father I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may *behold My glory*, which Thou hast given Me." (John xvii. 24.) When the Saviour spoke

of going away to His Father, sorrow filled the hearts of His disciples. Nevertheless, it was expedient that he should go away for the reasons which He assigned. (John xvi. 6, 7.) But what a change took place in the minds of the disciples when the Lord had actually gone away from them to His Father. "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with *great joy*; and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." (Luke xxiv. 51—53.) The same Lord Who companied with His disciples in Jerusalem changed their sorrow into joy. They were to be *with* Him, and *with* Him in glory. "He ascended up far above all heavens." (Eph. iv. 10.) Christ's bodily presence is there. It is the abode of angels (Mark xiii. 32) and of the spirits of just men made perfect. (Heb. xii. 22.) Enoch and Elijah and probably Moses are there in body. (Mat. xvii.) Abraham and the Old Testament worthies had their eye upon this heavenly city. Stephen saw heaven opened and Jesus standing at God's right hand ready to receive his spirit. "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." (Acts vii. 59.) Now, we can understand the words of St. Paul—"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "He had a desire to depart, and to be *with Christ*, which is far better." (Phil. i. 21-23.) The Apostle had a desire, that Christ should be magnified both in life, and death. It might be better for the Philippians, that he should be spared to preach the Gospel of Christ to them and to spread the savour of His precious Name, but he knew that to die and to be with Christ in heaven and glory was "*gain*." He knew that he should be delivered from a body of sin, from doubts and fears, from troubles and trials, from diseases and deaths, from persecutions, and perplexities. And that he should gain an entrance into the presence of Christ, to partake of His joys and pleasures, and to appear in His beauty and glory. It is "*very far better*" to depart and to be with Christ. Death is only a departing, a removing from a lower to an upper room.

A gentle drawing aside of the curtain that the soul may enter in. "It is *very far better*" to be with Christ joying and rejoicing with Him, than to be here sorrowing, weeping, and groaning. The saints love Christ now, but when they are in His presence, they will dwell in constant admiration of Him. They will see Him face to face. They will no longer look through a glass darkly, but behold Him as He is in majesty, honour, and glory. The saints in heaven are Christ's friends, brethren, and companions. They are freemen of the heavenly city, and walk in the palace grounds of the great King. They bear His Name and share His honours and privileges. They hold sweet and blessed intercourse with Him. They glory in the success of His kingdom, and rejoice when an heir of glory is born of God. They are filled with the fulness of joy and pleasure. They can bear no more, for a burden of glory is upon them. *There* all the graces of the saints are in full exercise. They are waiting for their glorified bodies, and in the meanwhile, they share and enjoy the grace, the goodness, the righteousness, the holiness, the honour, the glory, and the dominion of Jehovah Jesus. It is "*very far better*" to be with Christ than to be imprisoned in this earthly tenement of clay, sorrow, burden, decay, death and corruption. Throw open the prison gate and the captive soul will delight in its release and liberty. Throw open the door, and the heavenly bird will depart from its cage, rising and soaring on "joyful wing," and singing as it soars "to claim its mansion in the skies," that "It is very far better to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

And now what is the teaching of our own Church about the state of the believer's soul after its departure out of this life? Does she give any uncertain sound? Does she say that it goes to Purgatory to be cleansed from guilt to fit it for happiness? No, indeed! Such teaching would be an insult to Him Whose Blood cleanses from all sin. Both in her public services and in her occasional prayers, both in her Articles and in her

Homilies, she sets forth as the hope of the child of God, *immediately* after death the attainment of "everlasting joy and felicity." She prays for a sick brother:—"Yea, forasmuch as in all appearance the time of *his* dissolution draweth near, so fit and prepare *him*, we beseech Thee, against the hour of death, that after *his* departure hence in peace, and in Thy favour, *his soul* may be received into Thine everlasting kingdom, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ Thine only Son, our Lord and Saviour." And how does She comfort the sorrowful at the open grave of the departed? "Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with Whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh are *in joy and felicity*; we give Thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased Thee to deliver this our *brother* or *sister* out of the miseries of this sinful world; beseeching Thee, that it may please Thee of Thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed this life in the true faith of Thy holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord." Are not these words explicit? The soul of the believer when absent from the body is present with the Lord, sharing His joys and His happiness, and yet waiting "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the body to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto His glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." But to notice:—

Thirdly, the state of the believer, body, soul and spirit after the resurrection. Here I shall be very brief, for I hope to enlarge upon this part of my subject on some future occasion. The Scriptures declare "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." The Lord Jesus Christ shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed

to the body of His glory." We do not read of any change in the soul at the resurrection, but the body shall then receive its *new qualities*. It shall be an "*incorruptible*" body, a "*glorious*" body, a "*powerful*" body, a "*spiritual*" body, and an "*immortal*" body. These will be some of its properties in that day of glory. Then shall the Lord Jesus deliver up the Kingdom—the Church in her risen glory—to God, the Father, that He may be all in all. (1 Cor. xv.)

The believer shall then be like Christ, and see Him as He is. David rejoiced in hope, saying, "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be *satisfied*, when I awake with Thy likeness." (Psm. xvii. 15.) It is as if he had said, "I shall see the face of my God in the Righteous One, Jehovah Jesus; and when I appear with Him in glory, and I am *like Him* in body, soul and spirit, then I shall be perfectly satisfied." Then shall I be a king, crowned with the crown of righteousness—crowned with the crown of eternal life—and crowned with the incorruptible crown of glory which fadeth not away.

And now for a few practical words. There are only *two estates* of persons now. Those who are IN Christ, and those who are OUT of Christ. There will be only *two estates* when the soul leaves the body. It will be heaven or hell, happiness or misery. There will be only *two estates* after the resurrection of the body and the day of judgment. On the right hand, exaltation, dignity, honour, and glory. And on the left hand, humiliation, degradation, shame, and contempt. The lines are distinctive: "Come, ye blessed of My Father," or "Depart from Me, ye cursed"! Which is it *now*? And which will it be *hereafter*?

N.B.—This SERMON should be read in connection with SERMON No. 5, Series vii.—"CONVERSATION IN HEAVEN."

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