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DEATH AND DYING, CHAPTERS 3 AND 4,

CHAPTER III. Of the Act of Dying. What we may conceive of it. With Gospel Relief suited thereunto.

By Samuel Pierce,

I Conceive death, the progress of it over the human frame, with the act of dying, to be distinct. Death is inherent in our bodies and constitutions. It is nothing but the mortality of our bodies, which cannot take place without such and such giving way: it may be instantly, but it is produced by certain physical causes. Hence I apprehend it is that some, from a good sound understanding of the human frame, have expressed most exactly the precise time of their dissolution. In our bodies we are the subjects of a sensitive, animal, and rational life. This the soul, by its indwelling in the body, hath its enjoyments of. Yet these lives are not in the soul, but in the body: the soul is the subject of intellectual and rational life. This does not expire and cease with the body. At death, we lose no other life than what alone belongs to the body; which consists in that sense, motion, feeling, and perception, which belong to it; all which is vegetative, sensitive, and animal. With respect to which, the death of it comes on all the nerves, and parts of it, so as to affect the whole frame, to deprive it of all the senses, feelings, and motion thereof, whereby the soul is forced to leave it. Now death is first, as it respects its seizure of the body, which in its progress stops the circulation of the blood throughout the whole frame; then seals up every sense, and thus the breath of man goeth forth, and he returns to the earth: in that very day his thoughts, formed in the mind by the mean of the bodily nerves, blood, and senses, perish.

Now, the act of dying, I conceive, consists in all the senses, faculties, and members of the animal frame entirely ceasing, so as for the breath wholly to depart out of the body.

I conceive that it is very easy, when it comes to this. The soul is now unclothed of all mortality; it is out of its sheath: it is just what an angel is, as it respects its essence and faculties. It has no materially belonging to it; the essence and faculties of it are such as can by no means be destroyed by death. Its medium of knowledge and communication is wholly different from what it was before: it is now wholly intellectual. Its faculties are will and understanding; its affections of memory and suitableness to the objects and subjects before it, are essential to its existence. I think these two things make death so terrible to our view: we see the body is wholly laid a side it is put off. In its putting off, we perceive it is greatly agitated; when it came to its last gasp all was over. The mind was then wholly disengaged from it. Now this we feel ourselves concerned in to know where it is; how it acts; what we are to conceive thereof; what those objects and subjects are which engage it. Indeed, here we must stop, unless we submit to the word and light of inspiration; for what our souls, minds, thoughts are; what our thinking faculty is, we know not now, nor shall we, it may be, in a future state. We shall exist for ever, but our existence being in him who gave it, and continues it. I should conceive it will never fall under our knowledge, even in eternity. All we shall know of it, may be, will be only this: we know we live, and are in such a state, and are so and so exercised, but what our souls or existences are, will, I conceive, be beyond our knowledge, even in the invisible state.

We are to be disembodied by death. What light do the scriptures of truth give us concerning this? For it will not do for us to give way to conjecture. Indeed, it will not. The apostle tells us, We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. This appearance must be in our souls. He

says, We being absent from the body, are present with the Lord. He tells us, he knew a man in Christ, whether in the body or out of it, he could not say. Yet such an one was caught up to the third heaven, {2nd Corinthians. 12: 2}. It fully appears from hence, that we shall have no need of our bodies in heaven for a season. Our Lord said to the thief, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. {Luke 23: 43}. He is without his body to the present moment, yet he is in the immediate presence of Christ. The prophet John says, he saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held. And white robes were given unto every one of them. Revelation. 6: 9, 11}. This was expressive of the garment of immortality; from whence we may clearly perceive that the disembodied soul of the saint is, immediately at its leaving the body, with the spirits of just men made perfect. It is this which may well afford relief to the minds of saints, when they are in the very act of dying: that as soon as the body expires, they will be freed that very instant from all sin; the whole body of it will drop off for ever; not a stain will be found in them to eternity. They will instantaneously be clothed with the garments of immortality; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, mortality will be swallowed up of life; they will be all life and light; they will be clothed with eternal glory. In these garments of immortality and eternal glory they will be fitted for their disembodied state; to converse with God, the Father of spirits, to converse with angels, and disembodied spirits; so that they will hereby be as fit for the world of glory, and of spirits, as they were fitted for the world which they left when their bodies expired, all the time they were permitted to live in it in their bodies. This is a very comfortable consideration, and I think it must be allowed to be a very just one. The soul will be the subject on whom this change of immortality and glory will pass, the very moment death hath disunited it from the body; so that death will not be death to the saint, but only its passageway to eternal glory.

It deserves our most attentive consideration, that in all the acts of God within us, and upon us, we are altogether passive. We were when born again, and brought into the kingdom of God's dear son; we shall be so in the article of death, and in our translation into the world of glory; we shall be as completely fitted for the unseen state, as ever any of the saints before us were. It requires faith in the word of God, and much light from the Holy Spirit, to apprehend this; yet all the saints are equally wrought upon in regeneration, to fit them to enter into, and live in the kingdom of grace. And they are, at their dismissing from their bodies, all and each of them, wrought upon to enter the invisible state, to fit them to converse with such as they are to live with for evermore. I conceive the garments of immortality and eternal glory will be fit mediums for disembodied saints, to conceive, apprehend, and converse with those objects and subjects which will then be before them.

Mortality being swallowed up of life, and the garments of immortality and glory being wrought in the mind of the saint by the Holy Ghost, which will be the perfection of his work on the soul, an entrance shall be ministered abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. When these divine, most glorious, and supernatural truths are attended unto, all consideration of death, its progress, and what change will pass on the body in the article of dissolution, is not worth a thought; nor all which may be felt in the body, worth a one single sigh; nor the change of place, state, and circumstance either. We are then going from earth to heaven, from the church on earth, to the church in heaven. We are going to depart from our bodies to be with Christ; we are going from the state of grace to the state of glory; we are going to have our circumstances so changed, that we shall never have sin in us to eternity. We are going to our friends, and our Lord's friends, whose minds are perfectly pure; whose souls are in perfect harmony, who will be happy in our company, and love us next to Christ himself. We are going to enjoy our Lord, even as they do. These are the views the gospel gives us concerning the glory which

is to be revealed in us, and will be revealed to us as soon as we are dismissed from these bodies of ours, believers in Jesus. And it may afford us matter of support to consider this which follows: it is this, that when the cold clammy sweat of death is upon us, when you and I are actually departing, we shall need Christ, so as we never needed him yet. He knows this well; he will therefore be unto us very near and present. I do not mean by the manifestations of his gracious presence, I have no warrant from the word for so saying; not but that many a time it is so; but be this as it may, he, most assuredly, is very near us, because he is about to receive us. What he will do for us, as it respects our minds, we shall know nothing of; we shall perceive it when it hath taken place, but not whilst it is taking place. Let us learn, then, to leave ourselves wholly with him, and say for ourselves, as Stephen did, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. The apostle had blessed views of these subjects, when he said, I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day, {2nd Timothy 1: 12}. And again: I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at, that day; and not to me only, but unto all them which love his appearing, chap. {2nd Timothy 4: 6, 7, 8}.

And again And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. ver. 18. Our best preparations for dying and apprehensions of future glory must consist in having these most glorious and divine realities realized in our souls by the Holy Ghost. Not one of the Lord's beloved ones is more interested in them than another. No; many a saint has no views of these important things, yet there is not a single individual child of God but shall enjoy, in the invisible state, all the blessedness contained in them. The apostle Peter includes all believers in Christ Jesus with himself in the word us, and says, The God of all grace hath called us unto his eternal

glory by Christ Jesus. {1st Peter. 5: 10}. The holy apostle Jude tells us, Our Lord Jesus is able to keep us from falling, and to present as faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Surely, in what hath been delivered, we have had such gospel relief's suited to us, when we shall come into dying circumstances, as are all sufficient to sustain us when heart and flesh shall fail. Any saint entering into the subject which hath been proposed, or rather, every saint into whose mind these divine truths enter, and is engaged in the real apprehension and belief of them, may in death sing and say, My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. {Psalm 73: 26}. May the Lord look down from heaven, his holy dwelling place, on all his dying saints, and shine away from them all their fears of death, and fill them with prospects of a blessed immortality. There is not a moment but one saint or other is dying; and others, who are just entered into heaven. It is a very necessary act, and is a part of the communion of saints to pray on the behalf of sick and dying saints. It is also all the communion we can at present have with our friends in Christ just departed, to bless the Lord for taking them to himself; for his love to them now in glory with hint. He loved them whilst they were here, as truly as he doth now but he could not express it to them whilst they were here, as he doth now. He loved them to the end of their lives, to the very moment when they drew their last breath; he will love them in heaven for ever, and will express it in the following way: The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead, them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, Revelation. 7: 17}. Our Lord Jesus Christ is in the possession of the key of all the treasures of his Father's; grace and glory; and he can unlock them, and shew us all contained therein, so that we need not be unwilling to leave this world and body at any given moment when the Lord shall call for us: but when he shall say, Come up hither; we may well reply, Amen. Come Lord Jesus, come and receive us to thy heavenly glory. Let me, O my soul! take all this subject into close and deep meditation, and may the Lord bless the same unto thee ! Amen.

I must for once be in dying circumstances; I must for once feel the real death of the body; my heart strings must break my eyes must fail; my pulse cease; I must, in my body, undergo a dissolution of it; my breath must cease, and go out of it, so as for me to be forced thereby into a world I have never seen yet. I shall be wholly passive in death; so I shall be in my entrance into the unseen state. All thou needest is, to apprehend how safe thou art in the hands of Jesus Christ, and to be perfectly persuaded that he is all sufficient for thee, and all thy concerns then as truly as he is now, and to give thyself no concern about what shall then take place in thee, and the change of state into which thou wilt be removed. It will, O my soul! be real blessedness to have thine understanding well informed into the apprehension of those divine realities which the scriptures set before thee, as suitable supports for thy mind now; for if thou shouldest be supported ever so blessedly in the article of death and dying, yet thou canst not be kept up by the change which will pass on thy mind of glory and immortality; whereby, as I may say, thou wilt be immortalized, because this will not, it cannot take place, but either as thou art just in the moment of departing, or art actually departed out of thy body. Thou mayest rejoice in the views of it, but thou canst not rejoice that so it is with thee before it hath taken place. I want, O my soul! that thou shouldest clearly apprehend that thou wilt not know when this change passes on thee; when it has passed thou wilt perceive it; but though thou art the subject on whom this will take place, yet thou wilt not feel anything when it does. Thou wilt by it be swallowed up of life, and be changed from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. If it be given thee to receive right conceptions of this subject, it will save thee from false expectations in thy dying moments, and much enthusiasm. Thou wilt not look for any more from the Lord than he is pleased to promise. O my soul! Jesus says, I the Lord will hold thy right-hand, saying, Fear not, I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm, {Isaiah 41: 13, 14}. Is not this enough? Mayest thou not find enough in this, to keep up thy faith and hope in him, when thou art actually dying? Most assuredly. Then, O my soul! Rest here. Seek nothing beyond

this. Trust in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. I will, the Lord being my helper; I will express my mind before the Lord, in the following manner:

O Lord Jesus Christ, I must shortly leave my soul, when it is disengaged from its body by death, to thee. I cannot express myself then, if permitted so to do, but by saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. It maybe I may not be in a capacity of saying, or even thinking so in my dying moments. I would not be concerned about the fore views of this. No. I shall be then wholly passive, for thy Majesty to do in me, and for me, as seemeth good in thy sight. I would rejoice in the views thou hast given me of this. I would pray thee to improve my mind in the true knowledge of the same; that I may now live. and then die, in a right understanding of this most important verity; that those whom the Father 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. I am to be conformed in soul and body to thee, who art my grace and glory head. I have received a life from thee which death cannot touch. I am to die in thee; I am in my dying moment to be thy special care and charge. My death, and passage by it out of this world, is to be a part of my conformity to thee. I can do nothing; I can act nothing in my death. Thou hast saved me in thyself with an everlasting salvation, without any act of mine. Thou wilt be with me in my dying moments, whether I perceive it or not, and wilt take me to thy presence chamber in glory, and fill my soul with eternal glory, without any act of mine. O that it might please thee, to give me such clear apprehensions of the same as may give me perfect satisfaction; so that living, and if it please thee, when dying, the knowledge of this may be my great consolation, and the praise thereof shall be thine forever! Amen.

CHAPTER IV. Of what may be conceived concerning the Invisible State; with suitable supports for the Mind, derived from the Gospel, all sustaining and refreshing to Believers.

THE state we enter upon at death is invisible: we see nothing of it; we can form no ideas of it but from the word of inspiration. In this present embodied state, we receive all our ideas through the medium of our nerves and bodily senses. We are beset with surrounding objects suited to our present senses. How it will be with us when unclothed of our material part, we cannot say; and I conceive this makes the thoughts of death so distressing to the minds of some of the faithful in Christ Jesus. Some of them say, We are not afraid so much of death, as what may befall us in the article of death; that is, of the pain and agony which may attend dissolution. What this may be, and whether we may feel and experience it or not, need give us no concern, for the Lord will be with us. He says, I will never, never, never leave thee; I will never, never forsake thee; which ought to be enough for us. The pains of death can be but bodily: they must be short they will soon be over; for death, when it comes, will, soon do its office, which having done, it will never more return. In some instances it performs its work so gently, that the person seems to have felt little of it: the soul being fled, and the body dropt, almost in a moment. Some say, what they fear is, what they conceive must be felt at the separation of soul and body. Why, if death be but sleep, as the scriptures both of the Old and New Testament call it, then it is very evident nothing is felt at the instant when the soul departs from the body. This, I think, may receive some confirmation from what frequently occurs. The dying person is talking one moment, and unexpectedly, to those who are present, gone ere they were aware.

I do conceive, whether it be confessed or not, that we are more afraid of death, because we are to be unclothed by it, and enter into an unseen state, than we apprehend. We commonly say, None who are gone before us, ever returned to inform others what they felt, when death did its office on them, what they saw, when they were out of their bodies; and that we may well therefore shrink at the thought. Is it true, we have had saints who were actually dead in their bodies, and their souls, in the invisible state, restored to their bodies, and

conversed in them with their former friends in this our world: As the son of the widow woman of Zerephath, who was restored from death to life by Elijah; and the son of the Shunamite, who was raised to life at the prayer of Elisha; the widow's son of Nain; the daughter of Jairus, and Lazarus; all of whom had died, and their souls had been in the invisible state, yet Christ brought them out of it; so that they lived in their bodies as before, and conversed with their friends. They, however, made no communication of what they saw and conversed with in the invisible state. We must say they could not; we can say they did not. Many of the saints, whose bodies had slept the sleep of death, came out of their graves after Christ's resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many, {Matthew 27: 53}. Yet we do not find it recorded that they gave any account of the state which separates between saints on earth and saints in heaven: and were they asked, why? Wherefore did they not? The answer would be, it was impossible they should. Paul says, He was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it was not possible for a man to utter {2nd Corinthians. 12: 4}. He could not imprint them upon any man's understanding. We are in this present world confined wholly to the medium of our senses, acted on by the objects surrounding us and by what we hear from others, for all our present knowledge of the present world and of ourselves. Yet there are subjects and things we converse with which are invisible; so our souls are invisible; we see them not; what our intellectual minds, thoughts, words, and spirits are, never came under our view. The air which we breathe, and without which we cannot live one single moment, is invisible to us; so is light: we see all objects by it, yet we see it not. So fire: we see its flame; we perceive how it wastes and consumes what is cast into it; yet we see not the fire, which thus operates and produces such and such effects. What we call fire is melted air; we see this, but we see not the agent which produces this; yet we are not concerned, because we see not the agents in nature. It does not distress us, because we know not all things in the world. We shall all of us die as unacquainted with some

things in our present world, as though we had never been on it, or lived in it.

It is from the word of inspiration that we receive into our renewed minds ideas of spiritual and eternal things, in that the invisible state is set before us, so far as it concerns us in our present and embodied state to know. What is apprehended of the same in the minds of saints, through the light of the word and spirit, led the apostle and others to long to be clothed with immortality and eternal glory. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for, that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given to us the earnest of the spirit, {2nd Corinthians. 5: 4, 5}.

When I was of the age of twenty-two, being impressed with fears concerning an invisible state, I said to my parent, "Mother, I wish there was any other way of going to God than by death; I am afraid of what we shall see and converse with after we are out of the body." She replied, "I wonder you are so fearful; I should not be afraid to be in hell, if Christ were with me."

I conceived for many years that it was Paul's desire, if it might have been granted, to be changed in his body, as the saints will at the last day, and have been thus excused dying. I now, from the scriptures of truth, clearly perceive there are but two men in the invisible state who passed into it without death, all beside died, and were buried in their bodies in the grave. Even our Lord Jesus Christ died, and was buried. The saints, who rose to grace the triumphs of his resurrection, died in their bodies, and had been buried in them; yet now they shine in their glorified bodies, as Enoch, Elijah, and Moses also do; therefore I do not long to be excused dying; as it is the one consecrated passage for all the family and household of faith, (Enoch and Elijah only excepted) with those of the Lord's family also, who shall remain in their bodies until the coming of the Lord.

Whilst the stake we are to enter upon at death is at present invisible, yet we shall be as suited to it as if we had been born in it. This will be as truly the case as we are born for it. In this state we shall have to converse with God, the Father of lights, who is invisible; with Christ, in whom, as in a mirror, all the glory of God's Being, Persons, and Perfections, will be reflected and shine forth: with elect angels in their glorious forms; with elect saints in their disembodied forms; with Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and the risen saints, whom Christ raised up when he arose, the first fruits of all that sleep in him. Now all these are at present invisible unto us, yet they are not wholly unknown to us. We know God, Father, Son, and Spirit in Christ. We, read. and by faith we apprehend, that Jehovah is King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, which no man hath seen or can see. To whom we cannot but ascribe honor and power everlasting. Amen.

Christ is invisible unto us, yet by faith we see him now, who is invisible, and have present communion with him. The elect angels, we do not now see them in their distinct and glorious forms, yet we do conceive of them as servants of the Lord Jesus, and as sent forth by him to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. As to the spirits of just men made perfect, some of them, we knew in the flesh; others of them, whom we knew not in our world, yet some of us have reaped much benefit by their writings left behind them; so that, in a sense, they are peculiarly dear unto us; and as it respects the state, it will most exactly suit us. We shall find everything in it quite suited to us, so that our minds, under these considerations, may be well reconciled respecting leaving this world, and entering the invisible state: because, whilst we acknowledge it to be invisible, we dare not call it an unknown state. The word of God gives us some real conceptions of it. Saints in all ages have longed to enter on it; Christ himself, as our forerunner, is gone before us, and has taken possession of it; and when we shall be called upon to enter it, he will take us by the hand and introduce us unto it.

Into this invisible state we enter once for all we shall never after be fit for any other. In it we shall have such conceptions and enjoyments as we cannot have in this; they will be suitable to it, and the objects and subjects of it. These will be in vast variety, all suited to the spiritual mind, to expand it, to enjoy, and be freely and fully exercised on, whilst it will be by the same spiritual faculty with which we apprehend God in all his persons and perfections, in the God-Man, Christ Jesus, as set before us in the everlasting gospel; yet, as the apostle says, now we see and apprehend all this, through a glass, darkly; but then we shall see all this so completely and clearly, that it will be like seeing face to face. He says, Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

It is a very suitable support to the mind, when about to enter the invisible state, that we shall not be surprised into company and subjects we were wholly unacquainted with. The element which saints breathe in now is grace; the element they will then breathe in will be glory. The state they are now in is grace; the state they will be then in will be glory; the ordinances they are now under are suited to their present state; the ordinances they will be under then, will suit the glory to which they will be advanced. Christ, the Lamb of God, in the glories of his Mediatorial person, love, work, offices, and honors, will shine forth, in open sight and view, before all his angels and redeemed, and will be the ordinance of glory. Saints will see him; the redeemed will worship him; not to the exclusion of the Father and the Spirit, but to the glory of the Father and the Spirit, who ordained him to be salvation to the whole election of grace, as constituted of Adam's posterity.

When we enter into the invisible state, we shall not be introduced into, and swallowed up in views and apprehensions of God, as he is in his Essence. This would be confounding and tremendous: it would overwhelm and entirely absorb our very existence. No; this will not, this cannot be. We shall be admitted to a sight, and into the immediate presence of Christ. We shall be shone upon in him, with

all the manifestative love of the essential Three. We shall enjoy such immediate communion with the Three in Jehovah in the Man Christ Jesus, as will fill us with all the fullness of God; but we shall never be admitted further no, not when we see Christ in his own personal glory; we shall not even then be raised up to apprehend God in his own essential glory. This may yield some suitable support to our minds. It is Christ, the Man in God; or, if you like it better, it is Christ, God-Man, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead, into whose presence we shall be immediately introduced by death, and before whom we shall appear. We shall never see Father, Son, and Spirit, the Three in Jehovah, by any formal or distinct appearance, yet we shall have true and distinct apprehensions of them in their distinct persons; we shall love them, bless them, worship them, and have distinct communion with them in Christ, beyond all our present and uttermost conceptions of the subject. It is through the God-Man that all their love will flow into our souls; and it is in him everlasting praises will ascend, from all saints, to the Eternal Three, the one Incomprehensible Jehovah, who liveth for ever and ever, to whom be honor and glory everlasting. Amen.

The gospel opens the invisible state to us, so far as it can be opened to our faith; for, when opened to us, we can only apprehend the same by faith. It is said of Moses, By faith when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. {Hebrews. 11: 24, 25, 26, 27}.

It may be observed, we shall leave nothing in entering the invisible state, but, for a season, we shall be better without. Our bodies would for a season be of no use to us, therefore it is best they should be put off, and put in their graves. Christ will raise them up at the last day.

Our friends cannot any longer be of use to us; we are going to have new ones, some of whom we never knew in the body, and it will be a blessing for us and them to meet together in the temple above, and go no more out. Our leaving the church on earth need not to be lamented, because it is only that we may enjoy the society and worship of the church in heaven, where everlasting union and harmony prevails. We at death put off all, and leave all, that we may enjoy all; where we have all friends and no enemies; where we shall be most cordially embraced, most highly esteemed. We shall be welcomed by all, and not have any enemy. There we shall appear like ourselves; there we shall walk with Christ in white raiment; he will there shine upon us; he will open his whole heart unto us; he will there be the tree of life, the bread of life, the crown of life, the fountain of life, the water of life ; he will be all in all unto us, so that we shall need nothing beyond Christ. When we enter into what hath been delivered, it appears that the invisible state is a most truly desirable one. The gospel opens this state unto us; it actually sets it before us ; our Jesus is in it; he is the head of it; he is the glory of it; he receives and will admit all his members into it; nothing keeps out of it any of the heirs of glory but their old crazy lives. As soon as these drop, they enter without delay. The apostle says, If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Romans. 8: 17; 1st Corinthians. 3: 21, 22, 23}. All these things are, most assuredly, very sustaining and refreshing to the minds of spiritual believers. Let me now make use of all this for my own profit and use.

O my soul! Thou art shortly to enter the invisible state. Art thou in any measure so acquainted with it, as not to be at a loss whither thou art going, when thy present body falls by death? I most assuredly feel that it is tottering. I am not sorry for it, but yet I would have a due and proper consideration of whither I am going. Thou knowest nothing of it but by revelation and anticipation. And what thinkest

thou, O my soul! Is it suited to thee? Canst thou be happy to be, where the place and state are heavenly? Where the inhabitants are all taken with pleasures wholly intellectual and spiritual? Will it be acceptable to thee to be wholly swallowed up in. eternal and intellectual delights? Thou wilt in the separate state be destitute of the medium whereby thou apprehendest subjects and things now. The intellect will be unclothed: it will be in a state it never yet was. Thou wilt see and converse with beings and things which are wholly unknown to thy present senses. What thinkest thou of this? Hast thou surveyed what hath been declared concerning the invisible state, with the supports and consolations held forth in the everlasting gospel? If thou hast, thou wilt most assuredly grant there is a sufficiency contained in the same, to carry thee beyond all care and fears concerning that invisible state which thou wilt most assuredly enter on, Let me, therefore, put the substance of my views and thoughts concerning it into prayer, and express myself on the subject thus:

O Lord Jesus Christ, thou hast given me solemn warning that I must, very shortly, quit this my tabernacle, and put off this body by death! I say Amen to it. O Lord, I am to enter in my soul alone into the invisible world and state: I pray I may without the least reluctance. Thou wentest out of the world as I must. Blessed be thy name, thou hast consecrated the passage. O let me follow thee cheerfully, singing thy high praises, because thou hast conquered death. Save me, O Lord, from every uneasy thought! Let me expect to be fully prepared for the invisible state, and for those objects and subjects I am then to see and converse with, by that change of immortality and glory which will pass on my mind, immediately on my being disembodied. O thou blessed Christ, as every day, hour, and moment, fly fast to bring me unto, and to bring on my last change, grant, for thy great name's sake, I may be receiving from thee fresh intuitive views of the blessed state which awaits me. All I expect is but a change from grace to glory: the one is the preparation for the other. The former was an instantaneous change it was wrought in a

moment, so will be the latter. Blessed be thy name, I have some ideas of it, although faint. Lord, increase the same in my mind! Realize them more and more. Let me live in the clear apprehensions of the same; and O that when death comes, I may fall so sweetly composed into thine arms, that I may sleep in thee without the least reluctance. Amen.