

it lodged in Everlasting Arms, and Solacing it self in the full possession of endless and inexpressible Glories. It remains that we look after the Body which it hath left behind, and see how it fares with that mean while : or what Benefit it remains owner of, which may bring it under the comprehension of Happiness, at least in reversion. That the Bodies of Believers in their separate State, are not actually happy, in the strict notion of Felicity, much less perfectly so, as the Soul is, is beyond Dispute. Happiness can be predicated of none but intellectual and rational beings. Things merely sensitive, much more senseless and lifeless things cannot bear that denomination. Actual Happiness consists in a complete and rational Satisfaction taken in the fruition of the Object ; and that cannot be done by the dead Body, which hath neither life, sense, nor reason abiding in it. The wise man tells us, Eccl. 9. 5. *For the living know that they shall die : but the dead know not any thing.* If we consider a bodily Death in the proper or physical nature and notion of it, it is certain, that the Bodies of Believers do undergo the same Changes by Death, with the Bodies of other Men. As there is no difference in the Death it self, in all there is a separation of the Soul, by which the Body is left a lifeless and senseless Carcass, and every way unfit for the functions which it was made for ; so there is nothing that can befall the Bodies of the Wicked, which those of the Godly are not liable to, both that which is natural, and that which is violent. It is a Subject of putrefaction, and ready to be fed on by the Worms, Job 17. 13, 14. *If I wait, the grave is mine house : I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father : to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.* It becomes noisom and noxious to the living. *Sarah* was a precious Saint, yet when dead, *Abraham* must bury her out of his sight, Gen. 23. 4. Its beauty is lost, and it becomes ghastly and frightful. And it may have all the indignities offered to it, which the rage & malice of men can vent. A decent Burial may be denied it, it may be dug out of the Grave, hung up on a Gibbet, and Indignously exposed to all manner of Contempt, Rev. 11. 8, 9. *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom & Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds, and tongues, & nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, & shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves.* Which may be literally as well as an aphorically understood. And what indignities have been offered to the dead Bodies of Christ's Martyrs, Ecclesiastical History furnisheth us with plentiful instances of. So that there is no Judgment to be made by men in this regard ; nor do the Bodies of the Saints bear any Character upon them, by which men may distinguish them from the Bodies of other men. This notwithstanding, there is an Happiness



SERMON CXLII.

WE have followed the Departing Soul of the Believer, from its Earthly Tabernacle to its Heavenly Habitation, and left

pinets in reserve for these very Bodies, and they also are reserved for that, and shall in due season be brought to enjoy it in conjunction with their re-united Souls. This State of the Saints Bodies at present may in a more large sense be called their Happiness, in as much as it is a safe reserve of them for it, and makes a vast difference between the Bodies of the Godly and the Wicked, though it be secret and not discerned by sensible Observation.

THIS then is that Benefit which now cometh under our Deliberation. The Sum of it is, the Body is kept safe for Glory, and shall not miss of it in due time: And this is for the present a Complement of the Happiness of the Soul it self now in Heaven; viz. the satisfying assurance that it hath of this. *David* hath such a consideration on this Subject, *Psal.* 16. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.* Which hope cannot properly be ascribed to the dead Body, for it cannot exercise any faculty or power of a rational being: but it is the Soul which hath this hope, and it rejoiceth in it. God's Children are solicitous for their Bodies, being essential parts of themselves; nor can the Soul enjoy a compleat humanity without its Body. The thoughtfulness about it now is anxious & perplexing; but there it will be with quietness and satisfaction. It knows that it shall have it restored to it with all desirable Advantages, and can contentedly tarry God's time for the Accomplishment of it. But there are more particular two things, by which this Benefit is set forth in our Catechism, viz. 1. *That the Union between Christ and their Bodies doth abide.* 2. *That the Body shall rest in the Grave till the Resurrection.* And we may take a short Survey of these two, and see how great a Privilege Believers have in regard of their Dead Bodies above other Men,

1. *THE Union between Christ & their Bodies doth abide.* I shall not here meddle with nice and curious Enquiries about this Union, which have no footing in the Word of God, and no way serve to Edification, but be content to Discourse of it Soberly and Scripturally. Here then observe,

(1.) *THAT there is a near Union made between Christ and all Believers.* This is made in Conversion, and the ratification of the New-Covenant between them. That there is such an Union, and what is the Nature of it, we have already taken an account, under the Head of *Effectual Calling*. And we are here to call to mind, that *this Union is not Carnal, but Spiritual and Mystical.* It is *Relative*, or consists in the Relation that is made between Christ and his People, and accordingly resembled by a *Marriage Union*, *Hos.* 2. 19. And yet it is such an Union as derives influences from Christ to those that partake in it. Hence compared to *Head and Members*, *1 Cor.* 12. 12. And so close is it, that they are said mutually to have their Inbeing, one in another. He is said *to be in them*, *Rom.* 8. 10. And they

to abide in him, and he in them, *Joh.* 15. 5. And this flows from the Covenant that is between them.

(2.) *THAT this Union, comprehends not the Souls only, but also the Bodies of the Children of God.* And this is evident from the Word of God. Not only are we said *personally to be one with Christ*; and yet the Person contains both the essential parts of Man, viz. Soul and Body: tho' that might admit of a Synecdochical Interpretation, intending the Person by the Soul: but the Body it self is expressly declared to participate in in. Their Bodies are thereupon said to be *Members of Christ*, *1 Cor.* 6. 15. Christ Mystical is compared to a *Natural Body, consisting of Head & Members.* Now the Members of the Body, being parts of it, are united to it, firmly knit, and cannot be separated from it without mutilation. The relation which is made between Christ and his Redeemed upon their Believing in him, grasps in it their Bodies. And therefore both Soul and Body are said to be Christ's, *1 Cor.* 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

(3.) *THE Death of the Body doth not break this Union, or make a Separation between Christ and it.* Death indeed separates Soul and Body, and they are divided each from the other, and can be no longer serviceable one to another; but it separates neither of them from Christ. *This was a Natural Union*, and it is broke asunder by the dissolution of the frame of Nature in the Man; but *this is a Spiritual Union*, and it remains indissoluble for ever. Death it self is one of those things of which it is said, that they *shall not be able to separate us from the Love of God in Christ*, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. When the Soul goes one way, and the Body another, Christ still abides firmly knit to them both. For this reason Dying Believers are said *to sleep in Jesus*, *1 Thes.* 4. 14. And it is the Body that only can properly be said to sleep; that the Soul doth not, we have already observed. Jesus Christ looks upon that dead Body, that Dust, to be still a part of himself, under a mystical consideration; it is therefore precious Dust in his esteem. There is a piece of Christ that goeth into the Grave, every time that the Body of a Saint is carried thither, and he goes along with it into that shady Vale.

(4.) *IT is a wonderful Privilege that belongs to the Bodies of Believers, that this Union of theirs to Christ abides after Death.* The Body indeed cannot at present resent it, but yet it is really and admirably privileged by virtue of it. The difference which this puts between the dead Body of a Saint, and that of a Sinner is astonishing, however, to an eye of sense they may seem to be alike. Christ hath an endeared Love to that Body, he delights in those Relicks, and accordingly, it is his great Care, and therefore he will do well for and by it. But this Privilege may be more distinctly illustrated in the next particular. Hence,

2. *THE Body of the believer shall Rest in the Grave till the Resurrection.* The expression here used of *Resting* in the Grave, is to be taken in a large, and not a limited sense. If we speak of the Grave properly, for a Repository provided to lay by the Body in, by an answerable Burial of it; this is a Priviledge which belongs to Civility, and is afforded to Good and Bad. And yet the holy ones of God, have not always this respect shown them: Sometimes casually in the Providence of God they are drowned in the Sea, or torn with wild Beasts, and have no Funeral given them: Sometimes the cruelty and spite of their Adversaries will not admit of it. We read, in Psal. 79. 2, 3. *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they sted like water round about Jerusalem: and there was none to bury them.* By the Grave therefore we are here to understand the State of Death, or the Duration of the Separation of the Soul from the Body, in which the Carcass can take no care of, nor look after it self. And by *Resting* we are not to understand merely a *Sleep, a cessation from Motion, or a continuance of the Body in that posture it died in, and in that Place where it was Buried.* For the Body passeth a further Dissolution, than a meet Separation from the Soul; it is resolved into its Principles, it turns into dust, Eccl. 12.7. And that very Dust is many times thrown out of its Grave, scattered in the Air, and mixed with common Dust: But there is something more peculiar, and beneficial intended in it; and it consists, in that singular Preservation and Safety that Jesus Christ will afford to it, by virtue wherof it shall be forth coming in the appointed time. But we may take a more particular Account of what is contained in this Assertion, in the following Conclusions,

1. *THAT there is a Glorious Resurrection, which the dead Bodies of the Saints are appointed to.* The Doctrine of the Resurrection, will come to be treated of under the next Question. Only it is here mentioned as that, which is the ground of all that Care which Christ now takes of the dead Body. For if it were never to arise, this would be superfluous. This therefore the Saints of old had a prospect and belief of: and with this they comforted themselves under the sorrows of Life, and apprehensions of Death. So did Job, Chap. 19. 26, 27. *And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not anothers: though my reins be consumed within me.* So did David, Psal. 49. 15. So did the Prophet, Isai. 26. 19. And the Apostle hath that remark, 1 Cor. 15. 19. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* And he tells us, that all the Children of God groan for it, Rom. 8. 23.

2. *THAT there is a Time appointed, when this Resurrection shall be.* It is not a thing uncertain to God, tho' it be so to us. The Resur-

rection is to be the Preparatory to the last Judgment, and is to introduce it; for *Men are to rise to it*, Joh. 5. 28, 29. And we are told, that *God hath appointed the very Day for that*, Acts 17. 31. There are a great many things to be done in order to it, for each of which God hath allotted the Season, & when they are brought to pass, then he will finish all with that.

3. *THAT the Body must abide in the state of Death till then.* It must tarry till the Great Day, when all shall be raised, and that is, after the Affairs of this present World are accomplished. *The dead in Christ are to rise first*, but it is to be, when Christ shall descend, &c. 1 The. 4. 16. Mean while, they are to rest in the Grave, as in a Bed, Mat. 27. 52. When the Apostle in Vision had a prospect of the Souls under the Altar, crying to God for Vengeance, they had that Answer given them, Rev. 6. 11. *They shall rest for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* Christ will do this at once, & there are a great many yet to be born both naturally and Spiritually; they must therefore wait.

4. *WHEN that Time comes, the same Body must be raised.* I list not to dispute, in what respects it is the same. This is certain, that it shall not be another, but that which died. Job is confident of this, Job. 19. 27. Nor will all the Cavils of men against the rational possibility of this, undermine God's Omnipotency, or dispute the veracity of his Word. The Apostle tells us, that the same Body that was sown, shall be raised, 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43. Nor indeed, could it bear the Title of a Resurrection, if it were not the same; but would be more properly a New Creation, if another Body were bestowed on the Soul, than that which it once dwelt in.

5. *THERE are certain Priviledges, which the Body enjoys in the mean while; by virtue of its Union unto Christ.* Several of them indeed, are materially no other than what befalls the Bodies of the wicked; but yet, because they derive from Christ, and are of their Communion with him, consequent on their being United to him; they are not real Priviledges to those, tho' they are so to these. viz.

(1.) *THE Body rests from all the Labours of this Life.* This is enumerated to their blessedness, Rev. 14. 13.—*They rest from their Labours*—By which is intended, not only a ceasing of the toil, and travail, of the Employments of this Life, but the putting an end to all the bodily Troubles of this World, which the Soul felt only by concomitancy. This indeed belongs to the state of Humanity, and the ungodly Sinner hath this Rest as well as the Saint. The Grave is thus a Place of Quiet to all sorts, Job 3. 17, 18, 19. But, it is a poor Rest, which is only a dark Interval, and a Prologue to more dismal Troubles, and so it is with the Ungodly; whereas it hath this accompanying it, relating to the Children of God, that now they put off all Troubles, never to take them

up again. The Wicked's Trouble ends, to begin against at the last Day, but the Godly's ends for ever: *All Tears are wiped away*, Rev. 21. 4.

(2.) *It is no longer an Instrument of Concupiscence in the committing of Sin.* It was indeed an Instrument of the New Nature to perform its holy Actions, and so a Servant of Righteousness. However, the bodily Senses and Members were unhappily employed too often, by the Law in the Members, in fulfilling the Lusts of it, and by this means the man was brought into Captivity, which made him cry out, us, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* This shall now be no more, nor will an heavy indisposed Body hinder him, or be longer thus miserably mis employed, Rom. 6. 7.

(3.) *It shall be put out of the reach of any Harm, by any thing in this World.* As the Body is now made insensible of any injuries or affronts that are offered to it, so there can no hurt be done to it by them. Wicked Men may shew their spite, and make it appear what they would be at, if it were within their power; but it is out of the reach of real injury; though they should mangle it into Atoms, hang its Quarters on Gibbers, expose it to all imaginable Scorn: as it feels none of this, so neither will it render it ever the more displeasing to God, nor hinder it of a Glorious Resurrection. It is all this while asleep in Jesus. 1 The. 4. 14.

4. *The Curse shall be no Curse in its Death.* It is a Privilege of the New Jerusalem, whereof every true Believer is a Member, Rev. 22. 3. — *There shall be no more Curse.* It was one part of the Curse that fell upon Man for Sin, that he should dye a Bodily Death, which else had never befallen him. But tho' the Thing abides, yet the Curse is taken out of it. Christ having born the Curse, by being made one, Gal. 3. 13. their Death is become a Blessing, and they are blessed in it, Rev. 14. 13. And this very Death of theirs is a precious thing in the sight of God, Psal. 116. 15.

5. *This Dust shall be look'd after, and none of it lost, but be all forth coming in the last Day.* This is a great Mystery, and the fleshy mind entertains grievous Cavillings against it. But there is no doubt to be made of the possibility of it, by one that hath right conceptions of the All-knowledge and Infinite Power of God. If this Affair were left to the management of Angels, it would fail; their Alchemy would never attain to separate the remains of the Children of God from the other Elementary Parts with which it is mingled, or recollect it from the four Winds into which it is scattered. But God, who hath promised it is Almighty, and therefore can; Faithful, and therefore will perform it for them. When God ask'd the Prophet that Question, we have his reply, Ezek. 37. 3. *And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.* And if God had not known how to accomplish it, he would

never have given the Security of a Promise for it. True, the Dust of the Wicked, is kept by the powerful Providence of God for a Resurrection, but that is to Contempt: But the Care he hath of that of his People, is his peculiar respect he hath for them. And therefore it is a proper fruit of their being and continuing united to him. And there are divers reasons why, *this Union abiding, Christ should do this for the Bodies of Saints, for the confirming of our Faith in the belief of it, viz.*

(1.) BECAUSE God the Father hath chosen this Body, and given the Charge of it to Christ. Christ cannot but be careful of, and faithful to the Trust reposed on him, in the Everlasting Covenant. He therefore saith, that he must give Eternal Life to all that his Father hath given him, Joh. 17. 2. And God hath given all his Chosen to him for this end. And he hath not only bestowed their Souls on him, but their whole man. Whenever mention is made of this, they are nam'd personally.

(2.) BECAUSE He himself loveth it. Not only his Faithfulness to his Trust, but his Love to this Body engagerh him. The Lord Jesus Christ took a compleat Humane Nature upon him, and a Body as well as a Soul, Heb. 10. 5. And that was, that he might be like his Brethren in all things excepting Sin. As therefore he took care of his own Body, and we have him comforting himself about the safety and redelivery of it, Psal. 16. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption.* So he will proportionably do for the Bodies of his, because his Love to them made him to assume a Body like theirs.

(3.) BECAUSE He hath Redeemed it. Certainly Christ cannot forget or neglect that which he laid down his Life for the Purchase of. The Redemption made by Christ, cost him too much for him to lose any thing of it for want of looking after. It cost him his Blood, and he would not shed any of that in vain. Now this Redemption was for the whole Man. The whole was forfeited by Man's Apostacy; and that which was lost is purchased. This is the Argument for our Glorifying God with our Body, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. If Christ hath bought the Body from Wrath, he will keep it for the purchased Good, and at last ransom it from the Grave.

(4.) BECAUSE it is the Souls own Body. The Soul at present enjoys all that Happiness that it is capable of in a separate Estate, but it is not it self perfect as to Humanity, but wants a Body to compleat it, which therefore it must have restored to it, else it will not have the entire specifical Nature. And it had one once, and was so related to it, that it longs for that, and shall be fully satisfied in the Fruition of it, Job 19. 26.

(5.) BECAUSE this Body was an Instrument of the Service of God in this Life. It was Temple of the Holy Ghost, in which he had his abode, 1 Cor. 6. 19. And he managed it for the Glory of God. This Tongue praised him,

these

these Hands wrought for Christ, these Feet carried him to the Service of the Kingdom. Yea, all his Powers were consecrated for this design. This Service God accepted, and Christ took delight in, and it shall have its Reward. And shall therefore be kept to it.

U s e. *LET the Children of God improve the Consideration of these things, to fortify their Minds against the frights of Death.* Nature starts and relucts at the Thoughts of it. Let then Grace be exercised to compose your Spirits against the Distractions of such a reluctance. You love your Bodies, and it may be are too fond of the present Life of them. But you cannot secure against a Dissolution, nor do you know how soon it shall be. Your times are in God's Hand. Take care then to secure your Inbeing in Christ, and that happy Union which is the Foundation of your Felicity: And then improve the Thoughts of it, to make the Death of your Body very comfortable, whensoever it comes. That when your Dissolution approacheth, and the Thread

of Life is ready to be snapt asunder; you may not only be able to commend your Spirit to Christ, and believe that he will receive it, but may also be able to commit your Body to the Grave, as a Bed sanctified by Christ for your comfortable Rest; knowing that if he will watch over it, and look after it, through all that Night, and keep it safe till the Morning of the Resurrection, and that no Changes that shall pass over it shall frustrate your Expectation of that happy Resurrection; count your Death to be no other but a Rest, a sweet Sleep, secured from all Storms and Tempests. And when you close your Eyes, comfort your selves with this Thought, that you shall awake again, and when that is, that you shall be satisfied with his Image, Psal. 17. ult. Think then, in the instant of your Departure, that you hear your Redeemer saying to you, as once he bespake good Jacob, Gen. 46. 3, 4. *Fear not to go down to Egypt.*

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S E R M O N CXLII.