



True Saints, when absent from the
Body, are present with the LORD.

A
SERMON

on the Day of the *Funeral* of the

are **Mr. DAVID BRAINERD,**

Ministry to the *Indians*, from the Honourable Society
in *Massachusetts* for the Propagation of Christian Know-
ledge and Pastor of a Church of Christian *Indians* in
New Jersey; Who died at *Northampton* in *New Eng-*
land *Nov. 9th. 1747*, in the 30th Year of his Age,
and was interred on the 12th following.

CONTAINING
an account of his Character, and Manner of Life,
and his remarkable Speeches and Behaviour at Death.

Jonathan Edwards, A.M.

Pastor of the first Church in *Northampton*.

Psalm. ciii. 11, 12, 13. My Days are like a Shadow that de-
clineth, and I am withered like Grass: But thou, O
LORD, shalt endure forever, and thy Remembrance unto
all Generations: Thou shalt arise, and have Mercy upon
Zion.

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Absent from the Body,

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II COR. V. 8.

are confident, I say, and willing
to be absent from the Body, and
to be present with the LORD.

The Apostle in this Place is giving a Reason why he went on with so much Boldness and immovable Stedfastness, through such Labours, Sufferings and Dangers of his Life, in the Service of his LORD; for which his Enemies, the false Teachers among the *Corinthians*, sometimes reproach'd him, as being beside himself, and driven on by a Kind of Madness. In the latter Part of the preceeding Chapter, the Apostle informs the *Corinthians*, that the Reason why he did thus, was, that he firmly believed the Promises that CHRIST had made his faithful Servants of a glorious future eternal Reward, and knew that these present Afflictions were light, and but for a Moment, in Comparison of that far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory. The same Discourse is continued in this Chapter; wherein the Apostle further insists on the Reason he had given of his Constancy in suffering, and exposing himself to Death in the Work of the Ministry, even the more happy State he expected after Death. And this is the Subject of my Text; wherein may be observed,

I. The

Absent from the Body,

1. The great future Privilege, which the Apostle hoped for that of being present with CHRIST. The Words in the Original properly signify dwelling with Christ, as in the same Country or City, or making an Home with CHRIST.
2. When the Apostle looked for this Privilege, viz. when he should be absent from the Body. Not to wait for it till the Resurrection, when Soul and Body should be united again. He signifies the same Thing in his Epistle to the Philippians Chap. i. 22, 23. *But if I live in the Flesh, this is the Fruit of my Labour. Yet what I shall chuse, I wot not. For I am in a Strait between two; having a Desire to depart, and to be with CHRIST.*
3. The Value the Apostle set on this Privilege. It was such that for the Sake of it, he chose to be absent from the Body. He was willing rather, or (as the Word properly signifies) were more pleasing to him, to part with the World, and its Enjoyments, and be possessed of this great Benefit to continue here.
4. The present Benefit, which the Apostle had by the and Hope of this future Privilege, and of his great Victory; viz. that hence he received Courage, Assurance and Firmness of Mind: agreeable to the proper Impart of that is render'd, *we are confident.* The Apostle's Reason of that Fortitude and immovable Steadfastness with which he went through those extreme Trials and Dangers, which he mentions in this Discourse, was not discovered in the midst of all, he did not faint, was not discouraged, but in constant Light, and inward Support, Strength and Comfort in the midst of all: agreeable to the 10 v. of the foregoing Chapter. *For which Cause, we faint not: But tho' our outward Man perishes yet the inward Man is renewed Day by Day.* And he same expressed more particularly in the 8, 9, and 10 Verses of Chap. *We are troubled on every Side, yet not distressed, Christ perplexed, but not in Despair; persecuted, but not forsaken, shaken down, but not destroyed: always bearing about in the Body the dying of the LORD JESUS, that the Life also of JESUS might be made manifest in our mortal Flesh.* And in the next Chap. v. 4. --- 10. *In all Things approving our selves as Ministers of GOD, in much Patience, in Afflictions, in Necessities, in Distresses, in Stripes, in Imprisonments, in Tumults, in Labours, in Watchings, in Fastings; by Pureness, by Knowledge, by Longsuffering, by Kindness, by the HOLY GHOST, by Love unfeigned, by the Word of Truth, by the Power of GOD, by the Armour of Righteousness*

and present with the LORD.

on the Right Hand and on the Left, by Honour and Dishonour ; by evil Report and good Report : as Deceivers, and yet true ; as unknown, and yet well known ; as dying, and behold we live ; as chasten'd, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and yet possessing all Things.

Among the many useful Observations there might be raised from the Text, I shall at this Time only insist on that which lies most plainly before us in the Words ; viz. This,

The Souls of true Saints, when they leave their Bodies at Death, go to be with CHRIST.

Departed Souls of Saints go to be with CHRIST, in the following Respects :

I. They go to dwell in the same blessed Abode with the glorified human Nature of CHRIST.

His human Nature of CHRIST is yet in Being. He still lives, and will continue to all Eternity, to be both GOD and Man. His whole human Nature remains : not only his human Soul, but also his human Body. His dead Body rose from the Dead ; and the same that was raised from the Dead, was seated and glorified at GOD's Right Hand ; That which was dead, is now alive, and lives for evermore. And therefore there is a certain Place, a particular Part of the external Creation, to which CHRIST is gone, and where he remains. And this Place is that which we call the highest Heaven, or the Heaven of Heavens : a Place beyond all the other Heavens. Eph. iv. 9, 10. Now that he ascended, what is that he also descended first, into the lower Parts of the Earth, &c. He that descended, is the same also that ascended up, and is seated on the right hand of all Heavens. This is the same which the Apostle calls The third Heaven, 2 Cor. xii. 2. reckoning the Aerial Heaven as the first, the starry Heaven as the second, and the highest Heaven as the third. This is the Abode of the holy Angels : they are called the Angels of Heaven, Matt. xxiv. 36. The Angels which are in Heaven, Mark xiii. 32. The Angels of GOD in Heaven, Matt. xxii. 30. and Mark xii. 25. They are said always to behold the Face of the Father which is in Heaven, Mat. xviii. 10. And they are elsewhere often represented as before the Throne of GOD, or surrounding his Throne in Heaven, and sent from thence, and descending from thence on Messages

to this World. And thither it is that the Souls of departed Saints are conducted, when they die. They are not reserved in some Abode distinct from the highest Heaven; a Place of Rest, which they are kept in, till the Day of Judgment; such as some imagine, which they call the *Hades of the happy*: but they go directly to Heaven itself. This is the Saints Home, being their Father's House: they are Pilgrims and Strangers on the Earth, and this is the other and better Country that they are travelling to: (Heb. xi. 13 ---- 16.) This is the City they belong to; Philip. iii. 20. *Our Conversation, or (as the Word properly signifies) Citizenship, is in Heaven.* Therefore this undoubtedly is the Place the Apostle has respect to in my Text, when he says, *We are willing to forsake our former House, the Body, and to dwell in the same House, City or Country, wherein CHRIST dwells;* (which is the proper Import of the Words of the Original.) What can this House or City or Country be, but that House, which is elsewhere spoken of, as their proper Home, and their Father's House, and the City and Country which they properly belong, and whither they are travelling the while they continue in this World, and the House and Country where we know the human Nature of CHRIST is? This is the Saints Rest; here their Hearts are while they live; and here their Treasure is: *The Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, that is designed for us is reserved in Heaven;* (1 Pet. i. 4.) and therefore they never can have their proper and full Rest till they come to it. So that undoubtedly their Souls, when absent from their Bodies, (when the Scriptures represent them as in a State of perfect Rest) arrive hither. Those two Saints, that leave this World, to go to their Rest in another World, without dying, viz. *Enoch and Elijah, went to Heaven. Elijah went up, ascending up to Heaven, as CHRIST was.* And to enquire what resting Place, is there all Reason to think, that those Saints go, that leave the World, to go to their Rest, by Death. *Moses, when he died in the Top of the Mount, ascended to the same glorious Abode with Elias, who ascended without dying.* They are Companions in another World; as they appeared together at CHRIST's Transfiguration. They were together, at that Time, with CHRIST, in the Mount, when there was a Specimen or Sample of his Glorification in Heaven. And doubtless they were also together afterwards, with him, when he was actually fully glorified in Heaven. And thither undoubtedly it was, that the Soul of *Stephen* ascended, when he expired. The Circumstances

Body,

and present with the LORD.

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cumstances of his Death demonstrate it, as we have an Account of it Acts vii. 55 &c. He being full of the HOLY GHOST, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of GOD, and JESUS standing on the Right Hand of GOD; and said, behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of Man [i. e. JESUS in his human Nature] standing on the Right Hand of GOD. Then they cried out with a loud Voice, and stopped their Ears, and ran upon him with one Accord, and cast him out of the City, and stoned him. ---- And they stoned Stephen, calling upon GOD, and saying, LORD JESUS receive my Spirit. Before his Death he had an extraordinary View of the Glory that his Saviour had received in Heaven, not only for himself, but for him, and all his faithful Followers; that he might be encouraged by the Hopes of this Glory, cheerfully to lay down his Life for his Sake. Accordingly he dies in the Hope of this; saying, LORD JESUS, receive my Spirit. By which doubtless he meant, "receive my Spirit to be with thee, in that Glory, wherein I have now seen thee, in Heaven, at the Right Hand of GOD." And thither it was that the Soul of the penitent Thief on the Cross ascended. CHRIST said to him, to Day, shall thou be with me in Paradise. Paradise is the same with the third Heaven; as appears by 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3, 4. There that which is called the third Heaven in the 2d Verse, in the 4th Verse is called Paradise. The departed Souls of the Apostles and Prophets are in Heaven; as is manifest from Rev. xviii. 20. Rejoyce over her, thou Heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets. The Church of GOD is distinguished in Scripture, from Time to Time, into these two Parts; that Part of it that is in Heaven, and that which is in Earth; Eph. iii. 14, 15. JESUS CHRIST, of whom the whole Family in Heaven and Earth is named. Col. i. 20. And having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all Things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be Things in Earth, or Things in Heaven. Now what Things in Heaven are they for whom Peace has been made by the Blood of CHRIST'S Cross, and who have by him been reconciled to GOD, but the Saints in Heaven? In like manner we read (Eph. i. 10. of GOD'S gathering together in one, all Things, in CHRIST; both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth; even in him. The Spirits of just Men made perfect are in the same City of the living GOD, and heavenly Jerusalem, with the innumerable Company of Angels, and JESUS the Mediator of the new Covenant; as is manifest by Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24. The Church of GOD is often in Scripture called by the Name of
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Jerusalem : and the Apostle speaks of *the Jerusalem which is above, or which is in Heaven, as the Mother of us all* : But if no Part of the Church be in Heaven, or none but *Enoch* and *Elias*, 'tis not likely that the Church would be called *the Jerusalem which is in Heaven*.

II. The Souls of true Saints, when they leave their Bodies at Death, go to be with CHRIST, as they go to dwell in the immediate, full and constant Sight or View of him.

When we are absent from our dear Friends, they are out of Sight ; but when we are with them, we have the Opportunity and Satisfaction of seeing them. So while the Saints are in the Body, and are absent from the Lord, he is in several Respects out of Sight ; 1 Pet. i. 8. *Whom having not seen, ye love : In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, &c.* They have indeed, in this World, a spiritual Sight of CHRIST ; but they see through a Glass darkly, and with great Interruption : But in Heaven, they see him Face to Face, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. *The Pure in Heart are blessed ; for they shall see GOD,* Matth. v. 8. Their beatifical Vision of GOD is in CHRIST, who is that Brightness or Effulgence of GOD's Glory, by which his Glory shines forth in Heaven, to the View of Saints and Angels there, as well as here on Earth. This is the Sun of Righteousness, that is not only the Light of this World, but is also the Sun that enlightens the heavenly *Jerusalem* ; by whose bright Beams it is that the Glory of GOD shines forth there, to the enlightning and making happy all the glorious Inhabitants. *The Lamb is the Light thereof* ; and so the *Glory of GOD doth lighten it* ; Rev. xxi. 23. None sees GOD the Father immediately, who is the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible : CHRIST is the *Image of that Invisible GOD*, by which he is seen by all Elect Creatures. *The only-begotten Son that is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, and manifested him. None has ever immediately seen the Father, but the Son* ; and none else sees the Father any other Way, than by *the Son's revealing him*. And in Heaven, the Spirits of just Men made perfect do see him as he is. They behold his Glory. They see the Glory of his divine Nature, consisting in all the Glory of the Godhead, the Beauty of all his Perfections ; his great Majesty, almighty Power, his infinite Wisdom, Holiness and Grace, and they see the Beauty of his glorified human Nature, and the Glory which the Father hath given him, as GOD-Man and Mediator. For this End CHRIST desired that his
Saints

Saints might be with him, that they might behold his Glory, Joh. xvii. 24. And when the Souls of the Saints leave their Bodies, to go to be with CHRIST, they behold the marvellous Glory of that great Work of his, the Work of Redemption, and of the glorious Way of Salvation by him; which the Angels desire to look into. They have a most clear View of the unfathomable Depths of the manifold Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD; and the most bright Displays of the infinite Purity and Holiness of GOD, that do appear in that Way and Work: And see in another-guess Manner, than the Saints do here, what is the Breadth and Length and Depth and Height of the Grace and Love of CHRIST, appearing in his Redemption. And as they see the unspeakable Riches and Glory of the Attribute of GOD's Grace, so they most clearly behold and understand CHRIST's eternal and unmeasurable dying Love to them in particular. And in short they see every Thing in CHRIST that tends to kindle and enflame Love, and every Thing that tends to gratify Love, and every Thing that tends to satisfy them: And that in the most clear and glorious Manner, without any Darkness or Delusion, without any Impediment or Interruption. Now the Saints, while in the Body, see something of CHRIST's Glory and Love; as we, in the Dawning of the Morning, see something of the reflected Light of the Sun mingled with Darkness: But when separated from the Body, they see their glorious and loving Redeemer, as we see the Sun when risen, and shewing his whole Disk above the Horizon, by his direct Beams, in a clear Hemisphere, and with perfect Day.

III. The Souls of true Saints, when absent from the Body, go to be with JESUS CHRIST, as they are brought into a most perfect Conformity to, and Union with him. Their spiritual Conformity is begun while they are in the Body; here beholding as in a Glass, the Glory of the LORD, they are changed into the same Image: But when they come to see him as he is, in Heaven, then they become like him, in another Manner. That perfect Sight will abolish all Remains of Deformity, Disagreement and sinful Unlikeness; as all Darkness is abolished before the full Blaze of the Sun's Meridian Light: It is impossible that the least Degree of Obscurity should remain before such Light; so it is impossible the least Degree of Sin and spiritual Deformity should remain, in such a View of the spiritual Beauty and Glory of CHRIST, as the Saints enjoy in Heaven,