

# Free Grace Broadcaster

ISSUE 274

## GLORIFICATION

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*And whom he justified,  
them he also glorified.*

Romans 8:30

### Our Purpose

*“To humble the pride of man,  
to exalt the grace of God in salvation,  
and to promote real holiness in heart and life.”*

# Free Grace Broadcaster

## GLORIFICATION

# 274

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# CONFORMED TO THE IMAGE OF HIS SON

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981)

*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

*Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

—Romans 8:30

**I**T is the essence or kernel or nerve of the argument in these verses, that God’s act of justification<sup>1</sup> is once and for all. It is not something that can be annulled and reestablished, and annulled and reestablished. That would be chaos. It is God’s act, and it is “once and for all.” The apostle has already worked it out in chapter 5, where he lays the foundation for the argument he develops here... It is the key to the whole epistle. It begins by telling us, “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 5:1). But the apostle continues, “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand”—that brings out the status, the standing, the position—“and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom 5:2). The apostle has really said it all there in chapter 5; here, he repeats it, puts it in a slightly different manner, and works it out for us.

Actually, in chapter 5, verses 12 to 21, he emphasized that because we are justified we are “in Christ,” and shows what that implies. We were in Adam; we are now in Christ. The moment you are justified, you are “in Christ.” This is an indissoluble<sup>2</sup> relationship. We are involved in the “reign of grace” with the consequence expressed in the next verse: “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (5:21). Nothing so robs us of the joy of salvation and assurance as the failure to realize the full content of “justification.” Justification is not

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<sup>1</sup> **justification** – Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins (Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7), and accepts us as righteous in His sight (2Co 5:21) only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (Rom 5:19), and received by faith alone (Gal 2:16; Phi 3:9). (*Spurgeon’s Catechism*, Q. 32) See Free Grace Broadcaster 187, *Justification*; both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

<sup>2</sup> **indissoluble** – permanent; perpetually binding.

only forgiveness; that is preliminary. If you are justified, you are “in Christ,” incorporated into Him, a part of Him. And that, as Paul points out, implies and involves our “adoption”<sup>3</sup> as children of God, sons of God, and all that follows from that, as we have already seen.

These things must be *differentiated* and *distinguished* in thought, but they must never be *separated* as facts. Of course, in order to get a clear conception in our minds, we have to differentiate between the terms, but it is being impressed upon us that the action, as far as God is concerned, is *one*: “Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate... whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Rom 8:29-30). We cannot rise to such heights; as creatures of time, we are slow, and we must take truth in separate portions. But while it is right to draw these distinctions intellectually, it is fatal to separate these things as facts concerning what God does to us. Above all, the apostle wants us to realize that all these blessings are not dependent upon us and upon what we may do. God does all, and His act does not vary with what we do. We are fallible, we fall into sin and are liable to error, we misunderstand circumstances and are ready to grumble and complain in our tribulations. That does not change the end, says Paul; in spite of you, God is bringing His great purpose to pass. You cannot see it now, but you will see it ultimately.

Have you not often looked back in your life and said, “I did not understand that event then, but I see it now, and I thank God for it”? You say with the psalmist, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted... [because] before I was afflicted I went astray” (Psa 119:71, 67). You did not see at the time what God was doing; afterwards, you came to understand it. It is the central glory of this salvation that, though we do not understand it, it is still a fact, and it continues. If this were not so, not a single soul would be saved. Thank God, we are not saved by our understanding. If we were, we would soon be lost again. We are saved despite our failure to understand; and that is why I said earlier that an understanding of this doctrine is not essential to salvation. It is God Who does all from beginning to end...

But we move on to consider the last step—“and whom he justified, them he also glorified”...It is inevitable, as a part of God’s purpose, that we should be “conformed to the image of his Son”; that implies glorification. And glorification means that we shall be like the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us not forget that it includes the body, as verse 23

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<sup>3</sup> See FGB 246, *Adoption*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

reminds us: “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” In other words, it means that we shall be delivered finally and completely from every conceivable effect and result of sin and evil. We are not glorified in this life. The body will not be glorified until the resurrection morning, as we have already seen more than once in this epistle; for instance, in verses 10 and 11 of this 8<sup>th</sup> chapter: “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” The quickening has not happened yet; but it will happen. Before man is completely redeemed and glorified, every part of him has to be, and must be, delivered. We are delivered already in the realm of the spirit and soul; but the body still needs to be redeemed, and it shall be! That is the ultimate glorification. We shall be entirely delivered, body, soul, and spirit.

We must emphasize the way in which the apostle states the truth. Those justified, he says, “He [God] also glorified.” “You have been saying,” says someone, “that we are not yet glorified, but Paul says, ‘He also glorified.’” He has done so already. This is a most important point. We have already drawn attention to the fact that in each of these statements, the apostle used the past tense. “Whom he did foreknow,” not “whom he does foreknow.” It happened before the foundation of the world. “He also did predestinate.” It has happened. “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: whom he called, them he also justified and whom he justified, them he also glorified” (Rom 8:30). It has all happened in the past; each time, Paul uses the aorist tense.<sup>4</sup> This is true of all the terms; the reference is to a series of completed acts of God, but it is particularly striking and interesting with respect to glorification. We know that as Christians we have already been called; we know that we have already been justified. We know that we would not be interested in these things and believe the gospel if we had not been called. But we know that we are not glorified; and yet the apostle says that God has glorified us, that it has happened in the past.

How is this to be explained? There is only one explanation. The apostle deliberately uses this aorist tense to give us this final, unshakable assurance. In the mind of God, it has already been done; it is as

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<sup>4</sup> **aorist tense** – Greek grammatical tense about something that happened in the past, but without saying how long it lasted or whether it was finished.

certain as our justification. There was a time when you and I were unbelievers, but even then we had been called in God's purpose. It actually happened to us in time—"separated [me] from my mother's womb" (Gal 1:15), but "called" on the road to Damascus (Act 9:3). The apostle's argument is that as we know most certainly that we have been called and justified, we can be equally certain of our glorification. Nothing can prevent it because it is a part of God's purpose for us.

Let me substantiate what I have said... Take Dr. James Denney,<sup>5</sup> for instance. "The tense," he says, "in the last word" (that is, *glorification*) "is amazing. It is the most daring anticipation of faith that even the New Testament contains." That is an excellent comment; but in a sense, there is nothing at all daring about it. The apostle had been given a revelation concerning this, so no daring was involved. But looking at it from the human standpoint, it is indeed a most daring asseveration<sup>6</sup> and affirmation; nothing goes beyond it in the whole range and realm of Scripture. Dr. Denney continues, "The life is not to be taken out of it by the philosophical consideration that with God there is neither before nor after." The philosopher who does not believe in revelation and who dislikes this doctrine says, "There is no difficulty here, as regards God, because God is outside time in eternity, and everything is the same to God. With Him there is no past, present or future." But Denney says, and very rightly, that the life must not be taken out of this aorist by the philosophical consideration that with God there is neither before nor after. You do not get rid of it in that way; the statement goes beyond that. In other words, the apostle's statement is that the glorification is already consummated, though still in the future in the fullest sense and as regards our experience. But in God's mind and purpose it is as complete as every other part of His action...

The conclusion we must draw, therefore, is that the act of glorification is irrevocable:<sup>7</sup> It is absolutely *certain*. Nothing can cause it to fail, for it is the action of God. God has glorified us, and if God has glorified us, how can we ever fall from grace and salvation? How can anything ever change our position? In other words, because we are in the purpose of God, our eternal future is certain and sure. This is the apostle's way of giving us complete certainty and assurance. He says that if we are certain of our calling, we can be certain of our ultimate glorification. If God has called us it means that He has justified us, and if He has justified us, it means that He has glorified us; because if we are in any one

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<sup>5</sup> **James Denney** (1856-1917) – Scottish theologian and expositor.

<sup>6</sup> **asseveration** – forcible, definite declaration.

<sup>7</sup> **irrevocable** – impossible to change.

of these positions, we are in them all. They are joined together indissolubly, irrevocably, as links in a chain forged by God Himself.

The one thing that matters, therefore, from our experimental<sup>8</sup> standpoint is to be sure that we are in the purpose of God. Do we know that we have been called?...Do you accept God's verdict on yourself that you are a sinner, vile, unworthy, and deserving of nothing but hell? Do you see that, if you lived to be a million years old and strove with all your might as a monk or a hermit to live a godly life, you would be as lost at the end as you are now, and that you have no hope whatsoever but that the Son of God has died for you and your sins, and that God clothes you with His righteousness and gives you new life? If you do so believe, you are "called." Only the "called" accept God's verdict. The natural man hates it and abominates it (see 1Co 2:14); he resents it, regards it as insulting, and pours his vituperation<sup>9</sup> upon it. If you believe and accept what the Bible tells you about yourself, and about the only way to be reconciled to God and to come to a knowledge of God, I assure you that you are "called." And if you are called, you are justified, and if you are justified, you are glorified. Your glorification is as certain as the fact that you are now a Christian. No matter what may happen to you, or what the world, the flesh, the devil, and all hell may do to you, nothing can ever make any difference to your position.

From *Romans: An Exposition of Chapter 8:17-39, The Perseverance of the Saints*; (Edinburgh; Carlisle: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 254-259;  
this book is available in print from [www.banneroftruth.org](http://www.banneroftruth.org).

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**David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981):** Welsh expository preacher and author; born in Cardiff, Wales, UK.



Glorification is the final phase of the application of redemption. It is that which brings to completion the process that begins in effectual calling. Indeed, it is the completion of the whole process of redemption. For glorification means the attainment of the goal to which the elect of God were predestinated in the eternal purpose of the Father, and it involves the consummation of the redemption secured and procured by the vicarious work of Christ.—*John Murray*

Glorification is the full possession of that indestructible, spiritual life that is the ultimate reward for those who fulfill all righteousness. It is our full conformity to Christ in His exalted and glorious state, both in soul and body, to be perfected at the resurrection.

—*Harrison Perkins*

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<sup>8</sup> **experimental** – having a personal experience; experiential.

<sup>9</sup> **vituperation** – bitter and abusive language.

# THE GLORIFICATION OF GOD

Petrus Van Mastricht (1630-1706)

**1** THE majesty and glory of God shape us for *humility*...

God's majesty and glory, just as in His essence, attributes, and operations, is beautifully represented in the Word.<sup>1</sup> When devoutly deliberated upon and compared with our worthlessness, it suppresses our pride,<sup>2</sup> produces reverence and fear of God,<sup>3</sup> and a denial of all our own honor and glory (Psa 115:1).

## 2. It draws us back from any profaning of the divine glory.

It restrains the madness of those who hold this infinite majesty of God as of no consequence in their heart;<sup>4</sup> blaspheme it with their mouth;<sup>5</sup> and disparage<sup>6</sup> it in their work: (a) by teaching such things that agree little with the glory of His independence, grace, righteousness, and omnipotence; (b) by doing such things by which the glory of God is injured;<sup>7</sup> (c) by abusing the glory of God as a pretext<sup>8</sup> for sins (1Sa 15:15); (d) by preferring their own glory to the divine glory (Joh 12:43); or (e) by despising the name or worship of God by neglecting it, by treating it irreverently, or by profaning it in any other way against the Third Commandment of the Decalogue.<sup>9</sup>

**Motivating reasons:** For by all these things, (1) the majesty and glory of God is violated, His name is profaned, His face is spat upon, as it were, and at the least, He is provoked (Isa 3:8) and debased (Eze 13:19). God will more certainly than certain reassert against them His claim upon His own majesty, according to the threats (Exo 20:7) and the examples of divine judgments: "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified," that is, by My judgments.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> (Isa 40:15-17, 21; Jer 10:6-7, 10, 12-13; Amo 9:5-6; Mic 1:3-4; Hab 3:3; Job 26:6-14; 34:13; 35:5; 40:4ff.) Except for single references, multiple-verse references have been moved to footnotes.

<sup>2</sup> (Gen 18:27; Psa 8:1, 4)

<sup>3</sup> (Isa 2:10, 19, 21; Jer 10:6-7, 10; Psa 111:9; Isa 59:19)

<sup>4</sup> (Rom 2:4; Mal 2:2; Exo 5:2)

<sup>5</sup> (Isa 52:5; Eze 36:23; 1Ti 6:1; Ti 2:5)

<sup>6</sup> **disparage** – treat as being of little worth.

<sup>7</sup> (Rom 2:24; Ti 2:5)

<sup>8</sup> **pretext** – reason given to justify an action.

<sup>9</sup> **Decalogue** – Ten Commandments.

<sup>10</sup> (Lev 10:2-3; cf. 2Sa 12:14)

### 3. It calls us to the glorification of God. What is this glorification?

The majesty and glory of God call us to glorify His name (1Co 6:20), which is done in our heart.<sup>11</sup> [We do this] by acknowledging, esteeming (Mal 1:14), and revering the infinite eminence of God,<sup>12</sup> which He has displayed in His attributes, in His works, in His Son, and in His Word.<sup>13</sup> *In our mouth*:<sup>14</sup> by celebrating it among His other perfections and virtues<sup>15</sup> (the argument for which the whole Psalter<sup>16</sup> will supply; hence it is called “praises”). By awakening all things, that in this work of celebration, they might join hands with us, inasmuch as<sup>17</sup> we are not equal to the task alone (Psa 103:20-22). *In our work* (Joh 15:8): (a) by denying all our own honor [so] that God’s honor might be preserved more unimpaired for Him;<sup>18</sup> (b) by bravely enduring on account of it whatever dangers, losses, reproaches, and torments—all the way to death;<sup>19</sup> (c) by religiously abstaining from all things by which the glory of God could be injured, diminished, or blasphemed;<sup>20</sup> (d) by constantly doing those things that look toward the glory of God (Mat 5:16).

These sorts of things are especially: (i) gratitude for whatever benefits have been received, as much corporeal<sup>21</sup> as spiritual;<sup>22</sup> (ii) profession of His name and of evangelical truth;<sup>23</sup> (iii) payment of vows that have been offered on whatever occasion—in baptism, the Lord’s Supper, in sicknesses, and so forth;<sup>24</sup> and especially (iv) a holy manner of life;<sup>25</sup>

(e) Surrendering our entire selves, body and soul, to divine glorification:<sup>26</sup> in all our efforts and operations, as much as can be done, by expressly striving for the glory of God (1Co 10:31), and at least in general, by devoting all our resources to the glory of God (Rom 14:7-8), and by undertaking nothing at all that by its nature does not incline toward the glory of God, or which could in any way hinder it, however

<sup>11</sup> (Psa 103:1-2; Luk 1:46)

<sup>12</sup> **revering... God** – humbly worshiping God’s immeasurable, majestic superiority.

<sup>13</sup> (2Co 5:11; Jer 10:6-8)

<sup>14</sup> (Psa 40:16; 145:5)

<sup>15</sup> (1Pe 2:9; 1Ch 29:11-14)

<sup>16</sup> **Psalter** – Book of Psalms, used for singing in worship.

<sup>17</sup> **inasmuch as** – because.

<sup>18</sup> (Psa 115:1; Mat 3:11)

<sup>19</sup> (Phi 1:20; Luk 9:26; Exo 32:32; Rom 9:3)

<sup>20</sup> (Exo 20:7; Ti 2:5; Rom 2:24)

<sup>21</sup> **corporeal** – relating to a physical, material body as opposed to the spiritual.

<sup>22</sup> (Psa 50:23; 1Th 5:18)

<sup>23</sup> (Mat 10:32; Phi 1:7, 20)

<sup>24</sup> (Psa 116:18; 50:14)

<sup>25</sup> (Joh 15:8; Phi 1:11)

<sup>26</sup> (Act 15:26; 1Co 6:20)

much in itself it might be an adiaphoron<sup>27</sup> (1Co 8:13; 9:15).

*The motivating reasons:* Commending this universal glorification of God are: All glory should be brought to the One to Whom belongs the highest eminence—indeed, infinite eminence—that is, we should render to God what is God’s (Mat 22:21). Examples of every kind [should] light our way: God glorifying Himself; the Persons of the Trinity mutually glorifying themselves; the angels doing the same night and day (Isa 6:1-3); the heavenly saints; all the works of God (Rev 4:8); and heaven and earth...The fact [is] that for this end, all things were created by God; and we, together with the angels, were created for this end alone.<sup>28</sup> This glorification is all our perfection, excellence, and usefulness, through which we are suited for our use, that is, for the highest end of our *creation* (2Ti 2:20-21). Likewise, [it is] the highest end of our *redemption*;<sup>29</sup> without it, we are called unprofitable (Rom 3:12). Accordingly, in this is our chief honor; and in addition, God has promised that He will honor those who have honored Him (1Sa 2:8, 30). On the contrary, He will pour every disgrace—both here and hereafter—upon those who do not do this and who despise Him (1Sa 2:30). Indeed, He will curse them and even curse their blessings.<sup>30</sup> Finally, *we* will be eternally glorified for this end, so that we may glorify Him eternally with the blessed angels, day and night singing to Him ceaselessly their threefold “Holy, holy, holy!”<sup>31</sup>...

#### 4. It shows in what way we must strive for glory.

The majesty and glory of God shows from where it must be sought and in what true glory must be located—namely, *from* God and *in* God, Who is the ocean, as it were of majesty and glory<sup>32</sup>—and by what supports it is to be obtained in God and from God; namely, by contempt and disdain for worldly honor (Joh 12:43). “For if,” as Chrysostom<sup>33</sup> says, “you *desire* glory, *despise* glory, and you will be more glorious than all”;<sup>34</sup> by humility;<sup>35</sup> if something of His honor, glory, authority, and wealth falls to us, by submitting and expending it to the divine honor and glory.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, by those virtues to which God Himself in

<sup>27</sup> **adiaphoron** – something indifferent, neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture.

<sup>28</sup> (Rom 11:36; Pro 16:4; Isa 43:7)

<sup>29</sup> (1Co 6:20; 1Pe 2:9; Ti 2:14)

<sup>30</sup> (Mal 2:2; Num 20:12)

<sup>31</sup> (Isa 6:3; Ti 2:13)

<sup>32</sup> (Jer 17:14; Psa 109:1)

<sup>33</sup> **John Chrysostom** (c. 347-407) – early theologian and preacher of the Greek Church.

<sup>34</sup> (cf. Jam 4:16; Heb 11:25-26)

<sup>35</sup> (1Sa 2:30; Jam 1:9-10; 1Pe 5:5-6)

<sup>36</sup> (Rev 4:10; Pro 3:9-10)

particular attributes glory: the knowledge of God (Jer 9:23-24); patience and martyrdom;<sup>37</sup> zeal for sincerity (2Co 1:12); the glorious struggle for the faith and zeal for preserving a good conscience—for this, the righteous Judge will award the crown of righteousness (2Ti 4:7-8); by fidelity and constancy in evangelical work,<sup>38</sup> and any other such virtues that may be found in the Scriptures.

### 5. It stirs up our appetite for eternal glory.

The majesty and glory of God rouse us [to] pant and strive to be partakers of eternal glory, about which the apostle speaks: “We all with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory” (2Co 3:18).

*What this eternal glory is:* So then, this glory is called (1) the glory of God (Rom 5:2), and likewise the glory of Christ (2Th 2:14); and (2) the exceedingly exceeding eternal weight of glory (2Co 4:17); (3) the crown of glory (2Ti 4:8); (4) the crown of life<sup>39</sup> and the unfading crown of glory (1Pe 5:4). By this glory, the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Mat 13:43; Dan 12:3). The bodies of believers will be transformed so that they may be conformed to the glorious body of Christ (Phi 3:21); and what is sown here in dishonor will rise again in glory (1Co 15:41-43). The souls of believers, cleansed from all disgrace of ignorance, as regards the intellect,<sup>40</sup> and from all depraved concupiscence<sup>41</sup> of the will and of the affections—that is, made like the angels (Mat 22:30)—will be transformed into the image of God. The whole man will be constituted glorious, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing—holy and blameless (Eph 5:27). And all this in a glorious place—in the very dwelling of divine glory, the heavenly Jerusalem, whose glory is described in Revelation 21:1ff—and with a glorious fellowship and society (Heb 12:22).

*Where it comes from:* God the Father has prepared this glory for His own<sup>42</sup> by His eternal predestination, and God the Son has acquired and will one day confer.<sup>43</sup> The Holy Spirit (1Pe 4:14) will at the proper time transform us into this glory (2Co 3:18).

*Means:* Moreover, we will obtain this glory for ourselves by a zeal for

<sup>37</sup> (Rom 5:3; Rev 2:10)

<sup>38</sup> (1Th 2:19; Dan 12:3)

<sup>39</sup> (Rev 2:10; 3:11; 4:4)

<sup>40</sup> (1Co 13:9-10, 11-12)

<sup>41</sup> **depraved concupiscence** – corrupted and disordered desires of fallen human nature, especially sexual lust.

<sup>42</sup> (Mat 25:34; Rom 9:23; 1Co 2:7)

<sup>43</sup> (Heb 2:10; 2Th 2:14; Rom 15:7; Joh 17:22)

regeneration or conversion;<sup>44</sup> true and living faith;<sup>45</sup> sincere love for God (1Co 2:9); assiduous<sup>46</sup> zeal for good works (Rom 2:7, 10), namely, the works of charity (Mat 25:34-40); the noble contest for faith and a good conscience (2Ti 4:7); patient tolerance of whatever adversities for God and the Mediator;<sup>47</sup> heavenly conversation,<sup>48</sup> in which we look not at the things that are visible, which are vanishing away, but at the things that are invisible (2Co 4:18); and in all these things, we endure to the end.<sup>49</sup>

### 6. It offers solace<sup>50</sup> in whatever disgrace.

At the same time, while we live in exile from this glory, the majesty and glory of God offer solace in whatever disgrace, especially that which is sustained on account of God and Christ,<sup>51</sup> and even in the dishonor of death itself (1Co 15:43).

**By these arguments:** In these things, it offers solace to consider that God alone is owed honor and glory (Psa 115:1), whereas, on account of our sins, we are owed nothing but disgrace and trouble (Dan 9:7-8). The reproach of Christ itself is better than all the treasure of Egypt, as Moses judged (Heb 11:26). We can serve the interests of the divine glory, according to the divine will, not only in honor and glory, but also in contempt—from the analogy<sup>52</sup> of 2 Timothy 2:20-21. This is God’s usual way of acting: that whom He wills to glorify He first humbles.<sup>53</sup> Finally, He will one day repay every disgrace with that exceedingly exceeding eternal weight of glory (2Co 4:17), when our body that was sown with disgrace will be raised with glory (1Co 15:43).

From *Faith in the Triune God*, ed. J. Beeke, trans. T. Rester and M. Spangler, Vol. 2, *Theoretical-Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2019), 479-483; used by permission.

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**Petrus Van Mastricht (1630-1706):** Reformed pastor and theologian; ministered in Germany and the Netherlands; born in Cologne, Germany, EU.



A present justification is the pledge of a future glorification.  
—Octavius Winslow

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<sup>44</sup> (1Pe 1:3-4; Joh 3:5)

<sup>45</sup> (Joh 1:12; cf. Rom 8:17, 21)

<sup>46</sup> **assiduous effort** – persistent, careful, and diligent work.

<sup>47</sup> (Rom 8:17-18; 2Co 4:17; Luk 24:26)

<sup>48</sup> **conversation** – lifestyle; behavior (Col 3:1; Phi 3:20-21).

<sup>49</sup> (Rev 2:10; 2Ti 4:7-8)

<sup>50</sup> **solace** – comfort in time of distress, sadness, or disappointment.

<sup>51</sup> (Rom 15:13; Psa 69:7; 1Pe 4:14)

<sup>52</sup> **analogy** – comparison that explains by showing similarity.

<sup>53</sup> (1Sa 2:7-8; Luk 24:26; Heb 2:7)

# DESTINED FOR GLORY

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981)

*Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.—1 John 3:2*

**W**HAT we are going to be has not yet been revealed to us, but we know that we are destined for it. That is obviously what John means. He is not here in a sort of uncertain state that says, “Well, we are the children of God. At the present time I do not quite know what is going to happen to us, but no doubt it is going to be all right.” Not at all! John has seen something of the glory; and he says it has not yet been revealed to this world which does not understand it, but it *will* be revealed.

We can put it like this: Here we are in a state of humiliation, but we are going to be in a state of glorification. Do you not see that as Christian people, we, in a sense, have to retrace the steps trodden before us by our Lord? You remember how Richard Baxter<sup>1</sup> puts that—we must enter the room that He has already been through here on earth in a state of humiliation—born in Bethlehem, working as a carpenter, people not recognizing Him—it was *humiliation*. While He was on the earth that was His condition, and the world did not know Him. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not” (Joh 1:11). The world, His own world, rejected Him—*His own people* rejected Him. Yes, but He is no longer in the state of humiliation: He has passed on to glory, and He is in a state of glorification. The Apostle Paul had a vision of Him there on the road to Damascus; John had a vision on the island of Patmos; there He is in glory, and you and I are to retrace those very steps. Here *we* are in a state of humiliation, yes, but as certainly as He has gone before, we also shall go on to glory.

“Let not your heart be troubled,” said our Lord, “ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself” (Joh 14:1-2). That is it! It is the same thing exactly.

Christians, therefore, know that they are destined for that state of

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Baxter (1615-1691) – Anglican Puritan preacher and theologian.

glory; it is part of their essential belief. It is as much a part of their belief as their forgiveness of sins by the work of Christ upon the cross. So, what the Christian says is, “I am destined for glory. It has not come yet, but it is coming, and I am going on to it.” It will be manifested for certain, and so they are full of confidence and assurance. Paul, in that great eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, is in reality saying the same thing. This verse is John’s way of saying, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39). Your glorification and mine are an absolute certainty. As certainly as our Lord has entered His glory, you and I who are children of God shall enter it also.

It does not look like it now—John agrees entirely—it “doth not yet appear,” and the world is against us—it does not understand it. That is exactly how it was with Him, but the thing is certain.

**On what grounds can I be sure of this?** Here is my answer: the purposes of God. Consider Paul again: “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [Christ] might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Rom 8:29). That is a perfect statement of the whole thing. Your glorification and mine is a part of the purpose of God in salvation, and when God has purposed and planned a thing, it is certain—nothing can prevent it. Read again that mighty logic of Romans 8, and you will see it put perfectly. I can therefore rest my confidence of glorification upon the promises of God, and the promises of God are based upon the character of God. Because He is God, He cannot break His promises; and He has also given an oath, so we have a double assurance. The promises are there with His purposes and His character at the back of them.

**If you are still uncertain, add the *power* of God.** “For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter,” but what does it matter? “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Rom 8:36-37). “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (Rom 8:35). It is impossible; there is nothing that can do so. We talk about the power of God, the One Who made the world and the One Who could end it in a second. All the almighty, illimitable,<sup>2</sup> and absolute power of God guarantees my glorification.

**Indeed, I have an even further argument than that.** What we are now is a guarantee, in a sense, of what we are going to be. Our sonship is in

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<sup>2</sup> **illimitable** – impossible to limit.

itself a guarantee of our glorification because God never starts a work and then gives it up. “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phi 1:6). You and I start things and drop them; that is typical of mankind because of sin. But whatever God begins, God continues, and God will end it in absolute perfection. If therefore I am but a child, insignificant, unworthy, immature, the fact that I am alive is proof that I am going on to ultimate maturity; Christ is “the firstborn among many brethren,” and He is preparing and leading others, a great crowd of brethren, until eventually we arrive in eternal glory. Do you know that you are destined for glory, my friend; do you know within yourself that that is something that is awaiting you, that you are being led and taken on to that glory which awaits you? John says, “We *know*” this.

**But that brings me to my last point.** What do we know concerning this glory? These are the things that are indicated. We know that this glory is to be ushered in by the appearing, or the manifestation, of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. “We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him.” This is the great New Testament doctrine of the Second Coming, but God forbid that we should immediately begin to think of our several theories of this, that, or the other, of how it is going to happen. All I know is this: the Lord Jesus Christ will come again. Let us take the Scripture in its broad statement, and let us beware of robbing ourselves, I say, of the life-giving glorious doctrine by thus particularizing<sup>3</sup> these mere theories and philosophies rather than accepting this true exposition of Scripture.

**The Second Coming is a fact.** The Lord Jesus Christ is coming again, and there will be a judgment; and all that is sinful and evil will be consigned to the lake of fire and destroyed throughout all eternity; and there is to be “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2Pe 3:13). When He comes, these things will take place; that is the way the glory will be ushered in. The world is to be rid of everything that is impure, foul, and unworthy; “the elements shall melt with fervent heat” (2Pe 3:10). There is to be a renovation and a regeneration;<sup>4</sup> there will be a new world, and all evil will be banished. That is how the glory is to be ushered in, and I know that whatever the appearances may be in this world, as certainly as the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world the first time as a babe in Bethlehem, He will come again

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<sup>3</sup> **particularizing** – becoming too detailed as opposed to general.

<sup>4</sup> **renovation and regeneration** – the cosmic rebirth and renewal of “the whole creation” (Rom 8:18-25), where evil is forever banished and God’s righteousness reigns.

as the King of kings and Lord of lords, and He will wind up the affairs of this universe of time. I know that it is certain.

**Furthermore, “we shall see him as he is.”** “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1Co 13:12). Do you know that you are destined for that? We shall see Him as He is—blessed, glorious vision to see the Son of God in all His glory, as He is, face to face—you standing and looking at Him and enjoying Him for all eternity. It is only then that we will begin to understand what He did for us, the price He paid, the cost of our salvation. Oh, let us hold on to this! Shame on us for ever grumbling or complaining; shame on us for ever saying that the lot of the Christian is hard; shame on us for ever objecting to the demands of this glorious gospel; shame on us for ever half-heartedly worshipping, praising, and loving His honor and His glory. You and I are destined for that glorious vision; we shall see Him as He is, face to face.

**But consider something still more amazing and incredible.** We shall be like Him. “We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” This is John’s way of putting the whole doctrine of the resurrection of our very bodies, the ultimate final resurrection, the ultimate glorification of God’s people. In other words, what John is telling us, is that when that great day comes, we shall not only see Him, we shall be made like Him. Paul says that God’s purpose is that we shall be “conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom 8:29). That is the argument, and that is the doctrine.

In other words, while we are here on earth, the Holy Spirit is working in us, doing His work of holiness in us, and ridding us of sin so that eventually, we shall be faultless, blameless, without spot, and without rebuke. We shall have been delivered from every sin and vestige<sup>5</sup> and appearance of sin within us; in addition to that, our very bodies shall be changed and shall be glorified. Paul says that we expect Christ to come from heaven for this reason—that He shall change the body of our humiliation “that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body” (Phi 3:21). There will be an amazing change then in those who love Him when He appears. Again, read 1 Corinthians 15 where Paul tells us that “we shall all be changed, in a moment” (1Co 15:51-52). Our bodies will be glorified; there will be something of the radiance of His own glory in your body and mine, so that in this new heaven and new

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<sup>5</sup> vestige – trace of something that is disappearing.

earth, we shall have bodies made fit for our glorified spirits. We shall be like Him.

The New Testament does not tell us much more than that because we could not stand it. Our language is inadequate; if it were adequate, the description would be so baffling [that] we could not tolerate it—the thing is so glorious and wonderful! When the three disciples were with our Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration, they could not stand it; the magnificence of the glory, the brightness of the appearance was too great! Consider too what happened to Paul when he had one glimpse of that vision on the road to Damascus—he was blinded. No, I could not stand it as I am, as the result of sin; but when I am delivered from sin and the bondage of corruption, and when I have a new, glorified body, I will be able to stand it. I will look at Him, I will see Him face to face, I will see Him as He is, I will be like Him. If I were not like Him, I could not stand it—that is John’s argument.

I believe there is another thing here, and that is that as we look at Him, we become like Him; and as we continually look at Him, we shall be perfected...

We are changed into this same image, from glory into glory, as we look at Him and contemplate Him; and when we see Him perfectly, it will be an absolute change.

Those, then, are some of the things of which the Christian is sure, according to the apostle John. We know that we are the children of God. We know that we are destined for glory, and we know that glory is to be ushered in by His manifestation. We know that then we shall see Him as He is—and, wonder of wonders, we shall be like Him!

What blessed vision, what glorious hope, that *I*—small, insignificant, fallible, sinful, unworthy—*shall be like Him*, “the firstborn among many brethren” (Rom 8:29), and made conformable to His glorious nature! Beloved people, let us lay hold on this hope, look upon it, and meditate upon it day by day.

From *Children of God*, electronic ed. (Escondido, CA:  
Ephesians Four Group, 1993), 1 John 3:2.

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**David Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981):** Welsh expository preacher and author; born in Cardiff, Wales, UK.



At death, the believer not only gains a perfect and eternal deliverance from sin and temptation but is adorned with a perfect and glorious holiness.—*Jonathan Edwards*

# THE REDEMPTION OF BODIES

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)

*Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.—Philippians 3:21*

**T**HE best men's bodies in this world are vile. Vile in regard of the matter whence they are taken—the earth, from the dust.<sup>1</sup> The fairest body is but well-colored dust: base<sup>2</sup> and vile from the beginning, from the womb; base in the whole life, base in death; most base after death. They are base, I say, in the beginning.

But especially *base in our life*. Our bodies are *base in regard of labor*. “Man is born to labor”<sup>3</sup>—in this world—“as the sparks fly upward” (see Job 5:7). God would humble the body of every man with labor; or else those that have not the labor of men here shall have the labor of devils hereafter. The best body of the best saints are condemned to labor.

*Vile likewise in regard of sickness and diseases that grow out of the body*. Be it kept never so warm and tenderly, yet as the worms grow out of the very wood and consume the wood that breeds it, so diseases grow out of and come from the body. There is a fight and conflict between moisture and heat until one preys upon the other and consumes it. In regard of sickness, therefore, they are vile bodies.

*In regard likewise of disposing the soul the worst way*. For all tempers<sup>4</sup> of the body incline the soul to some sin or other, to some ill disposition<sup>5</sup> or other. *Choler* inclines it to [unrestrained] anger, *melancholy* to distrust and [depression]. The *sanguine* inclines it to [acting without restraint] and looseness, *phlegm* to deadness and [lack of emotion]. So, our base bodies make the soul dull. It becomes an unfit instrument whereby the soul cannot work as it would—an unfit house. The body is oftentimes a dark house; sometimes a house that drops in with moist diseases; a house that lets in water and so consumes it to rottenness.

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<sup>1</sup> **in regard... taken** – considering the lowly substance—dust—from which God formed man's body.

<sup>2</sup> **base** – lowly in substance, corrupted in nature, and inclined toward sin.

<sup>3</sup> **labor** – Apparently, the author classifies “labor” under the idea of “trouble.”

<sup>4</sup> **four tempers** – also known in early medical theory as “humors”; believed to be bodily fluids or vapors that shaped physical and mental health.

<sup>5</sup> **ill disposition** – habitual inclination of the soul toward a particular sin or spiritual weakness.

Sometimes it is a house fired by hot diseases. It is thus indisposed<sup>6</sup> and, therefore, a vile body.

**A vile body, likewise, that when it is thus indisposed, *there is no comfort on the earth that can comfort it***; for all the foundation of comfort in this world is the health of this poor body. A kingdom, nay, all the kingdoms in the world will not comfort a man if his body be not in tune; and, alas, how soon is this body out of tune! An instrument that hath many strings is soon subject to be out of tune, and there are many strings in the body. How many tunings, how many instruments, doth the soul use! If any are out of tune, the music is hindered. It becomes an unfit instrument. In this regard it is a vile body.

**In regards of the necessities of nature, this body is vile in this world.** I speak not of what comes from the body, in which respect it is base and vile. But how many things doth this vile body stand in need of! Man, in that respect, is the basest creature in the world. He is beholden<sup>7</sup> to the worms; he is beholden to nature to feed him in health, and in sickness the body needs patching up and piecing by this creature and by that. So, it is a vile body in regard of the necessities of it—in health, in sickness, in youth, in age. It is vile in life. I need not stand on this.

**It is more vile in death.** In the hour of death, then, it is base and vile indeed. Can we endure the sight of our dearest friends? How noisome<sup>8</sup> is their presence after death!<sup>9</sup> And the most exquisite temper<sup>10</sup> is the most vile and noisome of all. Those that are most delicately fed, and most beautifully faced, are most offensive; and this is the condition of all. That head that wore a crown, those hands that swayed a scepter, those brains and that understanding that ruled many kingdoms, all are subject to death, yes, and to baseness after death, as well as those that are poorer. And then they are vile bodies because they are subject to all manner of deaths. The bodies of God's saints have been cast out to the fowls of the air. How many ways have the poor martyrs tasted of death! These bodies are subject to all manners of death, to variety of deaths. Therefore, they are vile bodies.

**And then they are vile after death.** As we were taken out of dust at the first, so we return to dust again; and if these bodies be not transformed

<sup>6</sup> **indisposed** – disordered.

<sup>7</sup> **beholden** – owing thanks to someone in return for service; indebted.

<sup>8</sup> **noisome** – offensive through stench and decay.

<sup>9</sup> **presence after death** – in this context, their dead bodies repel our senses.

<sup>10</sup> **exquisite temper** (also *attemper*)...**of all** – highly refined blending of different qualities to produce a finely balanced physical beauty; thus, the more beautiful the body, the more offensive its stench and decay in death.

to be like the glorious body of Christ, they are most vile of all. The spirit of despair, the spirit of anger, which is in reprobate persons,<sup>11</sup> doth disfigure their faces! One may see their shame, their grief, their despair in their looks. So, their bodies are most vile and dishonorable. But I speak of God's children. I say here in this world, in regard that they come of parents that are miserable and sinful, "man that is born of a woman" hath but a short time to live and is full of misery (see Job 14:1)—man that is born of a woman, of a weak, miserable, sinful woman. In this respect, it is a vile body. And in all passages of our life, in respect of labor, pain, sicknesses, diseases, and likewise for indisposing the soul, it is an instrument to ill.<sup>12</sup> And in death itself more vile than in life; and after death most of all vile. So, you see they are vile bodies every way...

**"Who shall change our vile bodies."** The action that Christ shall exercise about them is "change." Christ will "change" our vile bodies. They are vile now. They shall not always be so; but Christ will "change" our vile bodies. He will not give us other bodies for them, but He will change them in regard of quality. For even as the great world was the same after the Flood as it was before the Flood and shall be when it is consumed by fire, it shall be a new world for quality but the same for substance. So, this body of ours shall be the same after the resurrection for substance that it is now. It shall be altered for quality; it shall not be changed for substance. Therefore, He shall "change," He shall not abolish our vile bodies. This is the action that our blessed Savior will exercise upon these vile bodies...Man is the most changeable creature in the world, for soul and for body too.

**Take him in his soul: How many states is he in?** There is first the state of nature in perfection; and then the state of corruption in original sin; and then the state of grace in the new creature; and then the state of glory. So likewise, he is changeable in his body. He was first taken out of the dust. Out of the dust God made this glorious creature of man's body. He is a painful creature, in labor, in sickness; and then from strength, he is changed to old age; and from thence to death and dust; and from dust, he is changed again to a more glorious estate than ever he was in. The body is made like the glorious body of Christ. He is changeable in soul and in body. But this is our comfort: We shall change for the best. All the changes of our body serve the last change, after which there shall never be any more change. When they are

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<sup>11</sup> **reprobate persons** – persons rejected by God.

<sup>12</sup> **ill** – bad or evil in a general sense.

changed once to be glorious, they shall be forever glorious. A blessed change, a blessed state of a Christian; all his changes tend to a state that shall *never* change. For after these bodies are changed from base to glorious, they shall be forever glorious.

**“Who...”** The person that shall change them is Christ: “*who* shall change our vile bodies.” In the person, we may consider the object and the action. Christ shall change our vile bodies. He that made us will make us again. He that is the image of God will refine us. He will renew us in body and soul to be like God, to be like Himself; and He that changeth our souls in this world will change our bodies in the world to come. His first coming was to change our souls, to deliver them from the bondage of Satan. His second coming shall be to deliver our bodies from the bondage of corruption, that is, the day of “the redemption of our bodies,” as the apostle calls it (Rom 8:23). So, it is He that shall change [us]. But of this, I shall speak more afterward.

**What is the pattern according to which this body shall be changed by...Christ Jesus?** His own body. He shall change our vile body, that it may be made like, or fashioned like, His glorious body. He is both the cause and the pattern; the efficient and the exemplary cause. He *is* the pattern. Our bodies shall be like His glorious body, even as our souls are like Christ’s soul. For this is certain. We are renewed in grace, not to the image of the first Adam, but to the image of the second Adam. We are conformed in soul to the image of Christ in holiness and righteousness. So likewise in the body, we shall be conformable to the body of Christ, “the second Adam.” As we bare the image of the first Adam in our first creation, we must bear the image of the second in our restoration on the day of the resurrection. The glorious body of Christ is the pattern of this transmutation<sup>13</sup> and change.

But we must understand this, as I said, in regard of *quality*, not in regard of *equality*: Our bodies shall be like His glorious body, not equal to it. To our capacity, we shall have full satisfaction and contentment for body and soul too; and they shall have security to be in that estate forever. Therefore, though there is a difference of glory, yet that difference is no prejudice to the glory we shall have. We shall have [what] is fit for us. “Our body shall be made like unto his glorious body.” Christ is our pattern.

**From this, we clearly see this point of theology: *Whatsoever is in us, both for soul and body (but here we speak of the body), whatsoever excellency***

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<sup>13</sup> **transmutation** – change of one thing into another.

*is in us, it is at the second hand.*<sup>14</sup> It is first in Christ our Head and then in us. He is first the Son of God by nature. We are the sons of God by adoption. He is the predestinated Son of God to save us, to be our Head. We are predestinated to be His members. He is the Son of God's love; we are beloved in Him. He is full of grace: "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (Joh 1:16). He rose, and we shall rise because He rose first. He ascended into heaven; by virtue of His ascension, we shall ascend into heaven too. He sits at the right hand of God in glory; and by virtue of His sitting, we sit there together with Him in heavenly places. Whatsoever is graciously or gloriously good that is in us, it is first in our blessed and glorious Savior.

**Therefore, let us look to Him and be thankful to God for Him.** When we thank God for ourselves, let us thank God first for giving Christ, Who is the pattern to Whom we are conformed. Let us give thanks for Him, as Peter doth: "Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1Pe 1:3). If [God] had not been His Father, He had not been ours. We cannot stand before God of ourselves, but in one that is perfect in Himself—[the] God-man. Therefore, when we bless God for grace and glory that belong to us, let us bless Him for giving Christ, that in Him we are happy! He conforms us in grace here and in glory hereafter, in body and soul, to our glorious Savior.

**And as it is a ground of thankfulness to God for Christ, so it yields us a rule for meditation.** When we would think of anything in ourselves, let us go to our Head—to Christ—in Whom we have all we have and that we hope to have. Of His fulness we receive, not only grace for grace, but glory for glory. Of all the glory He hath, we have [glory] answerable to Him; and surely it is a transforming meditation to think of Christ's glory, and to see ourselves in Him; to think of grace in Christ and of our interest in grace in Him. We must not think of Him as an abstracted<sup>15</sup> head, severed from us, but think of His glory and our glory in Him and by Him. He is glorious, and we shall be glorious likewise.

From *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart, vol. 5 (Edinburgh; London; Dublin: James Nichol; James Nisbet and Co.; W. Robertson, 1863), 162-173; in the public domain.

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**Richard Sibbes (1577-1635):** early Puritan preacher at Cambridge and later Gray's Inn, London; born at Tostock, Suffolk, England, UK.




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<sup>14</sup> **at the second hand** – derived from Christ.

<sup>15</sup> **abstracted** – isolated or disconnected.

# CHRIST GLORIFIED IN BELIEVERS

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)

*When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.—2 Thessalonians 1:10*

**I**N what respects will Christ be glorified and wondered at [in His saints]? I cannot expect to tell you one tenth part of it. I am only going to give you a little sample of what this must mean; exhaustive exposition [would be] quite impossible for me.

**I think, regarding His saints, that Jesus will be glorified and wondered at on account of their number**—“a great multitude, which no man can number” (Rev 7:9)...But there is *quality* as well as *quantity*. He is admired in His saints because every one of them is proof of His power to save from evil. My eye can hardly bear—even though it is but in imagination—to gaze upon the glittering ranks of the white-robed ones, where each one outshines the sun, and they are all as if a seven-fold midday<sup>1</sup> had clothed them. Yet as I look at them, all these tell me, “We have washed our robes—for they were once defiled. We have made them white—but this whiteness is caused by the blood of the Lamb.” These were heirs of wrath even as others; these were dead in trespasses and sins. All these like sheep had gone astray and turned everyone to his own way (see Isa 53:6); but look at them and see how He has saved them, washed them, cleansed them, perfected them! His power and grace are seen in all of them. If your eye pauses here and there, you will discover some that were supremely stubborn, whose neck was as an iron sinew, and yet He conquered them by love. Some were densely ignorant, but He opened their blind eyes; some grossly infected with the leprosy of lust, but He healed them; some under Satan’s most terrible power, but He cast the devil out of them. Oh, how He will be glorified in special cases! In yon<sup>2</sup> drunkard made into a saint, in yon blasphemer turned into a loving disciple, in yon persecutor who breathed out threatening, taught to sing everlastingly a hymn of praise! He will be exceedingly glorified in such!

**Perhaps the chief point in which Christ will be glorified will be *the***

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<sup>1</sup> **sevenfold midday** – Christ’s saints will outshine the sun in radiant holiness and supernatural splendor, surpassing the radiance of the sun’s brightness sevenfold (see Isa 30:26).

<sup>2</sup> **yon** – at a distance but within sight.

*absolute perfection of all the saints.* They shall then be “[without] spot or wrinkle, or any such thing” (Eph 5:27). We have not experienced what perfection is, and therefore we can hardly conceive it. Our thoughts themselves are too sinful for us to get a full idea of what absolute perfection must be; but, dear brethren, we shall have no sin left in us, for they are “without fault before the throne of God” (Rev 14:5); and we shall have no remaining propensity to sin.<sup>3</sup> There shall be no bias<sup>4</sup> in the will towards that which is evil, but it shall be fixed forever upon that which is good. The affections will never be [lustful] again, they will be chaste for Christ. The understanding will never make mistakes. You shall never put bitter for sweet, nor sweet for bitter; you shall be “perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”: and truly, brethren, He Who worketh this in us will be a wonder. Christ will be admired and adored because of this grand result. O mighty Master, with what strange moral alchemy<sup>5</sup> didst Thou work to turn that [sullen, bad-tempered] man into a mass of love! How didst Thou work to lift that selfish, [greedy man] up from his hoarded gains to make him find his gain in Thee? How didst Thou overcome that proud spirit, that fickle spirit, that lazy spirit, that lustful spirit—how didst Thou contrive to take all these away? How didst Thou [destroy] the very roots of sin, and every little rootlet of sin, out of Thy redeemed, so that not a tiny fiber can be found? “The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found” (Jer 50:20). Neither the guilt of sin nor the propensity to sin—both shall be gone, and Christ shall have done it, and He will be “glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe”...Now, since my text lays special stress upon *believing*, I invite you just for a minute to consider how as believers as well as saints the saved ones will glorify their Lord.

**First, it will be wonderful that there should be so many brought to faith in Him:** men with no God, and men with many gods, men steeped in ignorance, and men puffed up with carnal wisdom, great men and poor men, all brought to believe in the one Redeemer and praise Him for His great salvation. Will He not be glorified in their common faith? It will magnify Him that these will all be saved by faith, and not by their own merits. Not one among them will boast that he was saved by his own good works, but all of them will rejoice to have been saved by that blessedly simple way of “Believe and live!”—saved by sovereign

<sup>3</sup> **propensity to sin** – natural inclination or feeling that drives one to sin against God.

<sup>4</sup> **bias** – favoring or preferring one side, idea, or person over another, often unfairly.

<sup>5</sup> **strange moral alchemy** – the mysterious, transformative power of the Holy Spirit that changes the heart from sinful tendencies to spiritual love and the pursuit of holiness.

grace through the atoning blood, looked to by the tearful eye of simple faith. This, too, shall make Jesus glorious: all of them, weak as they were, were made strong by faith; all of them personally unfit for battle were yet made triumphant in conflict because by faith they overcame through the blood of the Lamb (see Rev 12:11). All of them shall be there to show that their faith was honored, that Christ was faithful to His promise and never allowed them to believe in vain. All of them standing in heavenly places, saved by faith, will ascribe every particle of the glory to the Lord Jesus only... They believed and were saved, but faith taketh no credit to itself; it is a self-denying grace and putteth the crown upon the head of Christ...

**I want you to reflect that Jesus will be glorified in the risen bodies of all His saints.** Now, in heaven, they are pure spirits, but when He shall come, they shall be clothed again. Poor body, thou must sleep awhile, but what thou shalt be at thine awaking doth not yet appear. Thou art now the shriveled seed, but there is a flower to come of thee that shall be lovely beyond all thought. Though sown in weakness, this body shall be raised in power; though sown in corruption, it shall be raised in incorruption. Weakness, weariness, pain, and death will be banished forever; infirmity and deformity will be all unknown. The Lord will raise up our bodies to be like unto His glorious body. Oh, what a prospect lies before us! Let us remember that this blessed resurrection will come to us because He rose, for there must be a resurrection to the members because the Head has risen. Oh, the charm<sup>6</sup> of being a risen man perfect in body, soul, and spirit! All that charm will be due to Christ, and therefore He will be admired in us.

**Then let us think of the absolute perfection of the church as to numbers:** all who have believed in Him will be with Him in glory. The text saith, He will be “admired in *all* them that believe.” Now, if some of those who believe perished, He would not be admired in them; but they will all be there, the little ones as well as the great ones. You will be there, you poor feeble folk who, when you say “Lord, I believe,” are obliged to add “help thou mine unbelief” (Mar 9:24). He shall be admired in all believers without a single exception, and peradventure there shall be more wonder at the going to heaven of the weak believers than at the stronger ones... heaven [will] ring with notes of even greater admiration that such poor creeping worms of the earth should win the day by mighty grace. Suppose that one of them should be missing at last! Stop the harps! Silence the songs! No beginning to be merry while

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<sup>6</sup> **charm** – quality or feature that exerts fascinating or attractive influence, causing admiration.

one child is shut out...It is the glory of Jesus that as a shepherd, He has lost none of His flock! As the Captain of salvation, He has brought “many sons to glory” (Heb 2:10) and has lost none; and hence, He is admired, not in some that believe, nor yet in all but one, but He is “admired in *all* them that believe.”

Does this not delight you, you who are weak and trembling—that He will be admired in you? There is little to admire in you at present, as you [repentantly] confess; but since Christ is in you now and will be more fully manifested in you, there will ere long be much to admire. May you partake in the excellence of our divine Lord and be conformed to His likeness that He may be seen in you and glorified in you.

**Another point of admiration will be the eternal safety of all His believing people.** There they are safe from fear of harm. Ye dogs of hell, you howled at their heels and hoped to devour them; but, lo, they are clean escaped from you! What must it be to be lifted above gunshot of the enemy, where no more watch shall need to be kept, for even the roar of Satanic artillery cannot be heard? O glorious Christ, to bring them all to such a state of safety, Thou art indeed to be wondered at forever.

Moreover, all the saints will be so honored, so happy, and so like their Lord that they, and everything about them, will be themes for never-ending admiration. You may have seen a room hung round with mirrors; and when you stood in the midst, you were reflected from every point: you were seen here, and seen there, and there again, and there again, and so every part of you was reflected; just such is heaven, Jesus is the center, and all His saints like mirrors reflect His glory. Is He human? So are they! Is He the Son of God? So are they sons of God! Is He perfect? So are they! Is He exalted? So are they! Is He a prophet? So are they, making known unto principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God. Is He a priest? So are they! Is He a King? So are they, for He hath made us “kings and priests unto God” (Rev 1:6), and we shall reign forever and ever! Look where you will along the ranks of the redeemed, this one thing shall be seen—the glory of Christ Jesus, even to surprise and wonder.

From a sermon delivered on Lord’s Day morning, June 1, 1879,  
at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington.

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**Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892):** Influential English Baptist preacher; born at Kelvedon, Essex, England, UK.



# CHRIST'S PATTERN FOR OUR BODY

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)

*Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.—Philippians 3:21*

**A**S Christ is the pattern of the glory of our body, so our body undoubtedly shall be glorious as His body is. This vile body shall be glorious, even like Christ's glorious body... Then let us use them to a glorious end; let us not use these base bodies to base purposes. Let every member of this vile body, while we live here, be a weapon of a sanctified soul—a weapon of righteousness ready to do good. Let us put honor upon these bodies that shall be thus honored; let us use them for honorable purposes. Let us lift our eyes to heaven; let us reach forth our hands to good works. Let our feet that have carried us to ill heretofore<sup>1</sup> carry us to the service of God; for these very vile bodies shall be glorious bodies. The very same eyes that have been lifted up to God in prayer; those very hands that now are instruments of good works; those very knees that are humbled to God in prayer; those feet that have carried us to holy exercises; and those spirits that are wasted and spent<sup>2</sup> in holy meditation—even these, this vile body that is thus holily used, shall be a glorious body. Therefore, let us use it answerably.<sup>3</sup> And labor to lay it down with honor in the dust, to leave it with a good report to the world, considering it shall be so glorious afterward...

**This body shall be glorious.** This very vile body, “this corruptible shall put on incorruption”—the same body, as the apostle saith (1Co 15:54). “I believe in the resurrection of the body,” as we say in the Creed. Paul pointed to his own body: this body, this mortal shall put on immortality (see 1Co 15:53-54).

If this body shall be glorious, how base soever it be in this world, then again *let us honor poor Christians*, though we see them vile and base. And [*let us*] *honor aged Christians* and *deformed*—Alas! Look not on them as they are, but as they shall be; as they are in the decree of Christ,<sup>4</sup> and as

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<sup>1</sup> **to ill heretofore** – to wickedness in time past.

<sup>2</sup> **wasted and spent** – exhausted or poured out in sustained, holy contemplation.

<sup>3</sup> **answerably** – with the knowledge that believers will give account to God.

<sup>4</sup> **decree of Christ** – Christ's eternal purpose to save, sanctify, and glorify His elect.

they shall be ere<sup>5</sup>long by the power of Christ! He will make them like His glorious body. Let us not despise weak or old or deformed people. These vile bodies shall be glorious. Those that died in martyrdom—whose bodies were cast into the fire and cast to wild beasts, etc.—they shall be glorious bodies. The Emperor Constantine<sup>6</sup> would kiss the very holes of the eyes of those that had their eyes pulled out, that had been martyred. So even our vile bodies, when they are used in the service of God in suffering, shall be glorious bodies. Let us honor our bodies or theirs that suffer for Christ. Paul made it his plea and a ground of his confidence because his body was vile for Christ. “I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ...I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus...the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest” (Eph 3:1; Gal 6:17; 2Co 4:10). He carried Christ’s marks in his body, making this an argument of respect, that he was a prisoner. So, when any are abased for Christ’s sake, let us think these are such as shall have glorious bodies, however they are esteemed of the world. But to enlarge the point a little further, these bodies shall be made like the body of Christ.

**Question:** Wherein shall this glory of our bodies consist? **Answer:** Especially in these six endowments:

**1. Our bodies then shall be perfect, even as Christ’s body is.** Our bodies are now vile and perhaps imperfect. They [may] lack a member, a sense, or a limb. Those martyrs that have been dismembered<sup>7</sup> shall then have perfect bodies. Let us not be afraid to lose a limb or a joint for Christ or a good cause. If our bodies be made vile for Christ, they shall be made perfect afterward.

**2. Then again, our bodies then shall be *beautiful*...**The body of our blessed Savior, now in heaven, is wondrously beautiful. So shall our bodies be, howsoever deformed they [may] be now. Let us not be overly concerned, therefore, upon any present deformity of our bodies now with years, or sickness, or other means. They shall not always be so. We shall have beautiful bodies. Nay, more than so,

**3. We shall have *glorious bodies*.** As we see Christ in the mount when He was transfigured, and Moses and Elias were with Him, His body was glorious. They could hardly behold Him. And in Revelation 1:16, Christ appears “as the sun shineth in his strength.” His body is wondrously glorious now in heaven, and so He is represented there. If the very representation of Him while He was upon earth was so glorious

<sup>5</sup> **erelong** – before long; soon.

<sup>6</sup> **Constantine the Great** (c. 282-337) – Roman Emperor who converted to Christianity.

<sup>7</sup> **have been dismembered** – have had their arms or legs cut off.

on the mount, what is it in heaven? Paul could not endure the light that shined on him (Acts 9:1-31). So shall our bodies be like the glorious body of Christ.

What a glorious time will it be when the glorious body of Christ shall appear, and all the saints shall appear in glory! What a reflection of beauty and glory there will be, one shining upon another, when Christ shall come “to be glorified in his saints” (2Th 1:10)! Oh, the glory of the body of God’s children! It shall put down all created glory. All the glory of the sun and moon and all the glory of these inferior bodies are nothing to the glory of the body of a Christian that doth abase his body here for Christ and the church’s sake. You see, then, these bodies shall be perfect, beautiful, and glorious bodies in regard of their luster. And,

**4. In the fourth place, they shall be *immortal bodies***—bodies that shall never die, unchangeable bodies. There shall be no alteration, no death, no sickness. “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Rev 7:17). They shall be immortal bodies that shall never die. As Peter saith, we shall have “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away” (1Pe 1:4)...In the next place,

**5. Our bodies shall be *powerful and vigorous*.** Now they are weak, as Paul saith. Our bodies are “sown in weakness” (1Co 15:43). But then they shall be able to ascend and descend. They shall be strong, even as the body of Christ. We shall have strong bodies. As all imperfections, so all weakness shall be taken away. In the sixth place,

**6. They shall be *spiritual bodies*.** That is, they shall not stand in need of meat, drink, sleep, and refreshings<sup>8</sup> as they now do, but Christ will be all in all to them. He will be [to us] instead of meat, drink, and clothes. Yes, and instead of the ordinances that we stand in need of here—the Word and sacraments—He will be all in all. And our bodies shall be spiritual in another regard because they shall be subject to the Spirit...These shall be the endowments of our bodies: They shall be perfect bodies, beautiful, glorious, shining bodies; immortal, unchangeable bodies; powerful, strong, and vigorous bodies, ready to move from place to place...They shall stand in need of no other help, and they shall be obedient altogether to the Spirit. You see now how these vile bodies draw away our souls. Then, all imperfections shall be taken away. We shall have purged bodies and purged souls. Thus, you see wherein the glory of the body shall consist.

Let us therefore often seriously think of these things...We must be

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<sup>8</sup> refreshings – bodily comforts such as warmth, rest, leisure, and easing of weariness.

willing to be disgraced for Christ's sake, to carry His death about us, to "die daily" in the resolution of our souls. How He was abased<sup>9</sup> before He was glorious!...What pains He did take in this body! And how disgraced He was in this body! That sacred face was spit upon; those blessed hands and feet were nailed to the cross; that blessed head that is revered by the angels was crowned with thorns. How His body was every way, in all the parts of it, abased and made vile<sup>10</sup> for us! He neglected His refreshings for us: it was "meat and drink" to Him to do good. If He became vile for us, if He abased His body for us, certainly we should be ashamed if we are not content that our bodies should be made vile for Him, that afterwards they may be made like His glorious body.

Away with these *nice* Christians<sup>11</sup> that are afraid of the wind blowing on them or the sun shining upon them, that are afraid to do anything or to suffer anything, and so in sparing their bodies destroy both body and soul! Consider, whoever thou art, this is not a life for thy body. This present life is a life for the *soul*. We come now to have the image of God in our souls in this life especially, and to have in our souls the life of grace here; but the life and happiness of our body is for the Second Coming of Christ—the glory of the body!

This life is *not* a time for the body. Do what we can, it will be a vile body: cherish it, set it out how thou canst—those painted sepulchers that would out-face age and out-face death,<sup>12</sup> and by colors and complexions, hide those furrows that age makes in the face—they are but vile...Let us use this body here so that it may be glorious in the world to come! We should suffer our souls to rule our bodies and to do all here that both body and soul may be glorious after. For indeed, all that the body hath here [on earth] is beholden to the soul for. Why, therefore, should it not be an instrument for the soul in holy things? Doth not the soul quicken it? Hath it not its beauty from the soul?...Let us use [the body] here that the soul may desire to meet it again, that Christ at that day may bring body and soul together to be glorious forever.

From *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart, Vol. 5 (Edinburgh; London; Dublin: James Nichol; James Nisbet and Co.; W. Robertson, 1863), 162-173; in the public domain.



<sup>9</sup> **abased** – humbled.

<sup>10</sup> **vile** – in this context, vile does not mean sinful, but lowly.

<sup>11</sup> **nice Christians** – not *nice* in the sense of kind or pleasant, but overly delicate or tender; Christians unwilling to endure even minor discomforts for the sake of Christ.

<sup>12</sup> **out-face age...death** – vainly seek to defy aging and death through adornment and cosmetics to cover the inevitable signs of decline, mortality, and the grave.

# THE BELIEVER'S INHERITANCE

John Flavel (c. 1630-1691)

*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.—Galatians 4:4-5*

**D**OCTRINE: The death of Jesus Christ hath not only satisfied for our debts, but [it] over and above purchased a rich inheritance for the children of God. “And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance” (Heb 9:15).

**We will here, first, see what Christ paid...** “But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many... But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many” (Rom 5:15, 17). In both places, Christ and Adam are compared as the two roots or common heads of mankind, both agreeing in this property of communicating their conditions to those that are theirs; yet there is a great deal of difference between them! For in Christ, the power is all divine and, therefore, infinitely more active and effectual. He communicates abundantly more to His than they lost in Adam... Yes, now we are not only redeemed from wrath by the adequate compensation<sup>1</sup> made for our sins by Christ’s blood and sufferings... but [we are] entitled to a most glorious inheritance, purchased by His blood—considered as the blood of an innocent, as the blood of God<sup>2</sup>—and therefore as most excellent and efficacious<sup>3</sup> blood. [It is] above what the law demanded. And this is the meaning of Athanasius, when he saith, “That Christ recompensed, or

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<sup>1</sup> **adequate compensation** – Christ’s sufferings are a payment that is equal in magnitude to the weight and horror of our sin. He fully paid the price that God’s justice required.

<sup>2</sup> **blood of God** – The Triune God is spirit (Joh 4:24) and in Himself has no blood; but Jesus, the incarnate Son, is fully God and fully man; so, it is theologically true to speak of “the blood of God” (Act 20:28): the God-man shed His blood in His human nature (Mar 14:24).

<sup>3</sup> **efficacious blood** – Christ’s blood effectually secured redemption, justification, and eternal inheritance for God’s elect; it was divinely empowered to accomplish salvation.

made amends for small things with great.”<sup>4</sup> He means not that sin, considered absolutely and in itself, is small. Oh, no, but compared with Christ’s blood and the infinite excellence and worth of it, it is so. And Chrysostom,<sup>5</sup> to the same purpose, “Christ paid much more”—saith he—“than we owed, and so much more as the immense ocean is more than a small drop.” So that it was rightly determined by holy Anselm.<sup>6</sup> “No man”—saith he—“can pay to God what he owes Him; Christ only paid more than he [*man*] owed Him.” By this, you see how rich a treasure lies in Christ to bestow in a purchase for us, above what He paid to redeem us; even as much as His soul and body were more worth than ours, for whom it was sacrificed. [It] is so great a sum that all the angels in heaven and men on earth can never compute and sum up to show us the total of it. And this was that inexhaustible treasure that Christ expended to procure and purchase the fairest<sup>7</sup> inheritance for believers.

**All eternal good things are the purchase of His blood.** Heaven and all the glory thereof is purchased for you that are believers with this price. Hence that glory, whatever it be, is called “an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1Pe 1:4). To the lively hope whereof you are begotten again, “by the resurrection of Christ from the dead” (1Pe 1:3). Not only present mercies are purchased for us, but “things to come” also (1Co 3:22). Man is a prudent and prospecting creature and is not satisfied that it is well with him for the present, unless he has some assurance it shall be well with him for time to come. His mind is taken up about what shall be hereafter; and from the good or evil things to come, he raiseth up to himself vast hopes or fears.

Therefore, to complete our happiness and fill up the uttermost capacity of our souls, all the good of eternity is put into the account and inventory of the saints’ estate and inheritance. This happiness is ineffable;<sup>8</sup> it is usually distinguished into what is *essential*, and what is *accessory* to it. The *essentials* of it, as far as we in our embodied state can

<sup>4</sup> *Latin: Christum parva magnis pensasse* (Christ valued small things as great) from *De Passione et Cruce* (*On the Passion and the Cross*). Flavel attributes the phrase to Athanasius of Alexandria (AD 296-373); some scholars now attribute it to a Pseudo-Athanasius (4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> century). The phrase emphasizes the majesty of the Eternal Son’s condescension, suffering, and love for God’s elect in their frailty.

<sup>5</sup> **John Chrysostom** (c. 347-407) – Archbishop of Constantinople, an important Early Church Father, known for his eloquence in preaching.

<sup>6</sup> **Anselm of Canterbury** (1033-1109) – medieval theologian. His theological treatises, prayers, meditations, and letters are considered literary masterpieces.

<sup>7</sup> **fairest** – supremely beautiful, excellent, and desirable.

<sup>8</sup> **ineffable** – too great to be described in words.

conceive, are the *objective*, *subjective*, or *formal* happiness to be enjoyed in heaven.

**The objective happiness is God Himself.** “Whom have I in heaven but thee?” (Psa 73:25). If it could be supposed (saith one) that God should withdraw from the saints in heaven and say, “Take heaven and divide it among you; but as for Me, I will withdraw from you,” the saints would fall a weeping in heaven and say, “Lord, take heaven and give it to whom Thou wilt. It is no heaven to us except Thou be there.” Heaven would be very *Bochim*<sup>9</sup> to the saints without God. Our glory in heaven consists in this: to be ever with the Lord (1Th 4:17). God Himself is the chief part of a saint's inheritance; in which sense, as some will understand, they are called “heirs of God” (Rom 8:17).

**The subjective glory<sup>10</sup> and happiness is the attemperation<sup>11</sup> and suiting of the soul and body to God.** This is begun in sanctification and perfected in glorification. It consists in removing from both all that is indecent and inconsistent with a state of such complete glory and happiness, and in superinducting<sup>12</sup> and clothing it with all heavenly qualities.

The immunities of the body are its freedom from all natural infirmities; which as they come in, they go out with sin. Thenceforth, there shall be no diseases, deformities, pains, flaws, monstrosities; their good physician death hath cured all this, and their vile bodies shall be made like unto Christ's glorious body (Phi 3:21) and be made a spiritual body (1Co 15:44): for *agility*, like the chariots of *Aminadab*; for *beauty*, as the top of *Lebanon*; for *incorruptibility*, as if they were *pure spirits*.

The *soul* also is discharged and freed from all darkness and ignorance of mind, being now able to discern all truths in God, that crystal ocean of truth. The leaks of the memory stopped forever; the roving of the fancy perfectly cured; the stubbornness and reluctancy of the will forever subdued and retained in due and full subjection to God. So that the saints in glory shall be free from all that now troubles them. They shall never sin more nor be once tempted so to do, for no serpent hisses in that paradise. They shall never grieve nor groan more, for God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes (Rev 7:17; 21:4). They shall never be troubled more, for God will then recompense tribulation to their

<sup>9</sup> **Bochim** – a location west of the Jordan River; its name means “weepers.”

<sup>10</sup> **subjective glory** – internal, experiential blessedness of the glorified believer.

<sup>11</sup> **attemperation** – adjusting something to make it suitable for a higher purpose; in this context, it means that glorification is the transformation of the believer's nature so it can fully delight in God, perfectly obey His will, and enjoy eternal communion with Him.

<sup>12</sup> **superinducting** – bringing to a higher or better condition.

troublers, and to them that are troubled, rest; they shall never doubt more, for fruition<sup>13</sup> excludes doubting.

**The *formal* happiness is the fulness of satisfaction resulting from the blessed sight and enjoyment of God by a soul so attempered to Him.** “I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness” (Psa 17:15). This sight of God in glory, called the Beatific Vision, must needs yield ineffable satisfaction to the beholding soul because it will be an *intuitive*<sup>14</sup> vision. The intellectual or mental eye shall see God (1Jo 3:2). The corporeal glorified eye<sup>15</sup> shall see Christ (Job 19:26-27). What a ravishing vision this will be, and how much will it exceed all reports and apprehensions we had of it here! Surely one half was not told us. It will be a *transformative vision*. It will change the beholder into its own image and likeness. “We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1Jo 3:2). As iron put into the fire becomes all fiery, so the soul, by conversing with God, is changed into His very similitude.<sup>16</sup> It will be an *appropriative vision*.<sup>17</sup> “Whom I shall see for myself” (Job 19:26-27). In heaven, interest is clear and undoubted. Fear is cast out—no need of marks and signs there—for what a man sees and enjoys, how can he doubt of? It will be a *ravishing vision*. These we have by faith are so, how much more those in glory? How was Paul transported, when he was in a visional way wrapped up into the third heaven and heard the unutterable things, though he was not admitted into the blessed society but was with them, as the angels are in our assemblies, a stander-by, a looker-on (2Co 12:1-4)...We shall then be at leisure for this employment and have no diversions from it forever. No evening is mentioned to the seventh day’s sabbath (Gen 2:1-3); no night in the new Jerusalem (Rev 21:25; 22:5). And therefore,

**Lastly, it will be a *fully satisfying vision*:** God will then be all in all, “Curiosity itself will be satisfied.” The blessed soul will feel itself blessed, filled, satisfied in every part. Ah, what happiness is here! To look and love, to drink and sing, and drink again at the fountainhead of the highest glory! And if at any time its eye be turned from a direct

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<sup>13</sup> **fruition excludes doubting** – entering the full experience of heaven (seeing Christ in His glory, being glorified, and participating in perfect holiness and love), faith will become sight leaving no possibility for doubt.

<sup>14</sup> **intuitive vision** – the soul’s clear, perfect, and direct sight of God’s glory and beauty.

<sup>15</sup> **corporeal glorified eye** – the resurrected, perfected eye of the believer, glorified and made fit to gaze upon Christ’s unveiled glory.

<sup>16</sup> **similitude** – likeness.

<sup>17</sup> **appropriative vision** – the soul’s personal and possessive sight of the glorious Christ; not merely seeing Him but beholding and embracing Him as the lover of one’s soul.

to a reflex<sup>18</sup> sight on what it once was—how it was wrought on, how fitted for His glory, how wonderfully distinguished by special grace from them that are howling in flames, whilst himself is shouting aloud upon his bed of everlasting rest—and this will enhance the glory.

And so also will the *accessories* of this blessedness be: *The place* where God is enjoyed, the *empyrean heaven*,<sup>19</sup> the city of God, whither Christ ascended, where the great assembly are met! Paradise and Canaan were but the types of it, more excelling and transcending the royal palaces of earthly princes than they do a pigeonhole. *The company* also with whom He is enjoyed adds to the glory. A blissful society indeed—[a] store of good neighbors in that city! There we shall have familiar converse<sup>20</sup> with angels, whose appearances now are insupportable by poor mortals. There will be sweet and full closings also between the saints: Luther and Zwingli are there agreed.<sup>21</sup> Here they could not fully close with one another, and no wonder, for they could not fully close with themselves. But perfect harmony and unity are *there*, all meeting and closing in God as lines in the center. This is a blessed glimpse of your inheritance.

From *The Whole Works of the Reverend John Flavel*, Vol. 1 (London; Edinburgh; Dublin: W. Baynes and Son; Waugh and Innes; M. Keene, 1820), 189-195; in the public domain.

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**John Flavel (c. 1630-1691):** English Presbyterian and minister; born at Bromagrove, Worcester, England, UK.



It is to be duly noted that the church's glory in heaven is the fruit of Christ's death. It is not merited by us but was purchased by Him. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it [i.e., in a sacrificial death]; That he might sanctify it...That he might present it to himself a glorious church" (Eph 5:25-27). So again, "That by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb 9:15). The following distinctions may help: The electing grace of the Father is the original cause of our glorification. The atonement of Christ is the meritorious cause. Quickening by the Spirit is the efficacious cause. Personal holiness is what fits us, for it is the condition without which we cannot obtain eternal bliss (Heb 12:14).—*A. W. Pink*

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<sup>18</sup> **reflex sight** – the soul's backward-looking gaze upon its former state of sin and Christ's astonishing outpouring of redeeming grace, now contemplated from the realms of glory.

<sup>19</sup> **empyrean heaven** – heaven of heavens, dwelling place of God, destination of Christ's ascension, final home of Christ's glorified blood-bought people.

<sup>20</sup> **converse** – social communication.

<sup>21</sup> **Martin Luther** (1483-1546) and **Huldrych Zwingli** (1484-1531) – German and Swiss leaders of the Protestant Reformation, who broke fellowship over their differing views of the Lord's Supper.

# THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)

*That it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.—Philippians 3:21*

**W**E see here that the best is yet to come.<sup>1</sup> The best change, after which there shall be no change, is to come. The weakest is the first, and the second is better. The second Adam is better than the first; and the second life shall be better than the first. Our bodies, as they shall be glorious, shall be better than they were in the first creation. They shall be glorious bodies, like unto Christ's. Oh, the comfort of a Christian... There shall be a change, but it shall be a change for the better! A Christian is a person full of hope. He is under a glorious hope, under a hope of glory of soul and body. He is always under hope—the “hope of glory.” Therefore, he joys under this hope (Rom 5:2)... Paul gives three evidences in one place [so that we may] know our interest in this glory of our bodies in 2 Corinthians 5:1.

**[This] is the first sign—a desire and groaning earnestly.** Saith he, “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” We know we have a glorious building, a double building: heaven and our bodies. We have two glorious houses. Heaven and these bodies shall be a glorious house. But how do we know this? Saith he, in the second verse, “For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” There is a wondrous desire after this clothing: “The creature groaneth, much more we that have the first fruits of the Spirit” (Rom 8:23). There will be a sighing for this glory, a waiting for the blessed coming of Christ, for Christ to redeem soul and body perfectly.

**In the fifth verse, there is the second evidence:** “Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God.” He that hath wrought us for the blessed estate to come is God. So, whosoever hopes for a house in heaven when this tabernacle is dissolved, he is “wrought”<sup>2</sup> for it, that is, he is a new creature for it (see 2Co 5:17). God hath wrought his soul and body for it. God fits our souls here to possess a glorious body after, and He will fit the body for a glorious soul. So, both shall be glorious—

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<sup>1</sup> **EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article has been edited more than usual for the benefit of modern readers.

<sup>2</sup> **wrought** – thoroughly prepared, made ready by God's work in him.

a glorious soul and a glorious body. He hath “wrought us” for the same. If a man therefore finds the beginning of the new creature, that it is begun to be wrought in him, he may know that he shall partake of this glory of the body, because he is “wrought” for it.

**The third is, “Who hath also given us the earnest<sup>3</sup> of the Spirit.”** Whosoever finds in them the Spirit of God, sanctifying their souls and bodies, stirring them up to holy duties, guiding, leading, and moving them to holy actions, they may, from the sanctifying Spirit that is an earnest to them, know what shall become of their bodies. “[He] hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.”

To confirm this, there is an excellent place in Romans 8:9, “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin” (Rom 8:10a). It is a vile body; it is as good as dead; it hath the sentence of death already...as a malefactor<sup>4</sup> that hath his sentence. “But the Spirit is life because of righteousness” (Rom 8:10b). What then? If the sanctifying Spirit of Christ dwell in you, [He] that raised up Jesus from the dead...shall also quicken<sup>5</sup> your mortal bodies (see Rom 8:11). The same Spirit that sanctifies these souls of ours and quickens<sup>6</sup> them to holy duties shall raise our bodies. As the same Spirit that sanctified the blessed mass of the body of Christ that He carried, and raised His body, the same Spirit that sanctifies our souls shall raise our bodies! When the Spirit of God hath begun to sanctify us, He never leaves us. He goes along in all changes, in life, in death, to the grave, as God said to Jacob, “I will be with thee there” (Gen 32:28ff). The Spirit of God will mold our dead

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<sup>3</sup> **earnest** – “The characteristic of an earnest is that it is an installment, the first payment in kind of the very thing itself. It is vital to the true understanding of this doctrine that we should realize that an earnest is a first installment of the whole, a guarantee that the rest will follow, and it is a pledge in that sense. But there is another difference also between a pledge and an earnest. If you have given a pledge to cover a transaction, when you actually make the payment, your pledge is returned to you. The terms *pledge* or *guarantee*...mean the same thing. You leave your deposit, but when the time comes and you make your payment, your deposit or your pledge is returned to you. But that does not happen in the case of an earnest. The reason is that an earnest is a part or portion of the whole, and therefore it is not returned to you when the remainder is paid...your earnest was actually a part of the whole...In other words, the apostle’s teaching is that the Holy Spirit within us gives us what we as Christians should be enjoying—a foretaste of heaven! Through the Holy Spirit within us as an earnest, we are to begin enjoying heaven even here.” (D. M. Lloyd-Jones, “The Earnest of Our Inheritance” in *God’s Ultimate Purpose: An Exposition of Ephesians 1*, 301-311). We may summarize *earnest* thus: the first installment of the inheritance itself; not a pledge to be returned, but a portion of the whole—through the Spirit, believers begin enjoying heaven and a foretaste of glorification in this world (see Eph 1:14).

<sup>4</sup> **malefactor** – criminal.

<sup>5</sup> **quicken** – give life to.

<sup>6</sup> **quicken** – gives spiritual life to sustain faith and grant strength for good works.

bodies and make them like the glorious body of Christ. The Spirit of God never leaves our souls or bodies. Therefore, if we find the earnest of the Spirit—the Spirit’s work, His comfort (as Scripture calls it, “joy in the Holy Ghost and peace of conscience”)—along with His sanctifying presence, especially in times of trouble when God sees His children most in need, then we have the earnest of the Spirit—the beginnings of grace and joy, the beginnings of heaven upon earth! By this they may *know*. As the first fruit is, so likewise is the harvest. As the earnest is, even so is the bargain. As we have it now in our souls, so we shall also have it in our bodies and souls hereafter.

Paul hath, by these three grounds, [reasons] why his hope of heaven was a good hope. We groan for it, we are wrought for it, we are fitted<sup>7</sup> for it. No man can hope to be glorified in his body, unless God has prepared the soul for it. It must be a fit jewel for so glorious a casket,<sup>8</sup> a fit inhabitant for so glorious a temple as the body shall be. The body shall be fitted for the soul, and the soul for the body. They are “wrought” for it. And then He hath given us “the earnest of the Spirit.” What need I quote further evidence, the Scripture being thus pregnant?<sup>9</sup>

I beseech you. Often consider your desires, whether you be content to live here always or not, to satisfy the vile lusts of your body; or whether you desire “to depart, and to be with Christ” (Phi 1:23), when you have done the work that God sent you for into the world. If we be content to abase ourselves for God here, Who hath provided so much glory for us hereafter, and when the time comes, we can desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, it is a good sign—if we have the beginnings of the new creature, “ye are wrought for it”—that our souls are fitted for a glorious body. We have “the earnest of the Spirit.” The same Spirit that sanctifies our souls and quickens [them] with joy and peace—the same Spirit—shall raise our bodies. Comfort yourselves with this, you that are Christians. Though you be weak, if you have but the earnest of the Spirit, undoubtedly you shall have a glorious house instead of this tabernacle of dust.

Christ will “change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” I beseech you, therefore, think often of this. Think of the time to come; comfort yourselves with things to come. In 1 Thesalonians 4:18, Paul would have us talk to one another often of this. This should be the matter of our conference: not only the state of the

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<sup>7</sup> **fitted** – adapted; suitable.

<sup>8</sup> **casket** – jewel-box.

<sup>9</sup> **pregnant** – plain and clear regarding this point.

church and our own estate here, but how it shall be with us when we are gone hence,<sup>10</sup> how it shall be with us hereafter, world without end. We should confer, speak, meditate often, and think about these things.

What can be grievous? What can be over-burdensome to that soul that knows it hath the pledge and earnest of glory hereafter? How doth it quicken the soul to any endeavor, when once we know that howsoever we abase<sup>11</sup> ourselves here, yet we shall have glorious bodies hereafter! It will quicken us to any endeavor—to *anything* for Christ. Therefore, let us think often of our estate to come. Let us set our thoughts forward to the time to come. Let faith make the times to come present, and that will make us heavenly-minded. What made Paul converse<sup>12</sup> as if he were in heaven? Faith made the estate to come present; and hope, which is grounded on faith, it looks to Christ's coming to change our vile bodies. So, faith and hope make the soul look upward. They make it heavenly-minded.

Our souls are dull, and our bodies are dull in this world...But if we get faith and hope to look forward [to] what shall be done to us in the time to come, the Spirit of faith and hope—if it touches the soul—will carry our dull bodies and our dead souls upward.

Therefore, let us cherish our faith and hope by often meditating on the blessed estate to come and think of these two things: 1) *of the excellent estate of our bodies and souls then*. For if our bodies shall then be glorious like the body of Christ, our souls much more...Let us think often of this glory as it is described in the Word. It transcends our thoughts! We cannot think highly enough of it and of our interest and assurance of it. And 2) let us *search ourselves daily, whether our hope is good or not*—that we have found evidence that our title to glory is good. Let us examine ourselves by those signs I named before. Where are our desires? What work hath the Spirit of God in us? How do we use these bodies of ours? As we use them now, we must consider the way they will be used hereafter. Let our tongues be our glory now, and they shall be glorious tongues afterward to praise God in heaven. Our bodies that have been used in glorious ways here shall be glorious in heaven. We may read our estate to come by what we are here. We may know what will become hereafter of those who carry themselves basely, filthily, and dishonorably here. Oh, let us spend a few days fruitfully and

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<sup>10</sup> **hence** – from here.

<sup>11</sup> **abase** – willingly endure lowliness, suffering, or self-denial in this life.

<sup>12</sup> **What made...converse...heaven** – What caused Paul to live in such a heavenly-minded way? He walked in habitual fellowship with Christ and governed his way of life by prayer, the Word, and faith in heavenly realities (Phi 3:20; 2Co 4:16-18).

painfully here amongst men and do all the good we can, and use these bodies of ours to all the happy and blessed services we can! Why? We shall have more glory than we can imagine... These vile bodies, when they are most vile in death, shall be made like the glorious body of Christ. Let us think often of these things.

From *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart, Vol. 5 (Edinburgh; London; Dublin: James Nichol; James Nisbet and Co.; W. Robertson, 1863), 162-173; in the public domain.



Is communion with Christ pleasant to us now? Do we find His name precious to us? Do we feel our hearts burn within us at the thought of His dying love? We shall have perfect communion with Him in glory. "We shall ever be with the Lord" (1 Th 4:17). We shall be with Him in Paradise; we shall see His face in the kingdom. These eyes of ours will behold those hands and feet that were pierced with nails, and that head that was crowned with thorns. Where He is, there will the sons of God be. When He comes, they will come with Him. When He sits down in His glory, they shall sit down by His side. Blessed prospects indeed! I am a dying man in a dying world. All before me is unseen. The world to come is a harbor unknown! But Christ is there, and that is enough. Surely if there is rest and peace in following Him by faith on earth, there will be far more rest and peace when you see Him face to face.

—*J. C. Ryle*

"This corruptible shall have put on incorruption" (1 Co 15:54)! There will be an entire casting aside of mortality, with all its wrappings of corruption, with all its relics of dishonor. Every particle of evil shall be shaken out of us, and this "vile body" transfigured into the likeness of the Lord's own glorious body (Phi 3:21). We entered this world mortal and corruptible; all our life long we are imbibing mortality and corruption, becoming more and more thoroughly mortal and corruptible. The grave sets its seal to all this and crumbles us down into common earth. But the trumpet sounds and all this is gone! Mortality falls off, and all pertaining to it is left behind, no more of dross or disease in our frame. We can then *defy* sickness, pain, and death. We can say to our bodies, "Be pained no more"; to our limbs, "Be weary no more"; to our lips, "Be parched no more"; to our eye, "Be dim no more."

—*Horatius Bonar*

By death, the true believer is brought to the possession of all those heavenly riches, honors, and glorious pleasures that were laid up by Christ for him. Being thus made gloriously beautiful with perfect holiness, he is embraced in the arms of his glorified Redeemer and is conducted to the infinite treasure that was laid up for him, has his crown of glory placed on his head, and is led to the rivers of pleasure that flow at God's right hand, is set down at the eternal banquet of heaven, and is eternally entertained in the heavenly music of God's praises that are sung by choirs of angels above, resting forever in the arms of a glorious Christ, forever delighted in His sweet embraces. 'Tis this, and no less than this, that death brings the true Christian to. This is the gain of dying. This is instead of those worthless, miserable, wretched, dull, earthly vanities that he left behind. No less than this is the gain of a Christian's death.

—*Jonathan Edwards*

# FROM DEATH TO GLORY

Octavius Winslow (1808-1878)

*Thou shalt...receive me to glory.—Psalm 73:24*

**T**HE transition of the believer from the chamber of sickness to the bed of death is a natural and often a short one. The Lord's sick one now becomes the Lord's dying one. It is by the process of "wasting disease" that the loving Savior, for the most part, comes into His garden and gathers His plants of righteousness—the lily in its youthful bloom, the rose in its matronly<sup>1</sup> beauty, the cedar in its manly strength, the oak in its grace and grandeur—transferring them to His Paradise on high.

There are, indeed, some of God's children whose departure may be regarded more (in the light of Enoch)<sup>2</sup> like translations<sup>3</sup> than of an ordinary death. The chariot has descended so suddenly and with wheels so noiseless, the last enemy has approached so stealthily and with tread so softly, that we had scarcely seen them enter the celestial carriage before it bore them beyond our weeping eyes and wondering gaze—they themselves not knowing that it was death until they had passed through its portal and found themselves in heaven! Absent from the body, as in a moment, they were present with the Lord. But with you, beloved, the Lord's wise and loving dealings may be far otherwise. It is, perhaps, by slow disease and acute suffering [that] He is taking down the earthly house. Wearisome days and sleepless nights are appointed to you; and looking through the lattice of the dissolving tabernacle, you exclaim, "Why is His chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of His chariot?" And now, as with unclasped and uplifted wings, your soul lingers upon the border land.

**Dying saint of God, how enviable is your state!** Soon you will see Jesus in all His glory. Soon you will mingle with apostles, prophets, martyrs, and all the heavenly host. Soon you will be clasped in the fond and welcoming embrace of the loved ones who preceded you to glory. Soon you will be freed from all taint of sin,<sup>4</sup> from every fetter of

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<sup>1</sup> **matronly** – characteristic of a dignified, middle-aged, married woman.

<sup>2</sup> **Enoch** – mentioned in Gen 5:19-24 and Heb 11:5; he "walked with God" by faith and pleased Him. As a result, God took him into His presence without experiencing death.

<sup>3</sup> **translations** – taken to heaven from earth without dying.

<sup>4</sup> **all taint of sin** – every trace of sin's contamination.

corruption, from every tear of sorrow, from every pang of suffering, and from every feeling of languor<sup>5</sup> and faintness. Oh, blissful exchange! Oh, glorious prospect! Fear not! Keep your eye upon Jesus. Look not so much to His work as to Himself, not so much to His salvation as to the Savior, not so much to the gospel of Christ as to the person of Christ. Let yours be a personal dealing with a personal Savior. Let nothing come between you and Jesus. He is with you, and He bids you come—not to His cross, or to His work, or to His sacrament—but to *Himself*. “Come unto ME; I will give you rest” (see Mat 11:28). He wants you to lay your dying head upon His very heart, to clasp His very hand in yours, and to feel that nearer to Him you cannot be until your disembodied spirit<sup>6</sup> speeds its flight and folds its weary wings upon His glorified bosom...

**One word as to the world you are about to leave.** Have you made a wise and equitable<sup>7</sup> adjustment of your temporal<sup>8</sup> matters, so that after your decease, the near and beloved ones who survive and succeed to your property may be free from all anxiety, allegation, and litigation? Our Lord Jesus made His last will and testament, bequeathing<sup>9</sup> to His people the richest treasure He could leave—His peace, which passes all understanding—do you follow His example and set your worldly house in order that those who inherit your goods may bless your memory and glorify God for the grace and wisdom and uprightness given you? The criminal neglect of this significant duty has been the productive cause of more domestic unhappiness than almost any that can be named. “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (1Ti 4:8).

**We now follow [the believer] from death to glory.** In each stage of this his earthly pilgrimage, how precious is he to the heart of Jesus, how firmly and safely kept by the power of God unto full salvation! The journey is not long; the transition is often very quick. The instant that he has suffered the last pang, wept the last tear, heaved the last sigh, and looked his last look of love on earth, he is before the throne of God and the Lamb, drinking of the crystal river that flows from beneath it, and basking in the effulgence of glory<sup>10</sup> that beams around it. My soul, let faith, with its far-seeing eye, look within the veil, and behold the

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<sup>5</sup> **languor** – lack of energy.

<sup>6</sup> **disembodied spirit** – human spirit separated from the physical body by death.

<sup>7</sup> **equitable** – fair and impartial.

<sup>8</sup> **temporal** – earthly, of this world.

<sup>9</sup> **bequeathing** – leaving something to someone by a will after one’s death.

<sup>10</sup> **effulgence of glory** – radiant outshining of divine majesty and splendor.

glory into which you shall before long enter, and exclaim, in the sweet exercise of that faith, “You will receive me to glory.”

**And, first, think of its certainty.** The inspired Scriptures, which cannot be broken, affirm this truth in the clearest and most positive terms. Nothing is more certain than the final glory of all God’s saints. “Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore” (Psa 16:11). “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness” (Psa 17:15). “The hope which is laid up for you in heaven” (Col 1:5). And if these aspirations<sup>11</sup> and declarations of faith are not sufficient, then, listen to the crowning evidence affirmed by the words of Jesus Himself: “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory” (Joh 17:24). Yes, my soul, glory is at the end of your weary, tearful, toilsome pilgrimage. It is the last link in the golden chain that binds you to the throne of heaven. The first link of that chain is God’s foreknowledge<sup>12</sup> of His saints; the last, His glorification of them: “For whom he did foreknow...them he also glorified” (Rom 8:30).

And now the sick and suffering and longing one is in glory! The soul has passed the portal of death, has dropped its chain, and is free! All it believed, all it expected, and all it longed for is now realized, fully and forever realized, and its traveled feet walk the golden streets, and its weary wing is folded upon the bosom of its Savior. No more sin, no more impurity, no more suffering, no more weariness, no more tears—the former things are passed away, behold, all things are new! It has seen Jesus! It is now mingling with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and all the holy angels—it is “without fault before the throne of God” (Rev 14:6), hymning the high praises of the Lamb.

From *The Works of Octavius Winslow* (Kindle Locations 59569-59694);  
Monergism Books. Kindle Edition.

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**Octavius Winslow (1808-1878):** Baptist pastor and prolific author; later an Anglican priest; born in Pentonville, England, UK.



This crazy tabernacle<sup>13</sup> is taken down that a glorious temple may be reared up.  
—*Jonathan Edwards.*

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<sup>11</sup> **aspirations** – earnest desires or longings.

<sup>12</sup> **God’s foreknowledge** – His eternal knowledge of all things and love for His elect in Christ before time.

<sup>13</sup> **crazy tabernacle** – believer’s weak and sinful human body.

# SEEING CHRIST'S ETERNAL GLORY<sup>1</sup>

Isaac Ambrose (1604-1664)

**W**HAT is the glory of Christ? I answer that the glory of Christ is either human or divine. (a) There is a human glory, which in time was more especially conferred upon His manhood. (b) There is an essential or divine glory, which before time and after time, even from everlasting to everlasting, issueth<sup>2</sup> from the Godhead. I shall speak to both these that we may rather take a view of Christ in those glories (as we are able), wherein He will appear to His saints as their "all in all" to all eternity.

**How shall the saints behold this glory?** I answer, as Christ hath a twofold glory, so there is a twofold manner of beholding it, i.e., *Ocular*<sup>3</sup> and *Mental*.

(a) **First, there is an *ocular* vision, a sight of Christ with our very eyes.** "Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold" (Job 19:27). With these eyes in our heads, we shall one day behold the human glory of Christ. I doubt not we shall behold the beauty of heaven, the shining bodies of the saints; but above all, our very eyes shall delightfully contemplate Christ's glorious body. And indeed, this shall drown all the other sights. If any think that Christ's glorious body shall be too intensive and too extraordinary a brightness for our weak eyes, let such consider that,

(1) *The eye in heaven shall be glorified.* Now glorification adds a singular excellency to the faculties. It advanceth the faculties and raiseth them to a higher pitch of excellency. Glorification adds a greater capacity to the eye than ever it had before. In this world, there is a difference in our eyes and sight. A man of a clear sight sees more things and more of everything than a dark sight doth. So, a glorified eye sees more of things than our eyes now can see. It shall be enlarged exceedingly to take in objects that now it cannot receive. Glorification adds strength to the faculties both internal and external, so that the eye shall be able

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<sup>1</sup> **EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article has been edited more than usual for modern readers.

<sup>2</sup> **essential...before time and after time...issueth from the Godhead** – "issueth" does not imply that Christ is a created being nor that He had a beginning. The reference here is to eternal generation, which is the timeless, necessary, and internal act by which the Father communicates the divine essence to the Son, affirming Christ's deity. This is in harmony with the Nicene Creed: "Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father."

<sup>3</sup> **ocular** – referring to the eye or vision.

to look on the glory of Christ, not with difficulty, but with *contentment*. In this world, every sense we have is apt to be destroyed by excellent objects; and the more excellent and transcendent the object is, the more it hurts and destroys the sense, as the sun by its brightness darkens the eye. Other things by mighty sounds bring deafness on the ear. Paul indeed had a vision of glory; but because his faculties were not glorified, he knew not “whether [he was] in the body, or out of the body” (2Co 12:3). Whether alive or dead, he did not know. Certainly, the sight of the glory of the other world would amaze, distract, and destroy us, if we had a sight of it as we now are; but in heaven, the eye shall have great pleasure in beholding the brightest light because it shall be advanced to the highest pitch of strength that may be.

(2) *As the eye shall be glorified, so it shall act in a glorified body.* Instead of hurting us, this will make the sight of the glory of Christ to leave upon us a more sweet, enlivening, and powerful impression. By this means, all the impediments<sup>4</sup> that hinder the conveyance of divine influences from that heavenly object will be removed. To illustrate this, let the most excellent sight be set before a man that is defective in his bodily state, and it doth not take him<sup>5</sup>—what would a sick man do with such things? He makes nothing of the most pleasant gardens, orchards, buildings, nor of the most glorious sights that are. When he is sick, they are but sick things of none effect to him. But in heaven, the body shall be glorified and stripped of all corruptions and imperfections, so that there shall be no bar<sup>6</sup> to the influences of the glory of Christ that shall be seen there.

(3) *As there shall be a glorified eye acting in a glorified body, so it shall be acted by a glorified spirit.* The eye is but the organ or instrument of sight, and without the spirit, [it] would convey no more than a glass<sup>7</sup> doth. It is the spirit of a man that gives life to vision; it is the spirit of a man that discovers things and sets them forth in their worth, virtues, and ends. Now in heaven, the spirits of men shall be glorified and enabled to perform all those offices in perfection, so that when a man shall look on the man Christ Jesus, by virtue of a glorified spirit, he shall see more, know more, taste more, than any other can. As a man of understanding, when he looks on a diamond or a wedge of gold, he hath other apprehensions of it, and a farther touch upon his spirit than a beast or

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<sup>4</sup> **impediments** – human and spiritual obstacles.

<sup>5</sup> **it doth not take him** – its beauty does not move nor impress him.

<sup>6</sup> **bar** – barrier or restriction.

<sup>7</sup> **glass** – mirror. The human eye, without God's Spirit, cannot communicate spiritual understanding to the believer's mind and heart—any more than a mirror's reflection can.

a child in a cradle hath. So, where the sight of the eye is acted<sup>8</sup> by a glorified mind, it takes in more from the sight of everything that is to be seen—inexpressibly more—than what can be done here by the most sanctified spirit in the world. Now, though [something else may] be the brightest visible thing in the heaven of heavens in these respects, yet [will] Christ's glorified body be the object of the eyes of saints, for they shall have glorified eyes in glorified bodies acted by their glorified spirits.

**(b) Second, there is a mental vision—a sight of Christ by the eyes of our understandings.** And surely this exceeds the former. The eye of the body is only on the body of Christ, but the eye of the soul is on the body and soul, on the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. This is the very top of heaven, when saints shall be enlightened with a clear and glorious sight of Christ as God. Divines<sup>9</sup> usually call it, “Beatific Vision.”<sup>10</sup>

**Question:** But how shall saints behold the glorious essence or Godhead of Christ? I answer:

**(1) Some say that Christ as God shall be known by the humanity of Christ.** Such a luster of His deity shall shine through His humanity that by no other means shall the essential glory of Christ appear.

**(2) Others say that, besides the humanity of Christ, there shall be a species<sup>11</sup> representing the divine essence of Christ—a light of glory elevating the understanding by a supernatural strength and that, thereby, the glorious essence of Christ shall be discovered.**

**(3) Others say that the divine essence shall be represented to the glorified understanding, not by Christ's humanity, nor by any species, but immediately<sup>12</sup> by itself.** Yet they also require a light of glory to elevate and fortify the understanding, by reason of its weakness and infinite disproportion and distance from the incomprehensible deity.

**(4) Others hold that to the clear vision of Christ as God, there is not required a sight of Christ's humanity, as the first suppose; nor a species**

<sup>8</sup> acted – enlightened.

<sup>9</sup> divines – theologians.

<sup>10</sup> **Beatific Vision** – a glorified soul's direct, transformative, and eternal beholding of God's glory in heaven. God's redeemed are brought into perfect communion with the Triune God, seeing Him “face to face” in the fullness of His beauty, holiness, and love. This is the purpose of being saved, the source of eternal joy, and the ultimate experience of glorification.

<sup>11</sup> **species** – (*theological term*, connected to the Beatific Vision). A glorified soul, strengthened by divine illumination, is given a clear understanding of Christ's divine essence through a *species*—a spiritual “representation” that helps believers know God far beyond what we can know on earth.

<sup>12</sup> **immediately** – directly, without the use of means.

representing the divine essence, as the second suppose; nor any created light elevating the understanding, as the third suppose; but only a change of the natural order of knowing. It is sufficient, they say, that the divine essence be immediately represented to a created understanding, which, though it cannot be done according to the order of nature as experience tells us (for so we conceive things as first having passed the sense and imagination), yet it may be done according to the order of divine grace. I shall not enter these scholastic disputes. It is enough for a sober man to know that in heaven we shall see Him “face to face” (1Co 13:12). “His servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face” (Rev 22:3-4).

**Question.** His face. What is that? I answer:

**(1) They shall see Christ as God, of the same essence with the Father and the Holy Ghost, and yet a distinct Person from them both.** They shall see the unity in Trinity and Trinity in unity. They shall see how the Son is begotten of the Father, and how the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. They shall see the difference between the generation of the Son and procession of the Spirit. These are mysteries in which we are blind and know little or nothing; but in seeing His face, we shall see all these.

**(2) They shall see Christ as the first Being or principle of all the good that is in the world.** They shall see how “all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (Joh 1:3). They shall see all the good in the creature as flowing from Christ and as contained in the absolute perfection of Christ's divine nature. They shall see in one Christ all the excellencies of all the creatures united, which is indeed to see Him in His eminence,<sup>13</sup> if there be any beauty, riches, honor, goodness in any creature, that is eminently, transcendently, and originally in Christ, and that shall be seen.

**(3) They shall see Christ in all His ways, counsels, decrees, executions,<sup>14</sup> and transactions, from everlasting to everlasting.** That great business of election and reprobation<sup>15</sup> will then be revealed. It is an expression of Augustine, “They shall then see the reason why one is elected and another reprobated; why one is rich, and another poor.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> **eminence** – exalted superiority.

<sup>14</sup> **executions** – carryings out of His eternal purpose.

<sup>15</sup> **election and reprobation** – See FGB 255, *Election and Reprobation*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

<sup>16</sup> **EDITOR'S NOTE:** These statements do not appear to be derived verbatim from Augustine's works but may rather form a pastoral summary from Augustine's major works *City of God* and *On the Predestination of the Saints*.

They shall then see all the works that God ever did or that God will ever do... We see not these things; but the saints, in seeing the face of Christ, shall see all things.

(4) **They shall see Christ in all His glory, ways, counsels, decrees, executions, and transactions, as working for their happiness.** Now this is more than the former; there is a great deal of difference in seeing an object as excellent in itself and in seeing an object as conducing to my happiness<sup>17</sup>... The saints admitted into the glorious sight of Christ take not only a view of Christ, of the essential glory of Christ, of the transactions of Christ, things excellent in themselves, but they see all these as to make them happy. They say of Christ and of all His actings, “These are mine, and for my happiness!” A stranger may look upon a king and see beauty, majesty, glory, and honor in him, but the queen looks upon the king and his beauty as her own. So, the saints look upon the King of heaven. They see Christ and all in Christ as their own, to make them happy forever and ever.

(5) **They shall see Christ as He is (1Jo 3: 2).** But what! Do we not see Him *now* as He is? Oh no! We see Him now *not* as He is in deed and truth, but only as He is in hearsay<sup>18</sup> and report. We now see Him only as He is shadowed out to us in the gospel of peace. And what is the gospel, but the portraiture of the king, which he sent to another land, to be seen by his bride? So kings and queens on earth woo one another. Whilst the bride is on earth, she never seeth Him as He is in His best Sabbath-royal-robe of immediate glory; she seeth Him rather by the second-hand, i.e. by messengers, words, and mediation. He rather sends His portraiture than comes Himself. But in heaven the saints “see him as he is”; they see Christ Himself in His own very person. They see the red and white in His own face; they see all the inside of Christ. And thousands of excellencies shall then be revealed that we see not now. The mysteries of that glorious ark shall then be opened: His incarnation, His two natures in one person, His suffering as man, and His sitting in the seat of God as God—all these shall be seen.

(6) **They shall see Christ without interruption and without intermission to all eternity.** If once the eye be set on the face of Jesus Christ, it will never be taken off again. Some conceive this to be the reason that the saints in heaven can never fall away: they shall have a continual view of Christ as God. Surely, to have but one glimpse of Christ in this respect,

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<sup>17</sup> **conducing...happiness** – seeing Christ in His glory and beauty leads to, brings about, the saint’s eternal happiness.

<sup>18</sup> **hearsay** – that which one hears or has heard someone say.

though it were gone presently, it were a great happiness beyond all that the world affords. If Christ should but grant us this happiness—"You shall come to see Me, but the sight of Me will destroy you"—this would be a desirable thing! But to have such an excellent glorious sight that will never end, that Christ should not only pass by, but stand still, so as the soul shall never lose His sight—oh, how glorious is this! If a man do but look upon a delightful object, he is unwilling to have the eye drawn from it. Surely the eyes of saints shall be eternally opened to see the divine nature of Christ. Turn them which way they will, they shall never turn aside the busied eyes of their understanding from the deity of Christ. He fills heaven. He is that fair tree of life, the branches whereof, in all these huge and capacious<sup>19</sup> borders of heaven, have not room to grow in, "seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him" (2Ch 2:5). Oh, the wonders of heaven! There are Abraham, Moses, Elias, the prophets, the apostles, and all the glorified martyrs, but the saints have neither leisure nor hearts<sup>20</sup> to feed themselves with beholding of creatures.<sup>21</sup> No, no! All the eyes of heaven, which are a fair and numerous company, are upon—only, only upon—the Lord Jesus Christ! The father hath no leisure to look over his shoulder to see his son. The husband hath no leisure to look over his shoulder to see his wife. Christ takes all eyes off from such created things. Surely it is enough for the saints and angels in heaven to study Christ for all eternity. It shall be their only labor to read Christ, to smell Christ, to hear, see, and taste Christ, to love, joy, and enjoy Jesus Christ forever and ever. Thus far...how the saints shall behold the glory of Christ.

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**Isaac Ambrose (1604-1664):** Anglican, then Presbyterian minister; born in Ormskirk, Lancashire, England, UK.



If we are painfully conscious of how far short we fall of being conformed to the image of Christ, then we should stir up our souls to make more serious efforts after the same. If we are to spend an eternity in His presence, how we should strive after a growing knowledge of God, how we should seek to please and honor Him in all things! Then let us "follow on to know the LORD" (Hos 6:3), let us spend more time in the "secret place of the most High" (Psa 91:1), let us make future things the subject of our meditation.

—Arthur W. Pink

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<sup>19</sup> **capacious** – expansive; spacious.

<sup>20</sup> **neither...hearts** – neither time nor desire to be focused on created beings, but on Christ.

<sup>21</sup> **beholding of creatures** – fixing their eyes on created beings rather than Christ.

# GROANING FOR GLORIFICATION

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)

*Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.—Romans 8:23*

**T**HIS groaning is universal among the saints: To a greater or lesser extent, we all feel it. It is not the groan of murmuring or complaint. It is rather the note of *desire* than of distress. Having received an earnest, we desire the whole of our portion. We are sighing that our entire manhood, in its trinity of spirit, soul, and body, may be set free from the last vestige of the Fall. We long to put off corruption, weakness, and dishonor, and to wrap ourselves in incorruption, in immortality, in glory, in the spiritual body that the Lord Jesus will bestow upon His people. We long for the manifestation of our adoption as the children of God. “We groan,” but it is “within ourselves” (Rom 8:23). It is not the hypocrite’s groan, by which he would make men believe that he is a saint because he is wretched. Our sighs are sacred things, too hallowed for us to tell abroad. We keep our longings to our Lord alone. Then the apostle says we are “waiting,” by which we learn that we are not to be [impatient], like Jonah or Elijah, when they said, “Let me die”; nor are we to whimper and sigh for the end of life because we are tired of work, nor wish to escape from our present sufferings until the will of the Lord is done. We are to groan for glorification, but we are to wait patiently for it, knowing that what the Lord appoints is best. Waiting implies being ready. We are to stand at the door expecting the Beloved to open it and take us away to Himself. This “groaning” is a test. You may judge of a man by what he groans after. Some men groan after wealth. They worship Mammon. Some groan continually under the troubles of life. They are merely impatient. But the man who sighs after God—who is uneasy until he is made like Christ—that is the blessed man. May God help us to groan for the coming of the Lord and the resurrection that He will bring to us.

From *Morning and Evening*; in the public domain.



After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

—*Ephesians 1:13-14*