



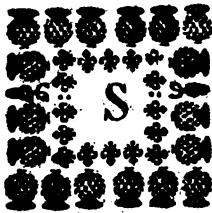
AN HEAVENLY Conversation.

PHILIP. 3. 20.

For our Conversation is in Heaven.

CHAP. I.

Of Examples of Godly men, and how far they should prevail with us: Opened in Six Particulars.


 Some read this Particle [*For*] [*But*] *But our Conversation is in Heaven.* Our Conversation is not as theirs: Certainly the Apostle doth intend this, to make a distinction from, or a difference between the Saints waies, and the waies of those that were Enemies to the Cross of Christ: *They mind Earthly things: But our Conversation is in Heaven:* But because of the particle, [*For*] our Conversation; therefore I think that it hath reference unto the 17. verse, for the 18. and 19. verses are in a parenthesis.

renthesis, and therefore if you would know the scope of the Apostle in it, and what this hath relation to; (for) it is in the 17. verse, *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as you have us for an ensample; for our Conversation is in Heaven,* so it is to follow: he made a little degression when he said, *Make us your example;* then he speakes of others, but many there are that walk thus and thus, and are enemies to the cross of Christ, *Whose belly is their god, whose glory is their shame, whose end is destruction, who mind earthly things; But our (or, for our) Conversation is in Heaven.* As if he should say, *Take heed of following of those whose belly is their god, who mind earthly things, for their end is destruction; but rather follow those whose Conversation is in heaven, for their end is, salvation: that's the scope of the words.* Now then from the scope and the coherance of them, follow us for an example, *For our Conversation is in Heaven;* so they are to be joyn'd together; from whence (first) before we come to speak of this Heavenly Conversation that the Apostle mentions, we have this point, *That the Examples of men whose Conversations are heavenly, are to be followed.* Follow us an example, for our Conversation is in heaven. They are guided by the spirit of God, and the end of their Conversation is good, and therefore 'tis safe to be followed. In *Prov. 2. 20.* there the Wise man speakes of an argument, *Why we should imbrace wisdom, because that would teach you to walk in the way of good men, and to keep the paths of the Righteous.* We should observe the way of good men and keep the paths of the righteous. It's true, that the examples of the best men, though never so holy, are not a sufficient rule for any action. If a man or woman doth any thing, though it be never so good, nicely upon the example of another man, yet this that they do will prove sin to them: I say, though the thing be good, and thou doest it upon the example of other good men, yet if that be all thy rule, the action will be sin to thee: for that is the rule of Christ to us, *whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* Now no example can be a ground sufficient for faith; therefore, example alone is not a good rule. Yea, and sometimes we know that

that Satan himself may transform himself into an Angel of light : and may for the prevailing of some evil make a great shew of some holiness : and so, many gross Hypocrites for a time have had much seeming holiness in their lives : and therefore it must be taken for a certain truth that the examples of men never so holy are not a sufficient rule. But yet thus far examples of men that are holy should prevail with us.

First, They should prevail with us more than other examples, than examples of the most learned men ; let men be never so great Rabbies, the example of one holy man whose Conversation is in Heaven, should be more to us than the example of many Scholers. For many men that are learned may be very corrupt, they may go against their own consciences ; as certainly many do,

1. It should prevail against the example of great rich men who have goods laid up for many yeares : you should rather follow the example of those that appear to be holy, than the example of the richest and greatist in the places where you live.
2. It should be more than the example of the Multitude, *Joel, 3. 14.* you have a notable Scripture. there against following of Multitudes of men, you may see there that multitudes go to destruction ; *Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.*
3. It should be more than the example of those that are merely related unto us : as children should rather look at the example of godly men and women though they be strangers, than of Father or Mother, or Uncle or Aunt, or the neereft kindred ; though their examples be not rules for our faith, yet they should be more than the examples of any others.

Secondly, Though they should not be rules or grounds of faith, yet they should be enough to take off prejudices that come from accusations of men. If men will accuse the wayes of godliness, and if there be any prejudices taken up against the pathis of Sion without ground, the example of godly men

should be enough to make us stand out against them; it may be you hear many crying out bitterly against such a way of Worship, and many false aspersions are cast upon it, because it is not a National way of Worship, for few there be that follow it. Now do but observe what manner of persons do worship God in that way which some call *Heretic*, are they not of holy and blameless Conversions according to the Gospel, the strictest Puritanes? Now though you must not do as they do merely from their example; yet their example should have a great deal of power and influence upon you to take off prejudices, and answer accusations; and to calm and sweeten your angry and bitter spirits.

Thirdly, Examples though not sufficient ground and rule for faith, yet they should be enough to make us to enquire after those waies, and to examine and try, whether they have any footing in the Word, because the followers of them, are very upright and circumspect in their way. Let me at least enquire after these waies, let me examine them by the light of the Gospel, surely there is some probability that these waies are the very paths of Sion, and lead to the gate of Heaven. because the Professors of them are such friends of Jesus Christ; It's likely that these men should know the mind of God that do converse with God most, that lie in his bosom, as the beloved Disciple in Christs: Is it not more likely that a man that is a familiar friend, and converses daily with such an one that this man should know his secrets, his will rather than a stranger? so all men in the world are strangers to God, but only the Saints: they converse with God, they are the men of his Council, and his heart, and therefore of all men in the world it's most likely that they should have all the Wills of God revealed unto them: All Learning and Natural Wisdom cannot show the mind of God so much as converse with God, and and holy humble familiarity with him; God loves to open his bosom to his hidden ones, to reveal his mind to them; and therefore when we see men that are godly, whose Conversation

vation is in Heaven, that they walked in such and such waies, it should make us to think it is like there is more good in these waies than I am aware of at the present, it's like that such men as God smiles upon, that they should know the mind of God more than other men: therefore though I will not presently conclude it's the mind of God, and do it merely because they do it, yet I'll examine and search whether it be not the mind of God or no according to the Scriptures.

Fourthly, The example of Godly men should prevail thus far, to make us to take heed that we do not oppose those waies except we have very clear ground to the contrary: then we may oppose them as *Paul* opposed *Peter*, and resisted him to the face, because he did not go in a right way: let men be never so holy and godly, yet they may be opposed in their way; If upon any examination you see clearly this is not the way of God, I find it to be otherwise, not others think it's not the way of God, and such and such are of a contrary mind; No, but I have been examining it by the Word of God, and laying the rule to my conscience, and my conscience to that, and I find it to be disagreeing to the mind of God, then ye may speak or write against it, but do it not otherwise. If ye see men holy, men whose Conversations be in Heaven, don't oppose it because men do; be sure your ground be good, and you be clear in it if you do oppose it, otherwise you may be in danger of fighting against God when you oppose them: therefore make so much use of the example of godly holy men, as not to oppose the way but upon clear Scripture evidence to the contrary.

Fifthly, The example of godly men should prevail thus far with us, *As to prepare us to let in any truth that they do profess and practice.* When we come to examine what is in the waies of God, and Heaven, in our examination, come with prepared hearts to let in the Truths, God shall reveal unto us, the rather because we see such holy and godly men have embraced those truths before us; when precious Gos-

pel Truths are delivered to us by the hands of the servants of Jesus Christ, then those very Truths in our eye are like apples of Gold in pictures of silver, as beautiful as golden fruit in silver dishes.

Sixty, The example of godly men should prevail thus far, as after we have examined, and found their way to be according to the Truth indeed, then their example *should confirm us in the Truth*: should help to settle us more in the Truth, should comfort and encourage us in such and such holy courses; because we find not only that we are convince'd of it, and we see it to be the way of God, and have experience of it, but others see it and they are convince'd of it, others that are so godly they find much communion with God in it; now this should mightily strengthen and further us in that we go on in the same way that the Saints of God go on in: And indeed, it should be a very great grief to any godly man, that he should differ from other godly men, though it cannot be but that we should differ sometimes, because we are imperfect here, yea, and sometimes a weak Christian knows that which a strong Christian may be ignorant of, (I say) it falls out so sometimes, that God in some things revails himself to those that are weak and hides himself from those that are strong; so that here in this world it cannot otherwise be expected for the present, till the time that the New Jerusalem shall be let down from God out of Heaven, and then the Saints will be all of one mind and walk all in one way, but till then there cannot be expected but that there should be different waies of the Saints; but yet I say it should be a very great heart-trouble to godly men to see that they are necessitated to go in different waies from other godly men: and on the other side a great encouragement and strengthening when the Saints go on in one way together with their faces towards heaven.

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CHAP. II.

What's to be done when Examples of Godly men are contrary?

IF you say, *What should we do when we have contrary Examples, and both sides godly men; yea very godly men whose Conversation is in Heaven, some go one way, and others as godly as they go another way? what shall people do then, when they see that either way bold men go in?*

Ans. To that I answer only these two things.

First, God by this means puts you to more strict examination of things, and doth teach you by this, that every Christian though never so weak, yet should have a bottom and ground for their faith, and practice out of the Word themselves, and never did God teach this lesson more strongly than now he doth, that we should all of us, not satisfy our selves in any point of Religion, nor in any practice of Religion, but what we can our selves find and feel footing for out of the Word. In former times Christians were very much led by example, and a few exemplary godly professors would carry all the well affected in those places with them, all that did pretend towards godliness would be very loth to go in a different way to some eminent godly men, but though perhaps their affections were good, and God may accept of their good affections, yet certainly they were not so grounded and established in the truth as God would have them; but now the Lord seems to go another way with his people, and puts every one, the weakest, the meanest servant, to search and to find out the truth themselves, and to have the knowledge of it themselves, and we hope the time is at hand for the fulfilling of that promise, *That all the people shall be taught of God,* shall be taught to understand themselves what are the reasons and grounds of the practice of Religion, and those

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tenents and opinions which they hold, and when people come to understand the grounds themselves, they have a great deal more strength; and they will come to be established more than formerly they have been, this good will come of it.

Secondly, When you see examyles on both sides go contrary one unto the other, and both godly, yet examine but this, Which way hath most earthly inducments, for that way that hath most earthly inducements to draw or brasthe heart, that way lies under the most suspision; for men that are godly, yet they are but godly in part, and though they may be as godly as other men in some other things, yet there may be a temptation, the temptation for Earthly contentment if it lies more one way then the other, you are to be more wary of on than the other. But that we may passe this point, because it is but from the coherance, by way of use but in a word or two.

CHAP. III

Rebuke of those that follow the example of the wicked, and reject the example of the godly.

IF the example of men whose Conversation is in Heaven is to be followed, hence then are to be rebuked those that rather follow the example of wicked and ungodly ones, if they be great, or learned, or the example of the multitude, will rather follow the example of any than the example of those whose Conversation is in Heaven; thou dost thus and thus, and yet say, Do not others do so? but who are they that do so? can you say in your Consciences, that you think that they that do so have their Conversations in Heaven, you will do as they do? If there be any example that you will follow, they should be such that you can take it upon your conscience, that these are the men who have their Conve rsations above; you will do

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as others do, in drinking, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and in all manner of prophaneſs; have theſe their Converſations in Heaven? Certainly you that do ſo, you follow the example of thoſe who have their Converſations in hell. But it may be you have ſome neighbors live by you whoſe Converſations are blameleſs, yea, they are Heavenly, and when you are in your good moods, your conſciences witneſs to them, and you could wiſh that you might die the death of the righteous; are there not ſome that live in the ſame families, ſtreets, or towns where you live, that though ſometimes your hearts are againſt them, you oppoſe them, and ſcorn them, and ſpeak againſt them, yet when you are in any good temper, or afraid of death, then you could wiſh that you were as they are, and might die their death; now will you not follow their example, but rather the example of others, whoſe examples are in ſuch things as are ſutable to your vile, ſinful, and baſe luſts? We know that theſe examples of holy men ſhall riſe up in judgment againſt you another day, the Lord will condemn you from their example, and ſay, Did not ſuch and ſuch live in the family and place where you liv'd, and did not you behold their holy and gracious Converſation, and ſhall the example of ſuch and ſuch vile wretches be followed rather than the example of my Saints? (I ſay) this will ſtop your mouths and aggravate your Condemnation in the great Audit-day: Some there are, that are ſo far from following the example of thoſe whoſe Converſations are in Heaven, as they rage and fret againſt them, and do what they can to darken the glory of their holy lives, and if they can but have any miſreport of them they will follow it what poſſibly they can to the end that they might eclipse the holineſs of their lives, that ſo they may ſtop their own conſciences, whereas were there not ſomething to darken the luſter and beauty of the lives of the Saints, certainly mens hearts would condemn them for walking in contrary ways unto them; and therefore for relief of their conſciences that they may not condemn them for

walking in waies contrary to them they do what they can to spew upon their glory, and are glad if they can hear any ill report of them; and wil follow them to their uttermost, and all because their corrupt hearts are against the holiness of their lives and Conversations,

And then lastly, *Let those that profess Religion labor to walk so as their examples may be convincing others*: Is there such a power in holy examples to prevail with men? you that profess Religion, make this an argument to work upon your hearts, that your Conversation may be more in Heaven, that so your example may do the more good in the place where you live; you that profess Religion and yet have earthly spirits, and live scandalously, and yildly, Oh know! you live to do as much mischief almost as a man can do in this world, no greater mischief than for one to profess Religion, and yet for his Conversation to be wicked and ungodly, and so to give the Lye to his profession. But for that we spake to heretofore, when we treated upon that Scripture, *Only let your Conversation be as becomes the Gospel,*

CHAP. IV.

Two Doctrines observed from the Text

THUS we proceed to the principal Doctrinal Taughts, *For our Conversation is in Heaven.* Our City Conversation, our Citzèn like behavior, or City Burges estate, for so the word signifies, our carriage like free denizens it is in heaven: now from thence you have, *First,*

That the Saints are the Citizens of Heaven.

Secondly, That their behavior and Conversation even while they are in this world it is in Heaven.

For the first (but briefly, to make way to the second) *The Saints of God, they are the Citizens of Heaven, they are all free Denizens, Burgeses of Heaven.* In the 2. Ephe. 19.

there you may see how God hath gathered all the Saints together to be fellow-Citizens of Heaven : Now therefore ye are no more strangers and forreigners, but fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God. They have an Heavenly Citie here in the Church : the Church it is a Heaven to the Saints, and as a type of that Heaven that they shall come into to live for ever both with the Saints and Angels hereafter. And in the 11. Heb. 10. it's spoken of *Abraham, He sojourned in the Land of promise, as in a strange Country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob the heirs with him of the same Promise, for he looked for a City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* It seems then that all the Cities in the world in comparision of this City have no foundations ; *Abraham* looked for a City that hath foundations, and whose builder and maker is God : The builders and makers of these Cities are men, the founders of the most famous Cities in this world have been men, and manie times wicked and ungodly men are the builders of them : The first City that we reade of was built by *Cain*. The builders and makers I say of these Cities are men, laboring men: but *Abraham* look'd for a City that had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And in the 12. Heb. 22. *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God the Heavenly Jerusalem: mark and to an innumerable company of Angels ; so that you are to have them your fellow Citizens, The Heavenly Jerusalem, that is here in the Church; which is (in comparision of Jerusalem that was in Canaan) called the Heavenly Jerusalem, so that they are Citizens of Heaven even as they are Members of the Church: the Saints of God here in the Church are said to dwell in Heaven, but in that their City there are an innumerable company of Angels also, that plainly notes that it hath reference unto the glorious Heaven of the Saints that they are the Citizens of; the Saints are the Citizens of Heaven, there they dwell: in the 13. of the Revelation, 6. and 8. verses, (this would serve for proof of this thing and so for the other point that remains, That their*

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Conversation it is in Heaven) *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his Name and his Tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them.* Now these were not in Heaven, that is, in their bodies they were not in Heaven for the present; But they are said to dwell in Heaven because they are of the Church here, and they are free Denizens of Heaven too, of the Heaven of the Saints that they shall live in hereafter in a more glorious way; They are *Now* Citizens of it; and they may be said to dwell in Heaven, as we shall see afterward in the opening of their Conversations being in Heaven.

CHAP. V.

How the Saints are Citizens of Heaven, opened in Nine Particulars.

NOW the Saints are Citizens of Heaven, For. First, *Their names are all inrolled in Heaven.* They are written in Heaven, in the 10. Luke 20. *Rejoyce in this, That your names are written in Heaven.* In Heaven is the Book of life where all the Names of the Saints are written. Philip. 4. 3. *Whose names* (saith he) *are written in the Book of life.*

Secondly, The Saints are the Citizens of Heaven, for they have Christ their Head gone before to take possession of Heaven in their names, therefore they have a right to Heaven. As a man may be a Citizen, although he should travel in another Country, yet his name being inrolled there, and he having possession there, he may be said to be a Citizen though he be in a strange land for the present in his body: So the Saints have their names inrolled in Heaven, they have Jesus Christ their head that is gone before in their names to take possession for them, and to provide mansions for them, as in the 14. John.

Thirdly

Thirdly, *When ever they do actually beleve, they do take up their freedom;* Their names were there Inrol'd from a eternity : and so Christ at his ascension went and took possession : but when they beleve actually, they do as it were take up their freedom in that City. There's many men that are born free, yet ther's a time when they take it up, and so others that have serv'd for their freedom, yet it may be a long time before they be made free : and so the Saints when they do actually beleve they come to take up their freedom in the City of Heaven, and are made Free Burgeſſes of Heaven.

And hence (in the fourth place) *They come no more to be as ſlaves ;* they are not bondſlaves as before, they are delivered from bondage being made free of Heaven, As if to be that foreigners, or ſuch as are ſlaves ſhould come to be Infranchiz'd, then they have the ſame freedom as others have, and are admitted to the like City-priviledges, and they are no more to be accounted as ſlaves : ſo thoſe that are by nature bondſlaves to ſin and Satan, yea, and ſuch as are under the bondage of the Law, yet when they come to beleve, they are enfranchiz'd in Heaven, and are delivered from the bondage of the Law, Sin and Satan, they are ſaid to be free-men of the City of Heaven.

Fiftly, *All the Saints have right to all the common ſtock, Treafury, and riches of Heaven ;* whatſoever privileges belong to the Charter of Heaven, the Saints have right and title to them all. As in great Cities there is a Common ſtock and Treafury that is for publick occaſions, and every Citizen hath ſome int'reſt in it ; ſo the Saints (I ſay) have int'reſt in all the Common-ſtock and Treafury and all the riches that there are in Heaven.

Sixtly, *The Saints are the Citizens of Heaven, they have for the preſent the ſame confirmation of their happy ſtate that the Angels and thoſe bleſſed ſouls have that are reſident in Heaven :* (I ſay) they have this priviledge now by being Citizens of heaven that though their bodies be not in the higheſt Heavens, yet they have their happineſs confirmed as ſure

as the Angels in Heaven have, and as any blessed souls in *Abraham's* bosom, look how they are confirmed in a happy estate so as they cannot be made miserable, so is every Believer, though he lives in this world, he hath this priviledg in being a Citizen of Heaven, that he is confirmed in a happy estate, that all the powers in hell and in the world can never make this soul to be miserable, and this is a mighty priviledg of being a Citizen of Heaven, he is more priviledged than *Adam* in Paradise, for *Adam* he was not confirmed and stablished when he was made in the state of innocencie, but every Believer is confirmed and stablished as the Angels in Heaven are.

Seventhly, They have this priviledg, *By being Citizens, they have priviledg of free trade to Heaven.* You know, that Free men in the Citie have priviledg of Trade more than Forreigners have; Forreigners are faine to pay Custome and double taxes more than the Free Citizens. So the Saints, they have the priviledg of Free trade in Heaven, for any thing that doth concern them; they have a Free-intercourse with Heaven which others have not.

Eightly, *They have now for the present Communion with the Angels of Heaven:* there is Communion and Commerce between the Saints here and the Angels, upon this ground because they are fellow Citizens; and in that place of the *Hebrews* before quoted, *We are come to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to the innumerable company of Angels:* There is a great deal of intercourse between the Saints and Angels here upon earth, the Angels look upon them as their fellow Citizens, and are ministring spirits for the good of the Elect, and they do very great services for the Church of God here in this world upon this ground, because they look upon them as their fellow Citizens,

Ninthly, *They have the protection of Heaven, being the Citizens of Heaven:* I say they have Heavens protection. As one that is a Citizen, he hath the protection of the Law of the Citie, and of the power of the Citie to defend him; hence we read of *Paul*, that because he was a *Roman* it was dangerous

gerous to meddle with him, as in the 22. of *Acts* 25. verſe, as they bound him with thongs; *Paul* ſaid unto the Centurion that ſtood by, *Is it lawfull for you to ſcourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?* As if he ſhould ſay, Take heed what you do, I am free of the Cite of *Rome*: And mark, (ſaith the Scripture) when the Centurion heard that, he went and told the chief Captain, ſaying, Take heed what thou doeſt, for this man is a Roman, he hath the protection of the City. Thus the Saints are Citizens of Heaven, They are not Romans, but of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and when any are about to wrong one of them, they had need take heed what they do for he is a Citizen of Heaven, the King of Heaven is his King to protect him; and he ſits and laughs at the enemies of the Church: And the very Angels themſelves they are their guard, to guard all theſe Citizens, and to protect them; and this is the comfortable eſtate of all the people of God, that they are the Citizens of Heaven. *Our City Converſe.* All this I note out of the ſignification of the word in the original; and without the underſtanding of the propriety of the language, and the word, we ſhould not have the underſtanding of this truth.

Wherefore my bretheren it being thus, it ſhould teach all the people of God to walk as becomes Citizens, not to be rude in their behavior; 'tis a diſhonor to Citizens to be rude in their behavior, it's enough for Country people that never had any education to be rude; but certainly the Saints of God, they have the education of Heaven (this may be added for a tenth Particular) They have the holy Ghoſt to be their Inſtructor, to bring them up in holy and good manners that is ſutable to Heaven, this the Saints have; and manifeſt it in your Converſations, be not rude in your way, prize your priviledg of being a Citizen of Heaven; it's that that coſt *Jeſus Chriſt* dear to purchaſe this enfranchiſement and liberty for you: we read in the 22. of the *Acts* of the Captain when he heard that *Paul* was a Roman, in the 27. verſe: their chief Captain came and ſaid

to him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief Captain answered, *with a great sum obtained I this Freedom.* And Paul answered, *I was free-Born.* They were wont to give great sums to purchase freedoms of the City. Oh! this City that here we are speaking of, hath such priviledges as is beyond any in the world: and no man or woman can come to be free of this City but it is by a great purchase: No man can say as Paul did here, that he was born free; no, but if he came to be free of Heaven it was with a Great purchase, it was with the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ that was more worth than all the world. And if the Son makes you free, then you shall be free indeed, and therefore prize this as a great mercie? while you live here in this world, account it as a great mercy that you are a Citizen of Heaven, account your happiness to consist there, it is more than to have House and Lands here; for a man to have a freedom of some City, it is more than to have House and Land in the Wilderness: What though the Lord doth order things so as while thou livest in the wilderness of this world thou hast no habitation of thine own, yet certainly the Lord hath made thee free of Heaven, it was purchased for thee by the blood of Jesus Christ; Now by that price that it cost thou mayest conclude that there is some great matter in it, that thou art a free Demizen of Heaven.

CHAP. VI.

*How the Saints have their Conversation in Heaven,
Opened in Nine Particulars.*

BUT now, our Conversation should be answerable; and now we come more fully up to the scope of the Apostle; But our Conversation in Heaven.

The Conversation of the Saints, that are free Citizens of Heaven

Heaven ; ought to be answerable ; though there Co-habitations be in this world, yet their Conversation it should be in Heaven ; in the 7. of *Dan.* 10. 18. there you read of the excellent estate of the Saints, *But the Saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever :* That that is translated here, *The Saints of the most High,* it is not only ment of the Most High God, but the Saints of the high Places, so 'tis translated by some, for the Saints are the Saints of high places in regard of their interest in Heaven, and in regard of their Conversations suitable to the place, in the 2. *Eph.* 6. *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* The Saints are set in Heavenly places, Heavenly dignity, Heavenly privileges, Heavenly prerogatives, yea, and they themselves may be said to be in Heavenly places though their bodies be upon the earth, their souls are in Heavenly places, their Conversation is in Heaven. They are the Saints of the High God, and they are set in high places.

You will say, *What is this Conversation that is in Heaven that is here spoken of.* I shall open it in these particulars.

The first is, The aim and scope of their hearts, it is Heaven-ward, that the Saints looke at as their aim and scope is. Heaven, they look upon themselves in this world as pilgrims and strangers, Heaven's their home, and their eye is there, their end, their scope, whatsoever they do it is for Heaven, some way or other to fit them for Heaven, and to lay in for Heaven against they shall come and live there, their Conversation therefore is in Heaven :. All that they do, eating, and drinking, going about their business, yet I say their aim it is Heaven. I remember it's reported of *Anaxagoras* a Philosopher, that being asked wherefore he liv'd, he said he was born to contemplate the Heavens, he made it the end of his life for which he was born to contemplate Heaven ; Being a Philosopher and having understanding in the motions of the Heavens, he took such delight in it, that he accounted it the end for which he was born. So the Saints look at Heaven as their Center that they

they aim at, that's their scope: we (saith the Apostle) do not looke at things that are seen, but at things that are not seen, nothing in the Earth is our scope, but Heaven is our scope, and so their Conversations may be said to be in Heaven in that respect.

Secondly, *Their Conversations are in Heaven, for they are acted by Heaven's principles in all their waies.*

Heavenly principles you will say, *What are they?*

This is a Heavenly Principle, That God is all in all: that's a Principle that the Saints are guided by, in Heaven they look upon God to be all in all unto them, so do the Saints here, in what they do, in what they are, in what they enjoy, they act upon this Principle, that it's God that is all in all, whatsoever I see in the creature, yet it's God that is all in all to me, I act by vertue of this Principle.

That God the infinite First-being, is infinitely worthy of all love for himself, that's a Heavenly Principle: the Saints that are in Heaven, they look upon the infinite excellencie and glory of God, they look upon him as the First-Being of all things, having all excellency, and glory enough to satisfie all creatures for ever, and looke upon him as infinitely worthy of all love and service for himself; know this is a heavenly Principle: So the Saints their conversation is in Heaven, they are acted by heavenly principles; I look upon such and such things in the world whereby I may gain credit, encrease, or comfort, this is an earthly principle: But when my heart is so upon God, that it looks upon him as infinitely excellent and worthy of all love, service, fear, honor, and worship, for himself alone, whatsoever becomes of the creature God is worthy of all for that infinite excellencie in himself; this is a heavenly principle: and for one to be acted in his life by such a principle as this is, this is to be acted by heavenly principles, not by such low, and base principles as the men of the world are, but by heavenly principles.

Thirdly, *Their Conversations are in Heaven.* For here though

though they live, in the world, they have communion with the God of Heaven that is above in the whole course of their lives. In the 1. Epistle by *John* 1. chap. you have divers excellent expressions about our communion with God. In the 3. verse, *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, That ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly, our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* And then in another Scripture we read of the Communion of the holy Ghost, there is Communion with the Father, Son, and holy Ghost. Now what makes Heaven but God? we say, where the King is there's the Court, where God is there's Heaven, let God be where he wil. There is some controversie among some, where the Saints shal be after the Resurrection; some think it shal be stil here, and yet with al the glory that the Scripture speaks of. Now it's no great matter where it be, so it be where God is, those that have Communion with God, they are in Heaven, their Conversation is in Heaven: now it's that that is the life of the Saints, their Communion with God; thy life it is to have communion with the Creature, that is for thee to close with the contents of the Creature, and the faculty that is in man to tast any thing, or to have any delight in any thing in this world, when there is a suitable object to the faculty, that's his Communion with the Creature; As now a Drunkard, there is a kind of Communion that he hath meerly with lewd company, and with the creature to please his sence for a while, there's all the communion that he hath. But what a different Conversation is this, for one meerly to please his sence in meat and drink a little while, and another to have communion with Father, Son, and holy Ghost? The Saints here in this world have not an Imaginary but a Real Communion with the Father Son and holy Ghost.

Communion, you wil say, what's that?

By Communion with God we mean this, The acting of the soul upon God, and the receiving in the influence of the goodness and love and mercy of God into the soul.

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When there is a mutual acting of the soul upon God, and God upon the soul again; as when friends have Communion one with another, that is, that one acts for the Comfort of the other, there is a mutual embracing and opening of hearts one upon another for the satisfying of the Spirits one of another: So communion with God is the mutual actings of the soul upon God, and God upon the soul again: The Saints they see the face of God, and God delights in the face of the Saints: And they let out their hearts to God, and God lets out his heart to them. We cannot expresse this to strangers, a stranger shall not meddle with this joy, this is a mystery, a riddle to the carnal world. Do but you consider this, that what Communion you have with your lewd company, to sit, and eat, and drink, and play, and tell stories all day long, this you think is a brave life; but now, that the communion of the Saints is raised higher, and the comfort of the Saints is not in such poor, low, base things as thine are, the Saints have comfort in God the Father, Son, and holy Ghost, in an infinite higher way, and in that respect their Conversations are said to be in Heaven: And especially when they are with God in his Ordinances they cannot be content except they have Communion with God there, it's not enough for them to call upon the Name of God, to kneel down and to use some humble broken hearted expressions; Oh but, what communion have I with God and Jesus Christ and the holy Ghost in my duties at this time! I come to the Word and other Ordinances, Oh! but what communion have I with God in them? I cannot be satisfied except I tast and see how good the Lord is; I cannot go abroad about my businesse but with a heavy heart except I hear something from Heaven this morning; all the comfort of their lives do depend upon this, in having communion with Father, Son, and holy Ghost.

Fourthly, Their Conversation may be said to be in Heaven, *Because they do live according to the Laws of Heaven: They do not here in this world live according to the Laws* of

of men, and the lusts of men, but they look for their direction from Heaven, What rule is there from Heaven to guide me? There must be some word from the God of Heaven to order and guide them in their waies, or else they cannot tell how to sute with them; Indeed while they live in the Cities of the world they must obey the Laws of men, but still it is in order to the Laws of Heaven, the main thing that they submit to, is the Statute Laws of Jesus Christ the great Law-giver; because there is a Law of Heaven that doth require them for to obey the Laws of men that are according to those Laws of Heaven, therefore they do obey them; but the Laws of Heaven are those that the Saints look after for their direction in all their waies, such and such a thing I have a mind to, but will the Law of Heaven justifie me in this? have I any word from Jesus Christ to guide me in in such a way? I dare not do otherwise than according to the Will and Scepter of Christ, they must be my rule in all my waies: whereas before thy lust was thy rule, and thy own ends thy rule: and the common course of the world thy rule; but now the Laws of Heaven are thy rule; and therefore their Conversations are in Heaven because they are guided by the Laws of Heaven: Heaven is their aim, They are acted by heavenly Principles, They converse with the God of heaven. And then fourthly, They live according to the Laws of heaven.

Fifthly, Their thoughts and hearts are set upon heaven, as he saith, *The soul is where it loves rather than where it lives*; where the heart is there's the soul, there the man may be said to be. Now the Saints have their hearts in heaven, their thoughts in heaven, their meditations in heaven, working there, *When I awake I am alwaies with thee (saith David.)* And Oh how sweet are the thoughts of heaven unto the Saints! While thou art mudling in the world, and plodding for thy self in the things of this world, If God should come to thee and say, Where art thou? as he said to *Adam*, yea sometimes while thou art at prayer and hearing the Word, Where are thy thoughts, and about what?

what? even as we say in the proverb, they are running about a Wool-geathering.

But now come to one whose Conversation is in Heaven, he keeps his thoughts and meditations there continually, meditating on the glorious things that are reserved in Heaven. As I remember I have read of that holy man, Mr. *Ward* that being in the midst of a dinner, and people wondering what he was musing about, he presently breaks out, *For ever, for ever, for ever*, for almost half a quart of an hour he could not be still'd, but he cries, *for ever, for ever, for ever*, So far as any man or women hath their Conversation in Heaven their thoughts are there, thinking Oh eternity, eternity, to be for ever in Heaven, to live for ever with Christ and God, and Oh the Crown of glory that is there! when will that blessed day come when I shall come to enjoy those good things that are there? his thoughts will be there, and he is longing to be there, his love and desires and affections will be working there. It's said of the people of Israel, *Acts*, 7. 39. That their hearts turned back again to Egypt; they never returned in their bodies to Egypt, but their hearts were there, they would fain have the Onions and Flesh pots that were in Egypt, their hearts were there. So it may be said of many, that though they come and hear the Word, yet their hearts are in their shops, their hearts are after their covetousness; but it's contrary with the Saints, Though they live here in this world, yet their hearts are in Heaven: As I remember it's written of Queen *Mary*, that she said, If they rip'd her upon they should find *Calix* in her heart; And so it may be said of Saints, whose Conversations are in Heaven; I speak not of all Professors of Religion, for it's said of bodies, (when *Paul* speaks of the resurrection) there are bodies Celestial, and bodies Terrestrial, so I may say, There are professors Celestial, and Professors Terrestrial, but as for such whose Conversations are in Heaven, who walk with God, and live here the lives of Heaven upon Earth, If they were rip'd up, you should find Heaven in their hearts; un-rip many
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mens hearts, and there's nothing but the earth, uncleanness, and baseness; suppose God should come this moment, and rip up all your hearts? and disclose them to all the men of the world, what a deal of filthy stuff would be found in many of your hearts? but for such whole Conversations are in Heaven, they would be ready to have God unrip their hearts when he pleaseth, Lord try, Lord search me, Lord, examine and see what is in my heart; I'll but put this now to you as in the Name of God, and let conscience answer, What do you think would be found in your hearts if they should be unrip'd now? and if your consciences tell you, Oh Lord! if my heart should be rip'd up now, there would be a filthy deal of ugly and abominable stuff there, surely I have not had my Conversation in Heaven, my heart hath been sinking even down to low and base things: but now, for those whom this text concerns, it will be an exceeding comfort to them; and I hope that there are divers of you that may be able to say, if the Lord should at this present rip our hearts and shew them to all the world, I hope the world should see that Heaven is stamped upon our hearts. We account it sad weather when we cannot see the Heavens for many daies, when we cannot see Heaven many times for a week together; and we account it an ill dwelling where men dwell in narrow lanes in the City, so that they can scarce see the Heavens except they go abroad in the fields. My brethren, surely it's a sad time with a gracious heart when any one day passes without converse with Heaven, without the sight of Heaven, and meditations of Heaven, and having their hearts there. Thus it should be with Christians whose Conversations are in Heaven, they should never love such dwellings wherein they cannot see the beams of the Sun; It's a most comfortable thing for to see the light, a man that dwells in some dark house, it's very comfortable for him to walk out into the open air, and to behold the Heavens; Oh my bretheren! our souls dwell in dark houses every one of us; for our bodies are to our souls like a dark and low celler,

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but the Lord gives us liberty to go abroad, to be conversing with the things of Heaven that he hath revealed in his word and in his Ordinances: And as many Citizens that live in dark rooms and keep a long time close to their work, yet at such times as they call days of Recreation, they walk abroad in the Fields, and take the fresh air, and oh how delightful is it to them! The same should be to a gracious heart that hath a great many businesses (indeed) in the world, I but on the Lords day, Oh that he may now enjoy God in his Ordinances more than before; his thoughts are upon those waies wherein he may come to have more of Heaven, Oh! that I may come to converse more with God than at other times! And upon that the Sabaths are the joy of his soul, his delight, he longs after the Sabbath, he thirsts after Ordinances, for indeed his heart is in them, for he finds there is more of Heaven in them than in other things; and in that regard the Saints having their thoughts and hearts in Heaven thus he proves to have his Conversation to be in Heaven. *Moses* never came to *Canaan*, and yet God gave *Moses* a sight of it, carried him up to mount *Nebo*. Heavenly meditations are as it were mount *Nebo*, whereby when the heart is raised a little upon the mount, it's able to see Heaven, and behold the glorious things there. The Scripture speaks of *Lucifer*, that he had his nest among the stars: A Saint hath as it were his nest, his dwelling among the stars, yea above the stars in the highest Heavens. As 'tis with wicked men, that when they seem to draw nigh to God, yet their hearts are far from him; then they are in their shops, they are among their ships when they seem to be worshiping of God: So when the Saints seem in regard of their bodies to be far from God, yet their hearts are in Heaven in the mean time.

Sixtly, For the opening of a Heavenly Conversation, it Consists in this, *When in the course of mens lives they do converse and delight in the same things that are done in Heaven, they make their happiness the same happiness that is in Heaven, and make their exercise to be the same Exercise that is in Heaven: As for instance,*

stance, What is there in Heaven? There is the sight of the face of God; *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* And the Angels, *Alwaies behold the face of God.* So the Saints may be said to have their Conversations in Heaven because their exercise here while they live, it is in the beholding the face God, in standing before God seeing his face; the greatest delight and contentment of their souls, it is, that they can see somewhat of God.

What's to be done further? The Work of Heaven, it is in the Praising and Blessings of God. What do the Saints and Angels of Heaven, but continually blesse, and magnifie, and praise the Name of that God whom they see to be so infinitely worthy of all praise, and honor from his creatures? There is a mans Conversation in Heaven when as he doth the same things, when he joyns with Angels and Saints in doing of the same work, of magnifying and blessing and praising God.

What's done in Heaven, *but the keeping of a perpetual Sabbath?* Then are our conversations in Heaven, when we delight in Gods Sabbath, yea and indeed to keep a constant Sabbath unto God, though busied about earthly things, yet still we keep a Sabbath to God, in resting from sin, and being spiritually employed. And that's a Sixth thing.

Seventhly, Then our Conversation is in Heaven, *When in Earthly employments, yet we are Heavenly:* when we use earthly things after a Heavenly manner; it is not the place that God looks at so much, where his Saints are, But what they do: Though while we live on the earth we use earthly things, yet when we can use them in an heavenly manner, then our Conversation may be in heaven though we be upon earth.

As thus first, when in the use of earthly things, we do quickly passe through earthly things to God, we make use of them, but we do not stick in them; we make them the means to passe through to God, and get quickly through: a carnal heart sticks in the things of the earth, mingles with the earth; but a spiritual, and heavenly heart makes

earthly

earthly things but as Conduits for conveyance of him to Heaven, we here carry about with us the flesh, and because we have so much earth, we have need of these earthly things, I but they are means of conveyance to spiritual and Heavenly things.

And then; When we use Earthly things as Heavenly, that is, we take a rise from earthly things to meditate of Heaven; upon the enjoyment of any thing in this Earth we raise up our thoughts to the things of Heaven; when we see the light, to remember then the glorious light of Heaven, and of the inheritance of the Saints which are in light; when we taste any sweetness in the creature, if these things be so sweet, Oh what is Heaven and God then that is the Fountain of all good things? Thus to make all earthly things to be but as heavenly rises to us, That's heavenly Conversation, that in the use of earthly things doth quickly passe through to God, and that makes spiritual and heavenly rises of earthly things.

Eightly, *Their is our Conversation Heavenly when the Saints in their converse together are Heavenly*: when the Saints in their converse do looke upon themselves as the Citizens of Heaven, and converse as it befits those of such a Country. When as Country men are abroad in foreign Parts and they meet together, and there be conferring about the state of their Country in their own language, and about their friends, and what things there are there among them, they will say one to another, (as *English men*) me thinks we are in *England* now; our converse is as if we were in *England*. So when the Saints in their meetings, they do not meet to jangle, and wrangle, but they meet to converse of Heaven, and to confer about their Country, and every one telling news of Heaven, ther's none of the Saints that walk close with God, but when they meet together may tell one another some tidings of salvation from above. When Country men meet together in any place commonly the first question is, What news is there from our Country, from *England*; So the Saints when they meet together

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ther if they be of Heavenly Conversations, They will be talking from what of Heaven before they go: what news of our Country? what news from Heaven? though they may have leave to refresh themselves being poor earthly creatures here, with something of the earth, yet they will have some talk of Heaven before they part one with another: This is a Heavenly Conversation when the Communion of the Saints of Heaven is in Heavenly things.

The Ninth and last thing wherein the Conversation of the Saints in Heaven is, is this, *That their great trade while they are upon the earth it is for Heaven*: Though they be not in their bodies there, yet their trading is there, and that's the special thing that seems to be noted in the very word in the text; now their chief trade it is in *πρωτευμεν*. Heaven, the Saints that have Heavenly Conversations they do not trade for trifles as other men do, but they trade for great things, for high things, in the 3. of Collos. saith the Apostle there, *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth*. They seek the things of God, even those things where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth; they seek after these things; they marchandize for those goodly Pearls.

CHAP. VII.

The Saints Trading for Heaven, opened in Seven Particulars.

NOW in the Saints Trading for Heaven there are these several things considerable.
First, As in trading you know it is requisite in those that are trades-men to any Country, that they should have skill in the Commodities that they trade
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for;

for; so the Saints they have skill in Heavenly things; there's many poor Christians who have little skill in the matters of the world, speak to them about them they understand but little, but speak to them about Heaven, and you may quickly perceive that they have skill in heavenly Commodities, they have a skill from God, they are Wise Merchants.

Secondly, A Trades-man, he must have a stock to trade withal: Now the Saints they have a stock to trade withall for heaven, they have grace in their hearts, grace in the heart is a stock for a trade. If you leave your Children no lands, yet if you leave them a good trade and stock, you think you leave them a plentiful portion. Now the Saints though they have but little in the world, yet they have skill in the Commodities of heaven, they have a good trade and a good stock too, they have a stock of grace that shall never be lost, however they perhaps may not have those in-comes that they do desire some times, yet they shall never lose their stock, their portion, and it should be their care to improve their stock for heaven, and indeed then they have their Conversation in heaven, when they improve and lay out all their stock that way about heavenly Commodities.

And then a third thing in trading is, To take advantage of the Market for Commodities: Great bargains may be had sometimes that cannot be had at another; so the trade of a Christian for Heaven it is in the observing his advantages that he hath for heavenly things, and those that have their Conversations in heaven they are very wise and understanding this way; they are able to know their times and seasons; other men that have not skill in the matters of heaven they do not know their times and seasons, and therefore they neglecting their markets, it may be upon their sick and death bed then they begin to think of heaven, and then, Oh that they might but know that their souls might go to Heaven when they go from their bodies! I but thou art unskillful in heavenly Commodities,

ties, thou didest not know thy time, thou shouldest have had thy Conversation in Heaven in the time of thy life, and so have observed what advantages God gave thee for trading for heaven; Oh that we were but all wise this way, to make it appear that our Conversations are in Heaven in this respect, namely, That we are wise to observe our advantages, Oh! the advantages that God hath given us all at one time or at another for Heaven, there's not any one of you but God hath given you much advantage for Heaven had you but taken it, If you will reflect upon your own hearts, and the course of your lives in former times, your consciences may tell you, Oh sometimes what fair advantages had I for Heaven! How did the Spirit of God begin to stir in me? What truths were there darted into mee at such a season? What motions flowing in had I at such a time? Oh how happy had I been if I had taken such an advantage for Heaven, I had even been in Heaven already: Now those who do converse with Heaven, they watch at those advantages, they come not to hear the Word but they watch for the time to have God stirring in their hearts, and they follow that advantage, they watch for the time of the softning of their spirits, and the enlivening of their souls, and they follow hard those advantages, and so trade for Heaven, and grow rich in Heavenly Commodities.

Fourthly, Where there is a trade from one Country to another, there's much intercourse. A man that trades to such a Town or Country, there's much intercourse between that man and those that live there: so a Christians trading for Heaven is in this, there is very much intercourse between Heaven and his soul, every day he sends up to Heaven, and every day he hath something from Heaven sent down to his soul! Oh do but examine what intercourse there hath been between Heaven and you: how is it with many of you? even as if there were no Heaven at all? Men that are no trades-men to the *Indies*, 'tis as if there were no such place at all to them. So it is with many

that lives even in the bosom of the Church, there is very little intercourſe between Heaven and them; but a trader for Heaven hath much intercourſe with heaven.

Fiftly, A man that trades to any place, if he trade for great matters he hath the chief of his ſtock where he trades, though he be not preſent in his body, yet the chief of his eſtate is there: If a man be a *Spaniſh* or a *Turkiſh* Merchant and trade thither, the chief of his eſtat lies there, in *Spain* or *Turkey* more than here. So it is with one that trades for Heaven, the chief part of his eſtate lies there, he accounts his riches to lie in Heaven; indeed he hath ſomewhat to live upon here in this world for a while, but there's his riches, he looks at Heaven as the place where his greateſt treasure lies.

Sixtly, A man that trades is willing to part with ſomething where he is, that he may receive advantage in the place where he trades: So it is with the Saints that trade for Heaven, they are willing to part with much that they might receive afterwards in Heaven: they are willing (I ſay) to part with any thing here in this world, to the end that they may receive it when they come home. A man that is abroad, and is going to his own Country, and there he is trading for Commodities, he is very willing to part with all his money where he is for receiving Commodities in his trade; or thoſe that give their moneyes here that ſo they may receive commodities in another place where they are trading: A carnal heart that doth not know the certainty nor excellency of the Commodities of Heaven, they are willing to part with nothing, but will keep all, they think with themſelves, what we have here we are ſure of, but that that they talk of Heaven we do not know what it is, it may prove to be but an imagination, therefore we will keep what we have and be ſuer of that: Oh! thou art no trader for heaven, if thou wert thou wouldeſt be willing to part with any thing here, that ſo thou mighteſt receive commodities there, thou wouldeſt be content to live poorly, and meanly in this world ſo be it that thou mighteſt have thy

thy riches when thou comest into thy mansion of glory,

Seventhly, Trades-men that trade for great matters, they must trust much, they cannot expect to have present pay in great sums. It's true, men that trade for little matters, that trade by retale, they usually take in their pence and two pence as their commodities goes forth; but it's not so with Merchants that trade for great things in Whol-sale: So 'tis in traders for Heaven, they trust much; and indeed, the grace of Faith it is the great grace that helps in the trading for Heaven, they have a little earnest for the present. You that are traders, and go to the Exchange and sell bargains for many thousands, you have not perhaps above twelve pence or a crown for the present, it may be only a promise, but you expect the great sums afterwards. So those that are traders for Heaven, they have some earnest, they be contented with a little for the present, the first-fruits of the Spirit, or a bare promise from Christ, this is that that binds the whole bargain and they expect to have the full pay hereafter when they come to Heaven. It is a happy thing when God gives men and women hearts to be willing to trust God for eternity, and if they have but a little comfort and grace now, yet to look at that as an earnest peny of all the glory that Jesus Christ hath purchased by his blood, and that God hath promised in his Word, thou art not fit to be a trades-man for Heaven that canst not trust, that canst not be content that great bargains should be bound with a little earnest. But that's the soul that trades in Heaven, that can be content to wait for the fulfilling of promises, and to take what they have from God for the present though it be but a very little, as an earnest to bind all those glorious things that God hath promised in his Word. Here you see a trader for Heaven in these Seven things. Now put all these things that you have heard together with these; and you may see what it is to have our Conversations in Heaven.

CHAP. VIII

Seven Evidences of mens having their conversation in Heaven.

NOW then, there are some Evidences of Christians having their Conversation in Heaven. As we shewed you some Evidences of an Eearthly Conversation, so likewise of a Heavenly conversation: that is, some demonstrations plainly to shew, *That the Conversations of Chriftians are in Heaven.*

In the first place, It's plain certainly, there are Christians that have their Conversations in Heaven; First, because there are Christians that can vilifie all the things of this earth: surely except they had their Conversations higher than the earth they could not so vilifie the things of the earth. It's an evidence of the height of Heaven, that a man is lifted up very high, that shall look upon the very Globe of the earth as a very punctum, as a little thing: so an evidence that the hearts of the saints are on high when they can look on the things of the earth as smal; it's true, we that are upon the earth look upon the stars as small, and the earth as great; but if we were in Heaven we would look upon the stars as great and the earth as small, as *Paul* did, accounted all things but as dung and dross, dogs meat, for the excellency of the knowledge of *Jesus Christ*: and *Luther*, that accounted the whole *Turkish Empire* but a Crumb that the great Master of the Family casts to his dog: surely here's an argument that the Saints have their Conversations in Heaven that can loake upon the things of the earth as so mean, and so little, as indeed they are.

A second Evidence is this, That they can be content with so little in this world, and can live such Comfortable lives in the enjoyment of so little; perhaps you cannot tell

how to have comfortable lives except you have so much coming in by the year, and so much provision : but now, one that is heavenly, a godly man or woman, can tell how to live a joyful and happy life in the want of the things of this world ; though they have but little, though but bread and water, though but mean habitations, mean cloathes, though but of mean esteem in the world, yet can go through the world with a joyful heart, blessing God all his daies, nothing but admiring, praising, and magnifying God for his rich mercy ; and blessing himself in God, and accounting his portion to be a goodly portion, and his lot to be fallen into a fair ground. I verrily beleeeve that there are very many poor, mean people in this world, yet their houses are more fill'd with blessings of God in one day, than many Rich, Great, Noble men have their houses in twenty or fourty yeers : now this argues that they have their Conversations in Heaven, that though they want comfort never so much in this world, yet they can live comfortable lives ; surely it is something that doth rejoyce them, when they can so rejoyce in the want of these outward things, when their joy depends not upon the things of this world ; men that have earthly hearts, if they lose but their outward comforts, they cry out, Oh we are undone ! And you may see mighty alterations in their very countenances, they have nothing to joy their hearts when they lose the things of the world : but it is not so with the Saints, whatsoever crosses they meet withall here in this world, yet still they rejoyce in Christ, blessing God, the course of their lives is nothing else but a continual magnifying and praising God for his mercie and goodnesse to them ; surely they have their Conversations in Heaven.

Thirdly, Not only can live joyfully in the want of many comforts, but they can suffer the loss of all, yea, suffer hard things, suffer afflictions, suffer torments and tortures with joyful hearts, reade but that 11. of the Heb. at your leisure, 13, 14. verses, They confessed that they were strangers, and pilgrims on the earth, for they that see such things

things, declare plainly that they seek a Country (this Scripture is to be annexed to the second evidence) Mark, They that seek such things declare plainly that they seek a Country, surely there is something else that they seek after when they let so light by the things of this world, For the Saints are not fools, but there is some reason for what they do, surely there is something in it, for they have the same nature as you have, and they have need of comfort as well as you, and had they not some other comfort besides outward comforts, they could not live so comfortably in the want of outward comforts, but they that are content with a little, as pilgrims and strangers: they declare plainly that they seek a Country; that is the second Evidence.

And then, *For the suffering of tortures and pains for the sake of Christ.* This is another Evidence and so you have in the 10. Heb. 32. *But call to remembrance the former daies in which after ye were made illuminated ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly, whilst ye were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches & afflictions, & partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used,* & then in the 34. verse, *And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, Why? knowing in your selves that ye have in Heaven a better and enduring substance:* This made them take joyfully the spoiling of their goods. What? when their goods were spoil'd, did they take that joyfully? what were they mad men to rejoyce at the plundering of their estates? No, it was no madness, It was because they knew in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring substance, and that made them be willing to wander about in sheeps skins, and goats skins, in leather clothes, as in the latter end of the 11. of Heb. read but from the 36. verse to the end: this argued their Conversations to be in Heaven. If you read in the story of the Martyrs, you shall find very often when they came to the stake, still their thoughts were in Heaven, and their hearts there, and encouraging one another what they should have in Heaven, and of the glory that they should have there, that being willing to suffer such hard things for Christ, and that

that being able to undergo all with so much joy, is an evidence, that there have been Christians in the world that have had their Conversations in Heaven.

A Fourth Evidence of Christians having their Conversations in Heaven is this, *That their hearts are so fill'd with Heavenly riches.* It is an Argument of a man that trades much unto such a place, when he hath his Ware-house stor'd with the Commodities of such a Country : As now, though no man should tel me which way his trading lies, that such a man were a Spanish or Turkish Merchant ; yet if I come into his Ware-house, and find that Constantly his Ware-house is fill'd with thole Commodities, I may conclude, that certainly this man is a Spanish or Turkish Merchant: he hath the Commodities of the Country continuallie in his ware-house. So, the Saints have much of the riches of Heaven in their hearts continually, they have much grace, much holynesse, much of the Image of God, much spiritual life there is there in a Christian, and you may see in his Conversation he doth manifest (I say) much of the Excellency of Heaven, much of the Glory of Heaven shines in his face ; surelie his Conversation is in Heaven who hath so much of the riches of Heaven in his heart : *The heart of the wicked (saith the holy Ghost) is little worth :* Look into the heart of a wicked man or woman what is there : thy heart that should be thy store-house, what is it fill'd withal ? it's fill'd with dirt, and drosse, and filth, and uncleanness, the hearts of wicked men are stored with those things : but now, look into the hearts of the Saints, they are fill'd with God, with Christ, with the holie Ghost, with grace, that shews that they have traded much in Heaven ; in a constant way you shal find their hearts fill'd with grace, and manifesting much in their lives, and therefore, surely their Conversation is in Heaven.

A fifth Evidence is this, *That they are willing to purchase the priviledges of Heaven at so dear a rate ; namely, The Ordinances that are part of the Priviledges of the Kingdome of Heaven.* Now the Ordinances that are the means whereby they

they come to enjoy so much of Heaven, they are willing to purchase them at a dear rate, Oh how ever I live, yet let me live where I may enjoy the Ordinances of God the wells of Salvation, my life cannot be comfortable in the enjoyment of all things in this world if I should be deprived of the breasts of consolation ; surely they that are willing to purchase Heavenly Commodities at so dear a rate as the Saints will do, this doth evidentlie declare their Conversations to be in Heaven.

Sixtie, *When they are so sensible of the stoppages between heaven and their own souls.* If there should be a general stoppage of ships that are in *France, Turkey, or Spain*, your country-men are not sensible at all of it ; but your Merchants I'll warrant you would be sensible enough of it, and when they come together upon the Exchange, all their converse would be of it, So it is with those that have their conversations in Heaven ; and here's a great difference between those and those that are earthly-minded ; tell those that are earthly of anie stoppage in the intercourse between them and Heaven, and they know not what you mean, they think you are fools and mad : but the Saints they are sensible of it, oh ! it is a sore and sad evil to them, I mean, when at any time God hides his face from them, when at any time they go into the presence of God and can hear nothing from him, can receive no Letters from Heaven (as I may so say.) If the Post doth not come from such a Country, the Marchants are troubled at it. So when the Saints send up their prayers to Heaven by which they trade thither and can hear nothing from God again ; and when they cannot feel those influences from Heaven let into their souls as heretofore sometimes they have done, Oh ! they bewaile this as a great evil that is upon them above any evil in the world, that influences of Heaven are stop'd, and that God seems to be a stranger unto them, Oh these things they complain of one to another, and they make their moans when they feel the stoppages of Heaven ; this plainly doctures, that they are *Traders for Heaven*, and that their Conversations are there.

The

The last Evidence of a Saints having his Convſation in Heaven is, *His willingneſſ to die, to depart this world*: The going out of this world with ſo much comfort, joy, peace, and triumph as many of the Saints have done; as we might give you the expreſſions of many of the Siantſ when they were ready to die, rejoycing at the hope of Eternal life, at their going out of the world; ſurely had they not converſed in Heaven while they lived here, their ſouls would not have been ſo willing to have departed out of their bodies. A man that hath nothing to do in another Country, it may be ſhall be there as a dead man, he goes but with little joy thither: But now, a man that hath had trading to another Country, and he hath great riches, and ſo thriven there, that whatſoever he ſeems to be here, yet there he is a great man: Oh! how comfortably doth that man go to the Country! how glad is he when he takes ſhip and ſees a fair gale, and prosperous wind to carry him to that Country! And ſo it is with the Saints who have their Converſations in Heaven; becauſe they have ſo much riches there, when they come to die they die with joy, and bleſſe God for that day as the moſt bleſſed day that they have ſeen; for they are going now to the Country that they have been trading to all their dayes, and where their riches lies. Theſe are the Evidences and Demonſtrations that the Saints have their Converſations in Heaven.

CHAP. IX.

Four Reasons why the Saints have their Converſations in Heaven.

BUT now, If you demand the reaſon, why it is that the Saints have their Converſations in Heaven?
To that I anſwer breifly.

The first Reason.

Because their souls that are their better part, they are from Heaven. You know, that when God made Man, He breathed into his Nostrils the breath of life. The Soul of man, it is as it were, the breath of God : God did not say of Mans Soul as of other creatures, *Let it be made, let there be a Soul in Mans body.* No, but when he had formed the body, he breathed the soul into him. It was to note, that the soul of man had a more Heavenly, and Divine original, than any of the other creatures that are here in this world ; and because the original it is so Divine, and Heavenly, therefore it is, that when the soul is (as it were) its self, is set at liberty, it would be at its original : Indeed, though mans soul be of a Divine, and Heavenly Nature, yet through the fall of man, so it is, that the soul of man is even almost turned to be flesh, and so mingled with unclean drossie things as if it had no such Divine and Heavenly original ? and therefore a natural man is called *flesh*, *That that is born of the flesh, is flesh* ; as if he had no soul at al : for I say, the soul of man through his fall, the Nature of it seemed to be changed, it is at least depressed down to such vile things, as if it never had such a Divine and Heavenly original. But now, when God works Grace in the soul, the soul of man begins to return to its self, and to know its self, and begins to return to its own Nature that it had in its first creation : and as soon as ever the soul begins to know its self, it looks then presently at al these things that are here below as vile things in comparison, as contemptable ; for indeed, al these things in this world are infinitely beneath the soul of a man : [Infinitely] that is, in comparison, we may even call it an infinite distance between mans soul and al these things that are here below in the world ; the soul of man is neer unto God himself, and therefore whenas the soul returns unto its self, it would be some where else than where it is, and would converse with those things that are suitable to its original. As it is with
a man

a man that hath a noble birth, suppose a Prince is got into another Country, and there being a Child, is used like a slave, set to rake Channels, and such mean employment; now all the while that he is there and not know his original, he minds nothing but to get his victuals, and do his work that he is set about; but if once he come to know from whence he was, namely, born the Heir unto such a great Prince, or Emperour that lives in so much glory in such a Country; then he that liv'd like a slave, his thoughts, and mind, and longings are, to be in the Country where his birth was so high, Oh that he might be but there, he should be happy then; and it doth him good to hear any Man speak of that Country. Truly, so it is with the souls of men, they are the birth (as I may so speak) of the high God, of the great King of Heaven and Earth, being breathed so into the nostrils of man. Now through mans fall the soul comes to be a slave to the Devil, and is set about drudgery to provide for the flesh: but now, when God is pleased to convert the soul, the Lord comes then to declare to a man or Woman, Oh man, Woman! thou art born from on high, thy soul is (as it were) a sparkle of the Divinity (as I may so say) thy Father by creation, nay, not only by creation as he is the Creator of all Creatures, is God, but by a more special work of his, by a more special work (I say) than in the first creation of other things; thy soul is from God, and of a Divine Nature, and is therefore capable of Communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; Certainly, thou never hadst such a Divine and Excellent being given thee merely that thou shouldest delight in the flesh, and be servicable to thy body, in eating, and drinking here a while; Oh! consider of thy Country whence thou camest at first; here's one work of Grace, to know the Excellency of our souls, and from whence they came: surely, if Grace do this, it must needs turn the heart of one that is converted to God, to have his Conversation to be in Heaven. That's the first Reason.

The

The Second Reason.

But not only so, because the soul had a heavenly original, and therefore will not be content with a portion here in this world. But secondly, *When grace comes there, the soul hath a Divine Nature put into it beyond the excellency that it had in its first Creation*: I say, there is a Divine Nature higher than is meer natural excellencie; in the 2. *Peter* 1. 3. *According* (saith he) *as his Divine Power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, and whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine Nature*. Certainly the Apostle did not here mean, meerly what *Adam* had in innocency, I never read that that's call'd the *Divine Nature*; though it's true, there is a renewing of the Image of God in man when he is converted; I but there is some what more in the soul of man than repairing of this; the holy Ghost comming and dwelling in the soul in a higher way than it dwelt in the soul of *Adam* at the first; indeed before it was a creature but such a creature as only had reference to God, as God was the Creator, and man was the creature; but now it hath reference to God as being made one with the Second Person in Trinity, and so one with the Father: and therefore of a higher Nature than man was in the state of innocencie. And you know what is said of *Adam* in Paradise, He was of the earth earthly, he was of the earth in comparison of the Second *Adam*, (take *Adam* in innocency in comparison of the second *Adam*, he was but of the earth earthly) and to his posterity though *Adam* had stood should have been but of the earth earthly, and their portion its like should have bin but in a happiness in this world: we never read in Scripture of a Heavenly condition *Adam* had been in though he had stood; but the second *Adam* is from Heaven Heavenly. And the posterity of the second *Adam* that is, those that are by *Regeneration* made the children of the everlasting Father, that are made the posterity of

Jesus

Jesus Christ by faith are from Heaven Heavenly ; therefore their souls are indued with a Divine Nature, with such high principles of grace as it must needs carry up their souls to Heaven : If a lump of earth should be so changed as to have a spirit and a life put into it, and to be made of such an Aerial nature as any of the birds are, this lump of earth would fly in the air presently. It is so in the work of conversion, All men and women are earthly, and therefore they sink down to the earth, and the earth is their proper center ; but when once they come to be converted, there is a spirit put into them whereby they come to mount up aloft : It is not more natural for the Earth to fall down low, than it is for the fire and air to ascend up high, because every creature doth move towards the Center of it, heavie things fall down because below is the proper place of them ; light things rise up, because their proper place is to be above : and so, the Conversations of the Saints must needs be in Heaven, because there's their Center, there's that that's suitable to the Divine Nature that is put into them.

The Third Reason.

Their Conversations must needs be in Heaven. *Because those things that are the most choice things unto them are in Heaven.* I should have named a great many particulars here to shew what are the choice things that concerne the Saints, and how they are all in Heaven.

Their Father, God is in Heaven : *Our father which art in Heaven.* Jesus Christ he is in Heaven ; *Seek the things above where Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of the Father.* Jesus Christ that is their Head is in Heaven. Their Husband is in Heaven. Their Elder Brother is in heaven. Their King is in heaven. Their Treasure is in heaven. Their Inheritance in heaven. Their Hope is in heaven. Their Mansion-house in heaven. Their chief Friends are in heaven. Their Substance is in heaven. Their Reward is in heaven.

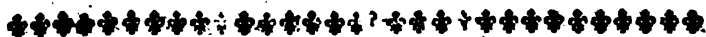
heaven. Their wages are in heaven. All these things being in heaven, no marvill though their Conversations are in heaven. And they are going to Heaven; now being that they are going that way, travelling towards heaven, they must needs be there in their hearts, heaven is the place that they shal come to ere long, they shal be there, and they know that here in this world they are to be but a while, but for ever to be there, *We shall be caught up into the clouds and be for ever with him*: Yea, their Conversations must needs be in Heaven, for they have much of heaven already, there's much of heaven in the Saints, the Kingdom of Heaven it is within them, the Scripture saith: They having so much of Heaven for the present, it must needs be that their Conversations are there, and so that Scripture in the 10. Heb. 34. *Knowing in your selves that ye have in Heaven a better and enduring substance*. You may read it thus, Knowing you have Heaven: a better enduring substance in your selves; so that the words [*knowing in your selves*] hath not only reference to what they know by hear-say, though this be a true note, that they may know heaven by hear-say; they hear Ministers speak of Heaven, and read it in the Word of God, but they know it in themselves, they know it by what God hath revealed in their own hearts, yea, though there were no books that ever they should see more, though they be not book-learn'd, and though they cannot read a letter in the book, though they should hear no more Sermons, yet by what is revealed in themselves, *They know themselves that they have a more better and enduring substance*: That's a truth. But the words may be more properly in the original, read thus: *Knowing that you have Heaven in your selves, a Better and Enduring substance*: External life is begun already in the hearts of the saints, there is Heaven already in the Saints; and therefore no marvel though their Conversations be in Heaven.

The Fourth Reason.

God hath so ordered things in this world on purpose, *that he might wean the hearts of the saints from the world.* The Lord loves to have the hearts of his Saints to be in Heaven where he hath treasured up such glorious things for them and because that the Saints while they are here in the world, and have so much of the world in them, they would feign be living here in the world; therefore God doth so order things that they shall meet with little content in this world, that they may be weary of it, and be wearied from it: and indeed, here's the reason why Gods people have met with such crosses in the world, why the Lord hath kept his Saints so low and mean in the world: It may be you are ready to draw ill conclusions from thence, and to think, I am afraid God doth not love me that he keeps me so low and mean, and I meet with such crosses, and others do not. Oh! gather not such ill conclusions as these are; It is, because he would gather your hearts to Heaven, and wean you from the world, that you might long to be with him in Heaven, for you are ablear from him here in this world, and the lord would have the full stream of your affections to run after those things that you shall have with him in Heaven. This use you are to make of those afflictions you meet withal, and those crosses that befall you in this world, And thus we have gone through the Doctrinal point, of the Saints having their Conversations in Heaven.

Z

CHAP.



CHAP. X.

WEE have treated long upon that point of *An Heavenly Conversation*, and have opened to you, what that Heavenly Conversation is, wherein it consists in many particulars: But now we shal proceed to the Application of all. Though as I have gone along, I have endeavoured not onely to speak to your heads, but your hearts, and to quicken what I have said, so as might quicken your hearts: yet from the consideration of all, there are divers Uses that may be profitable unto you.

The first Use.

The first is this, If the Saints live such a Heavenly Conversation as hath bin opened to you, Oh how far are they from being Saints, from being godly, *Who are so far from having their Conversations in Heaven, as they have their Conversations in Hell.* There are a generation of men that profess themselves to be Christians, and say, that they hope to goe to Heaven: and yet if you behold their Conversation, it is not other than the conversation of hell: Certainly, 'tis not what men say but how they live that will cast them another day: be that is of heaven, or see Heaven, his Conversation is in Heaven: and he that is for hell, his Conversation is hellish: now that's a Conversation in hell that is like to what is done in hell, what is there in hell, but blaspheming and cursing? What is there in hell, but hatred and malice? what is there in hell but, raging and filthiness? These things are the conversations of many men who are even devils incarnate. In many families there's the Name of God blasphomed, there's Cursing, and railing, and malice, and wrath, and pride, so that though they be here in this world, yet they manifest to what place they do

do belong. So that as the Saints have their Conversations in Heaven, when they die they go to their own place, that is to heaven where their Conversations were: so on the contrary, the wicked having their Conversations in hell, when they die they go to their own place: as it was said of *Judas*, *He went to his own place*: So a wicked man dying, having his Conversation in hell while he liv'd, (I say) when he dies he goes to his own place, that's his own proper place, he took content and delight in those things that were done there, and so when he dies, thither he shall go. *As the tree falls so it lies*. As thy Conversation is, and the bent of thy heart is there, so it must lie to all eternity.

CHAP. XI.

The Second Use.

THis Point likewise, rebukes Hypocrites, as wicked prophane ones that have their Conversations in hell: so there's another kind of men that are unsound professors, Hypocrites, and they have their Conversations between Heaven and Earth: It's not in Heaven nor in Hell, nor altogether upon the Earth, but between Earth, and Heaven, and Hell. Sometimes they seem to be aloft, above; sometimes very forward and zealous in the profession of Religion, sometimes much enlarged in Duties, at other times again they are as base earthly spirits as any, yea, sometimes, there's much of Hell in their hearts, and in their waies, they profess themselves the seed of *Abraham*, but they are not as the stars of heaven, but as *Meteors* that are between Heaven and Earth: we call them blazing stars; but they are not so bright as the stars, nor are they of such a heavenly nature as the stars, they are but made of a few unclean vapours that come out

of the earth, which being got up neer the heavens, do make a shew as if they were some star in heaven, but you find a great deal of difference between the stars and them in this, for within a little while they fall, and vanish, and come to nothing ; and so it is with many hypocrites, they by the Word are raised up a little for the present, and seem to be above the stars, and they have a glittering shew as if they had something heavenly in them, even like the stars of heaven, they seem to be got above others : your blazing star, a child would thinck it a great deal bigger than one of the stars that is an hundred times bigger than that is ; so 'tis with many hypocrites, they have a greater shew of Religion than many that have the truth of Godliness, and that are truly gracious, they look upon them as wondering at the excellent parts that they have, excellent abilities, it may be, they will discorse sometimes in an excellent manner about heavenly things ; you shall find some that have no soundness at all, yet will have very excellent discourse, they speak the very language of Canaan, but it is in such company where they may gain respect by it, but still are but as meteors that hang between heaven and earth : whereas the truth is, while they seem to be so high above others, and so heavenly, yet their hearts are groveling upon the earth : many times while they have most excellent expressions in prayer, yet God sees their hearts basely cleaving to some earthly things, there is some base earthly contentment that their hearts are upon, while they seem to be so heavenly, much like to the Kite that flies on high as if it were an Eagle, but the eye of it while it is above in the air is fixed upon some carrion, upon some prey that it hath upon the earth, and as soon as ever it sees a fit opportunity to seize upon the prey, it comes down to seize upon it, and that's the place the Kite would be at, that's the place he doth most delight in, to be upon his prey : And so an hypocrite, though he rises high in some actions, yet the truth is, his eye is upon some earthly prey, and when he sees his opportunity, thither he goes and sinks down to those

those things, and that's his most proper place, there he takes most delight and content in his Conversation, though his actions may seem to be Heavenly, and therefore he will fall down and never attain to the highest Heavens that the Saints shal go to, but to hell at the last.

CHAP. XII.

The Third Use.

THE Third Use is this, *The Saints Conversation in Heaven.* Hence then for shame, let us not find fault with strictness in the waies of God, let not man speak against the waies of God, as being too strict, and what need we be so Circumspect, and so precise, and so pure? what need we labor to do so much? what! canst thou attain to a more strict and holy Conversation than a Heavenly Conversation? It is a very carnal expression that some have, *Why? we cannot be Saints? we are not Saints*; yes, the holy Ghost calls all beleevers, all that have the very least degree of true grace, he calls them *Saints*. When we come to Heaven, then we shall live better, but while we are in this world we cannot. Yes, while you are in this world your Conversation is to be in Heaven; surely men either are not acquainted with the Word, or they shut their eyes and wil not see and consider what the Word saith about a strict Conversation: Sometimes you find in Scripture, that we are commanded, *to be perfect, as our Heavenly Father is perfect*; it's a strange speech, and yet it's the speech of Christ himself. And we must walk as Christ walked, and he that hath this hope, purifieth himself as he pure; and then our Conversation is in Heaven. Put these together, *Perfect as our Heavenly father is perfect; Walk as Christ walked; Purge our selves as he is Pure.* Then our Conversation is in Heaven: what doal these things tend

tend to? Surely it tends to a great deal of strictness and holiness of life. And these things shew that the work of a Christian here in this world is a busie work, that a Christian-life it is not an idle, dull, heavy, or sluggish life; you that are Christians, you had need quicken up your selves, you had need awaken those drowsie spirits of yours, if this be required of you, that you should be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect, Walk as Christ walked, Purifie your selves as he is pure, be Holy as he is holy, and to have your Conversations in Heaven, surely, there need be a great deal of quickness and life in the hearts of Christians; and you are not to content your selves in a meer profession, and doing some little matter in the way of Religion, or being somewhat better than others, you are to aim at heaven, look up there, and make that to be your pattern.

CHAP. XIII.

The Fourth Use.

AND that rebukes even such as are truly godly, many that yet do fail exceeding much in this thing: Oh! their Conversations are too low, are too earthly; If they would examine their hearts strictly they cannot say, that their Conversations are in heaven, *I am a stranger upon the earth*, saith David. But many may say, that they are strangers in heaven. Whereas earth should be the place of our pilgrimage, and heaven our home; but it's quite otherwaies, heaven is rather the place where most professors are strangers, and earth is the place of their habitation, they cast up a thought now and then to heaven, as now and then men wil cast up their eyes and look upon heaven, but where's your heart? where's the great workings of your spirits? It's a speech of the Lord, saith he, *Heaven is my Throne, & Earth is my Foot-stool*: Spiritual things

things they are to be look'd upon as the good things, as the Throne of God, and those earthly things only as the things of Gods foot-stool: but now, How many are there that have Earth their throne and heaven their foot-stool? that is, Heavenly things are made subordinate to earthly things; Oh! this should not be in any of those that professe themselves to be Christians, none of the Saines should satisfie themselves in any life but this, to be able to say, I blesse God, my Conversation is in Heaven, though God let me live upon the earth, yet my conversation is in Heaven. What an unworthy thing it is for one that doth professe to have his portion, and his inheritance in Heaven, yet to have the heart so mingled here with the earth; In *Gen 45. 20.* saith *Joseph* in sending for his faither, *Regard not your stuffe, for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.* Regard not the stuff, do not let it grieve you to forsake your stuff, leave all your Lumber behind you, for all the good things of Egypt are yours. Oh what a shameful thing is it, that Christians should regard their stuff so much as they do, that hope to have the good things not of Egypt, but of Heaven its selfe to be theirs! Surely if we have seen the things of Heaven, one would think that all the things of the earth should be darkened in our eyes: *2 Cor. 3. 10.* *That which was glorious* (saies the text) *had noe glory in comparison of the greater glory.* That Scripture I confesse, is spoken in comparing of the Law and the Gospel, there was a glory in the delivering of the Law but that had noe glory in comparison of the greater glory, that is, in comparison of the gospel; for in the Gospel we behold as in a glasse with open face the glory of God, and we changed into the same image, as from glory to glory: But we may apply it thus; As the things of the earth that were glorious before in your eyes, yet in comparison of the greater glory, should not at all be glorious; though before conversion these things were glorious, and grant it, that there is some kind of glory upon the things of this world, that they are gilded and varnish'd over, but in comparison of the greater glory they are not glorious at all, though they that

that never saw any thing else as glorious but the things of the world, yet thou that hast seen the greater glory shouldst not account these things glorious: Oh therefore Christians, lift up your hearts to Heaven, and let your Conversations be in Heaven: Though God hath so ordered it, that you must live here a while and must be content, for indeed to some Christians that have their Conversations in Heaven, it's a great part of their self denial, and of their subjection to God, to be willing to live upon the earth, and to stay from Heaven till Gods time come; This is a riddle and a mystery to many, that it should be a part of our Salvation, Obedience, yea, of Self-denial, though they had Crowns of Glory, though they were Kings and Princes here in this world, to be willing to stay here. We might come to attain this, if our conversations were in Heaven and our hearts there. As we reade of *Daniel*, though God so ordered it, that he could not live at *Jerusalem* where the Temple was, yet he would open his window towards *Jerusalem*, he would ever be looking that way. And so, though God hath so ordered it, that we cannot come yet to live in this Heavenly *Jerusalem* bodily, and in that full way as hereafter we expect to do, yet we should open our window, our eyes, and the doors of our hearts should open towards Heaven. I remember I have read of *Edward the first* King of England, that had a mighty mind to go to *Jerusalem*, but because he could not go, for death prevented him, he gave charge to his Son to carry his heart thither. And so it should be with us, we should endeavour to have our hearts there, and to have as much of Heaven as we can though we cannot be there our selves in nature: Every creature hath put into it by the God of nature an instinct to move to its proper place; as now, because the proper place of fire is above, there is an instinct of nature in fire to ascend to its proper place. And the proper place of earth is below, and therefore it will fall down to the Center! a heavy thing that hath much earth in it, though it breaks its self to peices yet it will fall down towards its Center:

Center: and to it will be with a Christian, though he break himself to pieces, whatsoever he suffers, yet he hath an instinct to carry him to his proper place; fire because its proper place is above, if it be kept down by violence, what a mighty power there is in fire to make way for its self that it may get up, that's the very reason of the mighty force that there is in Guns, because there is fire in the powder that is kept in, when the powder is once fir'd because the fire would get up above, therefore it breaks with violence, and if it cannot have vent to get out, it breaks any thing in the world, for it must out, that it may get up to it's own place; and so it should be with a Christian, there should be a strong imperiousness to get up to his own place; that would be an evidence indeed that Heaven is thy proper place: Oh Christians lift up your hearts, and let your Conversations be in Heaven.

CHAP. XIV.

An Heavenly Conversation is a convincing Conversation.

I Shall not need to come again and tel you, what Heavenly Conversation is, it hath been opened at large to you; but for the setting an edg upon this Exhortation.

First, Know, *That a Heavenly Conversation will be a very convincing Conversation*; then you will convince men you have somewhat more than they have, when they see you live Heavenly; for the men of the world they know the things of the world are the things that their hearts are upon, and that which they mind; but now, when they see those that professe Religion mingle themselves with the earth as they do, then they will think that they are act-ed by the same principles that themselves are; but now, Heavenly conversations will convince them, when they behold them walking above in the whol course of their lives, when they see an evenness and propotion in their course; take them at all times, and in all businesss, they carry themselves as men of another world: As a man

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that

that is a stranger to a place, may for a while act it so, as he may seem to be one that is a Native in the place, but one that is born in the place, will go nigh to find him out in one thing or other : and so 'tis very hard for men to carry themselves so, if they have not true Grace, though they appear sometimes to be very Heavenly, yet one that is a true Citizen of Heaven will discern them at one time or other if they have not grace; yea, the truth is, carnal men will discover themselves that they are born of the Earth, and are of their Country, his speech betraies him, he is a Gileadite : But when Christians shal in their constant way have their Conversations in Heaven, then their Conversations are very convincing; There are the Raies of Heaven about them, they have the lustre of heaven shining wheresoever they go, and in all company, surely such a man seems to be in heaven continually : So it will force it from the very consciences of men to say, Certainly these are the Citizens of heaven; if there be any Denizens of the new Jerusalem while they live upon the Earth, these they are. I remember its said of that Martyr Dr. *Taylor*, That he did rejoyce that he ever came into the Prison to be in company with that Angel of God, Mr. *Bradford*; Mr. *Bradford's* Conversation, it was Angel-like, like an Angel of heaven, and did convince almost every where, where he went : Oh ! 'tis of great use that Christians should live convincing Conversations. You know what *Dives* said to *Abraham*, That he would have one sent to warn his Brethren, that they might not come to that place : saith *Abraham*, *They have Moses and the Prophets* : Oh but saith *Dives*, *If one rise from the dead, they would hear him*. I may say thus, If God should send one from heaven to live among men, and to preach to them, surely they would regard him. Would it not be a great benefit to the world, if God should send some one Saint from heaven, or Angel to converse in a bodily way among us ? Truly, Christians should live so, as if they came from heaven every day, as if they had been in heaven and conversing with God. When they go to perform Duty in a morning.

ning, and get alone between God and their souls, they should never leave striving till they get their hearts so in Heaven, and get themselves upon the Mount, so as when they come down to their family their very faces may shine, so that you may see by their Conversations, that certainly they have been with God upon the Mount this day.

Now I appeal to you in this, Do you live so, as that your family, and your neighbors may see that you have bin this morning in heaven? Every morning we should have some converse with Heaven, which if we had, our Conversations would be convincing all the day long, and very profitable it would be to the world; Christians that live Heavenly Conversations they are (I say) of very great use in the places where they live. As I remember it's said concerning Christ, When he ascended up to Heaven, he gave gifts to men. And if we could oftener ascend up to Heaven, we should be more able to be beneficial to the world.

CHAP. XV.

An Heavenly Conversation is growing.

AN Heavenly Conversation is a growing Conversation. Oh! they grow mightily, they do thrive in grace exceeding much in a very little time, they grow to attain to a very great measure of Communion with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ, and every day they grow more and more spiritual, having so much of heaven within them: It's true, when they come into Heaven, they shall be perfect: But now, the fetching from Heaven is that that makes them grow, it must be the influence from Heaven that must cause the growth of Saints; As now, suppose that the ground upon which flowers and herbs grow, be never so fertile in its self, and the herbs or plants be never so well rooted in the earth, yet if there be not an influence

influence of heaven upon them they will not grow much, nay not at all, but quickly wither: So it is with Christians, let them have never so much means of growing below, never so many Ordinances, yet if they have not rich dews from above they will not grow, or if there be any growth, yet either they will bear no fruit, or else it will be very shrivelled and sowre fruit. You know, that fruit that hath the most of the beams of the Sun that comes from heaven upon it, that fruit grows ripper and sweeter than other fruit; fruit that grows in the shade, that hath the influence of Heaven kept off from it, it is sowre fruit. And the reason that the Saints have so little fruit, and that it is so sowre, it is because that they have not more influences from heaven, they do not stand in the open Sun, their souls are not presented daily before God, and have the warme beams of the Sun of Righteousnesse shining from Heaven upon them; but there is something between Heaven and their souls: but a Conversation in Heaven, as it would be a *Convincing* Conversation, so it would be a *Growing* Conversation.

CHAP. XVI.

An Heavenly Conversation brings much glory to God.

ANd then, *It would be a Conversation glorifying God much.* Oh! the Glory that God would have from a Conversation in Heaven! Let your light so shine before men, that others beholding your good works, may glorifie your Father which is in Heaven. Then indeed the Image of the God of Heaven is held forth when mens Conversations are heavenly, the Lord takes much delight to have his glory to be dispensed abroad by his Saints, to have some reflection upon the world: As in a glasse, though beams of the Sun do not shine upon a wall, yet by a glasse you may take the beams of the Sun and cast the reflection of them upon

upon a wall: so those beams of the glory of God that shine in Heaven, the Saints by their Heavenly Conversation may (as it were by a glasse) take them and reflect them upon the world, and upon the faces of men: the hearts of the Saints should be as a glasse taking the beams of the glory of God and casting them up and down where they are, and so your Heavenly Father should come to be glorified by you. Let every Christian think thus, My Conversation is thus and thus; but what glory do I bring to God by my Conversation? do others glorifie God by beholding the lustre of the holmes of God in me? do they see cause to blesse God that they see so much of the glory of God in me? Certainly, there is more of the glory of God shines in the gracious, holy, spiritual Conversation of a Christian, then shines in the Sun, Moon, and stars, than in Heaven, and Earth: I mean, for the works of Creation and Providence that are in heaven and Earth; the Creatures that God hath made, as the Sun, Moon, and Stars; and here in this world, the Seas, the Earth, the plants, and the like, though they have much of the glory of God, yet a Heavenly Conversation declares more of the glory of God than all these. You know what the psalmist saith, *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament shew his handy work*. It may be spoken more fully of Heavenly Conversations, the Heavenly Conversations of the Saints, declare the glory of God; and those that shine in the Firmament of the Church are stars, (for the Church is the Firmament, and the Saints be there as stars) and they declare the Handywork of God. Now though its true, As in Heaven there's one star differs from another star in glory: and so in Christians every one cannot attain to so much glory as another, yet every one is a star, the meanest Christian that lives, the weakest Believer that is, yet should be as a star in the firmament, though he cannot shine so gloriously as the Sun, or as other stars, yet there should be never a believer, never a godly man or woman in the Church, but should shine as a star in the firmament, but should be as the Gospel is, even a mix-

a mirror wherein we might behold the glory of God, in whom we may behold the glory of God even (as it were) with open face: An Heavenly Conversation is a Conversation glorifying God.

CHAP. XVII

An heavenly Conversation bringeth much glory in the Saints.

AN Heavenly Conversation, it's a Conversation that will bring much glory to your selves: Though it's true, that the Saints should aim at the glory of God most, yet there will come glory to themselves whether they will or no if their Conversations be in Heaven: it's impossible but that in the conscience of men they should be honored walking in a Heavenly Conversation: Ther's an excellent Scripture, that shews, that in our glorifying of God, we glorifie our selves also: 2 Thess. 1. 11, 12. the Apostle he praises for them, *Wherefore also (saith he) we pray alwaies for you, that our God would count you worthy of this Calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodnes, and the work of faith with power. To what end? That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. He praises for the Theſſalonians, That they might walk so, that they might have so much of the grace of God in them, that the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified in them. O! this is that that all the Saints should desire, and endeavor after, That the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ should be glorified in them; and ye in him, saith he: Labor you, that Christ may be glorified in your lives, and you shall be glorified in him. We should desire that Christ may have glory in our glory, and then we shall have glory in Christs glory: this is a sweet and blessed life, when as the Saints have such hearts, as they can say, Lord, let me have no glory, but that thou mayest*

mayest have Glory in. Then saith God, Is it so? Doeſt thou deſire no further glory in this world, but that I may have glory in? then I wil have no glory in this world, but what thou ſhalt have glory in: Chriſt wil make us partakers of his glory, as well as we ſhal make him partaker of our glory. Oh! An Heavenly Converſation that glorifies God, wil glorifie the Saints too.

CHAP. XVIII.

An Heavenly Converſation wil make Suffring eaſie.

Heavenly Converſation, it will make all ſufferings to be very eaſie, it will be nothing to ſuffer any thing you meet withal in this world, if your Converſations be in Heaven: All revilings, and reproaches, and wrongs, they will be nothing, if you get but a Heavenly Converſation, you will contemn all theſe things that the men of the world think to be ſuch great matters: Men that have converſed in Heaven, never will be much offended for any ſufferings: 2 Cor. 4. 17. *For our light afflictions which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: While we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen, are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal.* All but light afflictions, Why? for our Eye is above all theſe things. And it's a notable paſſage that in the Goſpel, if you examine the place of Chriſts tranſfiguration upon the Mount, there Chriſt ſhewed his glory unto ſome Diſciples, that he carried with him; and this is that which I would note from it, do but obſerve in the ſtory who were the Diſciples that Chriſt carried with him to ſee his glory, they were, Peter, James, and John: now afterwards, if you compare that ſtory with the ſtory of Chriſt being in his Agony, which was preſently after; where his

soul

soul was heavie unto death, when he was betrayed, and to be crucified the next day, and fell groveling upon the earth, and I sweat cloddors of blood through the anguish that was upon his spirit, and cried out, Oh Lord ! *If it be possible let this cup pass from me.* Here's a great deal of difference between Christ in his Agony, and upon the mount in his transfiguration ; and observe, that Christ would have none of his Disciples see him in his Agony, but *Peter, James and John*, only those three that saw him in his transfiguration upon the mount in his glory.

The note from hence is, *That those that can converse much with Christ in glory, can converse with Christ in Heaven, can see Heaven, they may be permitted to see Christ in his Agony, & it wil do them no hurt.* But now, for the other disciples that did not see Christ in his glory, if they had seen Christ in his Agony, it might have offended them, Is this our Lord and Master that is in such a fearful Agony at this time ? Oh ! it would have offended them ; but now, the ones that saw him glorified, it offended them not ; Well, though he be in an agony now, yet we know him to be a glorious Savior, and we wil beleieve and trust in him still. So, if we can converse with God in Glory upon the mount, what ever Agony we see Christ in afterwards we shall be able to bear it : when *Stephen* had the stones rading about his ears, yet when he saw the heavens opened it was nothing to him, then, he fell asleep, he rejoyced in the expectation of Heaven. And if you reade in the Book of Martyrs, ever when they came to their sufferings you may see how they did rejoyce, when they did think of Heaven, and remember eternal life. Saith one woman to her child that was going to be burnt, when as the people thought she would have rung her hands, and made great lamentations to have seen her child stepping into the flames, she said nothing but this, Remember eternal life my son. Oh ! conversing with Heaven makes all sufferings in the world nothing.

CHAP. XIX.

Heavenly Conversation brings much joy.

THen, Oh the sweetness and comfort that there will be while the soul is converting in Heaven! Oh the joy & the peace that will come to the Soul in the certain evidence that the soul is partaker in the Death, Resurrection, and Intercession of Jesus Christ! (I say) those whose Conversations are in Heaven, by this they come to have certain evidence to their souls, that they have their portion in the death, in the Resurrection, in the Ascension, in the Intercession of Jesus Christ, and this will afford comfort enough. That Scripture in the 3. Colos. 1. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things that are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth: for ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.* Here's an evidence that you are risen with Christ, that you are dead to the world, and have interest in his Ascension, and are partakers of his Resurrection, and have part in his Intercession. Those that have their Conversations in heaven now, they may know certainly that they are risen from death to life, that when Christ ascended, he went to Heaven to take possession for them, yea, that they are in Heaven where Christ is: *He hath set us in Heavenly places together with Christ Jesus.* For he is there as a common head: That they are ascended with Christ already, and that Christ is there as an Advocate making Intercession for them to the Father, there will be the consolations of those that have their Conversation in Heaven.

CHAP. XX.

An Heavenly conversation is very safe.

AND then, A Conversation in Heaven, *is a very safe Conversation, you will be free from snares and temptations.* As an Earthly Conversation subjects unto temptations; so a Heavenly Conversation will free us from temptations. When is the bird in danger of the lime-twig or Net but when she comes to pick below upon the ground? but if she could but keep her self above alwaies, she were free then from the Share and Net: It's *Chrysostoms* similitude, *Keep aloof, and then ye be free from the snare of the fowler.* It's a safe Conversation.

CHAP. XXI.

An Heavenly Conversation giveth abundant enterance into Glory.

AND then, It will cause an abundant enterance into the Kingdom of Heaven. When they come to die, Oh how joyfully w^{ill} they die, what abundant enterance will be made into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? *For when they die they shall but change their place, they shall not change their company:* they shall but go to their Fathers house to be partakers of those manifold Christ before hath prepared.

Oh my bretheren! labor to have your Conversations in Heaven, and know, that this is not a matter only that concerns eminent Christians, but all Christians; and see how the Apostle charges this upon the *Thessalonians*, 1.

Epist.

Epistle 2. 11. *As you know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, (as a Father doth his children) that you would walk worthy of God who hath called you unto his Kingdom and Glory. That is, That you would walk in a Conversation answerable to the glorious Kingdom of God that you are called to, according to your high calling, we should walk worthy of it: We are charged so to do: and as it's said concerning Christ in the Gospel by Saint John, he spake concerning himself, But the Son of man which is in Heaven. So it should be said of every child of God, such a one that is in Heaven, not only such a one that shal go to Heaven, but that is in Heaven for the present.*

CHAR. XXII

Seven Rules, or Directions, how to get Heavenly Conversations.

BUT you will say, *How should we do to get this our Conversation to be in Heaven? it's an excellent Conversation indeed, Oh that we might attain unto it!*

The First Rule.

First, Take this Rule, *Be perswaded that it is attainable.* Let Christians conclude thus with themselves, it is possible for me to live a life of Heaven while I am upon the earth: There is a Heaven to be got, it wil mightily stir up the spirit of a Christian, if he do beleeye this. I may live in Heaven here, with God, and Christ, and his Angels, and Saints; there are some that have attain'd to this; and how have they attain'd to it? not by their own strength, they were men subject to the same infirmities that you are, even Paul himself that had his Conversation in Heaven, was subject to many infirmities. But, through the strength

of Christ he can do all things, he was nothing in himself; reade but the 7. of the *Romans*, *Paul* saith there of himself, that he was even sold under sin, and when he would do good evil was present with him: and he was led captive, and he found a Law in his members rebelling against the law of his mind, and he had many corruptions and was feign to have a prick in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to humble him: and he spake of this Heavenly Conversation, not only that he had it himself, but writing to the *Philippians* they attain'd to it; they were a Church that were very spiritual, but were but poor and mean in respect of some others, and they had not those eminent gifts that the *Corinthians* had, and yet the *Philippians* had their Conversations in Heaven: therefore it is a thing that is attainable.

The Second Rule.

Secondly, If you would get your Conversations in Heaven, *Labor to keep a clear conscience, keep a Heaven in your conscience.* Those men that do fully and defile their consciences, they lose their intercourse with Heaven, and indeed, the presence of the God of heaven is tedious to them, they be loth to go into his presence when once they have defiled consciences, *If there be a Hell in a mans conscience, there will not be a Heaven in his Conversation,* but let men and women labor to keep conscience clean, and a Heaven there, and then there will be a Heaven in their Conversations.

The Third Rule.

Watch opportunities for Heavenly exercises, though you have much business in the world, watch time: You that are servants, you should not indeed neglect your Masters business: for you may serve God in the work of your Masters, but yet you must watch opportunities; get alone, and if you cannot have any long time let it be so much the frequenter, watch all opportunities for Heavenly exercises, for meditation, for prayer, for reading, for conversing with God:

Oh!

Oh! we might get many opportunities to get our souls in Heaven if we would but watch; and those that are diligent to watch opportunities for Heavenly exercises, and prize opportunities for them, they are the men and women that will come to attain to a Heavenly Conversation, that do not make it as a light matter whether they have converse with God or no in holy duties: Christians that would have their Conversations in Heaven, they must look upon their opportunities for Heavenly exercises, they eye them, as that wherein much of the joy and comfort of their lives consists.

The Fourth Rule.

Forget not this in the next place, (I speak now to Christians that would feign have their Conversations in Heaven) I say to you, *Take heed and be careful that you rest not in formality, watch to get opportunities, but be not formal in duties in them.* Oh! this will mightily darken your Conversations, it will make them very earthly, there will be no beauty at all in them if you come to rest in formality in holy performances: There's many Christians that we hope may have some good at the bottom, yet growing to a form in Religion they never honor their profession, they have little comfort to their own souls, they go on in a dead hearted condition, they know not what it is to have communion with God, Oh beware of that; that we are all by nature subject too; those that have enlightenings of conscience, they dare not but take opportunities for Heavenly duties; but then comes in the temptation of the Devil, and the corruption of our own hearts; when I have done my task, then it's over, I have prayed, I but have you been in Heaven that while? what converse with God have you had there? Oh take heed of formality! it will exceedingly hinder your Conversation. But now, a Christian though of never such weak parts, can but chatter to God; and speak a few broken words and half sentences, yet if he doth not rest in formality he may have much converse with God,

God, whereas others that have excellent parts, yet resting in the work done, never knows what the meaning is of having a Conversation in Heaven.

The Fifth Rule.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

ἡ ὁμιλία ὡς μα-
τὴν σώμα.

Castigo corpus
meum. vulg.

Comundo cor-
pus meum.

Levidum red-
do corpus.

August.

Et metapho-
rasumpta a pu-

gilibus & su-
stantibus, qui

pugnis & ver-
beribus se mu-

tuo obtundunt.

chem. Jans.

Aret. Parens.

Piscat.

Labor to beat down your Bodies, That is, take heed of making provision for the flesh, beware of sensual lusts; how came *Paul* to to have his Conversation in Heaven? saith he, *I beat down my body; The word is, Black and blue*; chub'd it down; as if he should say, This body of mine would draw my heart aside from spiritual things, and make me earthly and sensual, I wil keep down my body, I wil not give that satisfaction to the flesh, and body so as to strengthen any temptation that should draw my heart off from Spiritual, and Heavenly things: no, but I beat down my body saith he. There's no Christian that is Heavenly but he must be very careful and watchful over his senses while he lives here, to beat down his body, and so he may come to have his Conversation in Heaven.

The Sixth Rule.

Labor to be skilful in the mystery of godliness, to draw strength from Jesus Christ in every thing you do. For my Brethren, Christ he is *Jacob's Ladder*. When *Jacob* lay asleep he saw a ladder on which the Angels did descend and ascend up to Heaven. Now this *Jacob's Ladder* is no other but *Jesus Christ* to Christians, and that must be set up to Heaven; if you would go to Heaven, and converse with Heaven, it must be by *Jesus Christ*, you must be instructed in the mystery of the Gospel in conversing with God through a Mediator; there is such an infinite distance between God and us, that except we have *Christ the Mediator* we can never come to God, nor God come to us; it is

only Christ the Mediator that is the Ladder : We need not say, Who shall go up to Heaven to fetch Christ down ? No, we may have Christ in our hearts, and set up him, and so we may go up to Heaven by his mediation. Whenas a Christian comes to live in this manner ; what I do expect from God, I expect to draw it through a Mediator, and all the services that I tender up to God I tender them up through the hand and heart of Christ : Now those that are acquainted with this have much converse with Heaven : By Jesus Christ the Mediator I may come up there and present my self there, though no unclean thing may come there, for God looks upon the Saints through him as righteous, being clothed with his righteousness, they may come to their Father with boldnesse, having their Elder brothers garments upon them, they may come and kneel before the Throne of grace, come into Heaven as into the Presence Chamber and kneel every morning for their Fathers blessing ; it's by him that we have access unto the Father : Oh ! acquaint thy self with the Mystery of godliness in drawing all from Christ ; and tending all to God through Christ : By this Heaven comes down to thee, and by this thou climest up to Heaven, this is the *Jacob's Ladder*. But those men that only look upon God in a natural way, that's thus, Indeed all good things must come from God ; and so they go to prayer, *Lord we beseech thee bless us this day, for all good things come from thee*. And they serve God, their consciences tell them they must worship, and serve God while they live here ; but it is but in a dull natural way : let me leave it in your hearts, All good comes from God through a Mediator, through Jesus Christ the second person in Trinity, God-Man, and all my services are tendered up to God through him ; there is this Mediator God-Man that unites God and me together, and so by him I have acceptance both for my person and all my actions, and by him I come to have other manner of blessings than comes from God meerly as Creator, God in bounty bestows upon the creature many good things, but when we

we come to deal with God in Christ we come to have Heavenly blessings, blessings beyond the power of nature, yea beyond all those blessings that nature can be any conveyance of, beyond the blessings that the conduits of the creature are able to hold forth, they have the blessing from God immediately, immediately I mean in respect of the creature, it's by the meditation of Christ, they enjoy God in Christ, and so come to enjoy God in a Heavenly, Supernatural way: Oh this is the way to have our Conversations in Heaven; and those Christians that are much acquainted with the Gospel of Christ, they come to live far more Heavenly Conversations than others that go on in a dull, heavie, and natural kind of way in serving of God: But being not acquainted with this mystrie, their hearts lie low upon the earth, and know not what it is to have their Conversations in Heaven.

The Seventh Rule.

And so the next Rule with which I must close all is this, *Exercise much the grace of faith*: There is no way to get above the Creature, and above Nature, but by exercising the grace of Faith. Many Christians think they must exercise love to God, and exercise sorrow for sin; the grace of Repentance, mourning for sin, that's good, thou shouldest do that, and thou shouldest exercise patience; but the great grace that is to be employed if thou wouldest attain a Heavenly life, is, *The exercise of Faith*: and make conscience to put forth that grace much, for it's by that that we do converse with God through Christ. Though Christ be the ladder, yet it's faith that carries us up this ladder, and brings us down again, it's faith that makes the things of Heaven real to the soul, *Heb. 11. 1.* It's faith that is an evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for, by faith these things come to be made real and substantial things, and as present things, faith it is that gives a great excellency to all the things of heaven as self, and therefore

therefore live much by faith, and walk by faith, and not by sence, and then shalt thou be above the world and live in Heaven; and as the fruit of thy faith, wait for the appearing of Jesus Christ. *Our Conversation is in Heaven* (saith the apostle) *from whence also we look for the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ &c.* Where a mans Conversation is, there his expectations may be; and where the expectations are, there a mans Conversation is; now our Conversation is in Heaven from whence also we look for Jesus Christ; as if he should say, It's not a meer notion, do not you think that when we speak of Conversing in Heaven that we please our own fancies only; Oh no, saith he, we by faith look upon Heaven as the most real thing in the world, for we expect the Lord Jesus Christ ere long to appear in glory bodily, and we shall see him with these eyes, and he shall change our vile bodies and make them like his glorious body, we by faith looking upon such glorious things to be so real, and so at hand, and we waiting for these things, it's this that makes our Conversation to be in Heaven: our hearts and all are there, because that we expect that these things will be made good to us quickly, Oh Christians do but exercise your faith in this, in Jesus Christ, and put forth this fruit of faith in waiting for the appearing of Jesus Christ when he shall come and appear in his glory, this will help to make your Conversations to be in Heaven? Oh what a blessed time will that be when Jesus Christ shall come from the Heavens, and appear to those that have been waiting for him! it was a blessed thing to have Christ here personally and to live with him when he was upon the earth though it were in the state of his humiliation, Oh when he shall come in his glory, how blessed will that be! and when he shall change our vile bodies that they may be like unto his glorious body, Oh this will keep the heart in expectation of Christ, for then that vile body of thine that is now a body of sin and death, matter of diseases, a body of weakness, and a lump of clay, now it shall be made like the glorious body of Jesus Christ, to shine more glorious than the

C c

Sun

Sun in the firmament; this will be when Jesus Christ shall come with all his Angels in his glory; and this is observable, when all the glory of the creature shall be darkened with the glory of God and Jesus Christ, yet then the bodies of the saints shall shine gloriously before the face of God and Jesus Christ, surely they shall be more glorious than the glory of the Sun, for that you know will be darkened at the coming of Jesus Christ; The great glory of the Father, and Jesus Christ, and the Angels shall darken the glory of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, but the glory of the bodies of the Saints shall be so great, as all the glory of God, and Jesus Christ and the Angels shall not darken their glory, but it shall appear with a vere great lustre: now if the glory of God, and the Angels, should darken it, then to what purpose is it that their bodies shall be like to the glorious body of Jesus Christ? but certainly it shall not darken their glory: If a candle could be raised to have so much lustre and beauty as if you should put it into the midst of the Sun, yet it would shine in the midst of it, it would be a strange kind of light you would say: It shall be so with the bodies of the Saints, that though they are put into the midst of the glory of God, and his Son, yet their very bodies shall shine in beauty and lustre there: Now did we beleeve this, and wait for it every day, how would it change us! I have a diseased and a lumpish body, and my body hinders me in every duty of worship, and service, wandring and vain thoughts lodge in me now; I but I'll wait for that time when Christ shall come in all his glory, and make my body to be like unto his glorious body, to make it to be able to look upon the face of God, and to be able to be exercised in holy duties to all eternity without any weariness, and without any intermission: so shall the bodies of the Saints be raised to that power, that their bodies shall be so strong, that their souls shall be exercised about the highest things possible for a creature to be exercised with without weariness; wait for this: I have many things here that trouble my mind, and spirit, and hinders me

me in my converse with Heaven, but within a while the time shal come that I shal be delivered from al troubles here, when Christ shal appear with his mighty Angels to be admired of his Saints, and when he shal come and take the Saints to judg the world, and shal set all the Saints upon Thrones to judg the world, the expectation of this time wil raise the heart very much to be in Heaven.

But then especially, when I consider the glory that shal be upon my soul, let me think thus, if this body of mine that is a lump of flesh shal be by the almighty power of God whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself, raised to that height of glory, to be more glorious than the Sun in the Firmament; then what height of glory shal my soul be raised too! but then, take not only my soul, but my grace, the Divine Nature that is in my soul, what shal that be raised too? The plants are capable to be raised to a higher excellency than stones; and the Rational creature to a higher excellency than a Sensitive creature; and the Sensitive higher than the Vegetative, and the Supernatural creature to a higher excellency than the Natural; Then raise your thoughts thus: My body shal be raised so high, what shal my soul be then? and what shal my graces that are in my soul be? Oh! wait for this, it is but for a little while before I shal be with God for him to be all in all to my soul, enjoying full communion with him. (Galay. V. exhort. the faith, and wait for it, look for it every day, consider it's neerer and neerer, your salvation is neerer than when at first you believed, God hath a little work for you here but as soon as this is done this shal be my condition, I shal see my Savior, my soul shal presently be with him and enjoy full communion with him in glory, and my body within a while shal be raised and shal live for ever with him: shal be where he is, and shal enjoy all that he hath purchased by his blood, as much glory as the blood of Christ is worth and capable of; the text saith, *It shal be a weight of glory*: I am not here fitted to bear a weight of glory, if the glory of Heaven should shine in upon me to such as it

might, it would swallow me up presently. We read in the 7. of *Dan.* upon the glory of God appearing to him, saith he, I Daniel *fainted, and was sick certain daies.* If God should open the Heavens, and dart in some light from Heaven into us so as he might, alas we should faint presently and be sick and die, *No man can see God and live*; no man here can enjoy that that God hath prepared for his Saints in Heaven and live; therefore let us be content for a while to be as we are, and exercise our faith and hope in what shall be; Thou shalt be able to bear that weight of glory, and be able to stand before the face of God continually to enjoy those things that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can enter into the heart of man to conceive: nay, though a man hath a spiritual eye, and a spiritual eare, and a spiritual heart enlarged to supernatural things yet they are things not only beyond the eye of sense, but the eye of reason; nay, the eye of faith hath not seen them fully, nor ear hath ever heard of, neither can enter into a gracious heart to conceive what it is; but those Clusters that we have of this land of Canaan do shew that there is a glorious rest for his people. Now by the exercise of your faith and hope work these things upon your souls every day, it would be a mighty help to make your Conversation to be in Heaven; where should my heart and thoughts, where should my life and conversation be, but where I expect such things as these are to be revealed very soon in the Day of Jesus Christ, in his appointed time, which is at hand.

F I N I S