

A
Name in HEAVEN

The Truest Ground of Joy,
On LUKE x. 20.

AND THE
POWER of GRACE
In Weaning the Heart from the
WORLD,

On PSAL. cxxxi. 1.

Set forth in TWO DISCOURSES
in Commemoration of the Happy
BIRTH, &c. of the Only SON of a
Person of QUALITY.

By the late Reverend
Mr. *MATTHEW MEAD*.
Minister of the Gospel.

Published from the Original Copies wrote
out fair fit for the Press with the Au-
thor's own Hand, and by him Dedicated
to the said Person of Quality.

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THE EPISTLE

To the
READER.

READER,

THE ensuing Sermons are
by a Providence somewhat
peculiar presented to thy
View. They were first Preached
at the Request of a Person of Qua-
lity, the Right Honourable the La-
dy A 2 dy

To the Reader.

dy *Diana Verney*, and afterwards wrote out fair for her Use and Benefit, by the worthy Author himself, as appears by his own Epistles Dedicatory affixed; and lately (among a confused heap of Papers) fell into the hands of one who was well apprized of the Worth and Value of their Author, and therefore could not pass them by unregarded with those other Papers. On perusing them, he found such Impresses of the Spirit, and such *Vestigia* of the Wit and Parts of him whose Name they bear, that he concluded they were his genuine Offspring, and that they might (tho' preached on private Occasions, yet) be of publick Use and Service; and accordingly had thoughts of Printing them; whereto he conceived himself warranted, seeing they were drawn up in Form, with Titles, Author's Name, and Dedications annexed, as though they were intended for the Press. But this Owner

er of them though acquainted with the Stile, yet being ignorant of the Hand-writing of the Author (and knowing how easie and common a thing it is to invert the Sense and Meaning of a Man, by the Ignorance or Carelessness of a Transcriber) was not willing, on farther Consideration, to serve the Publick at the expence of the Reputation of a Person he so much esteemed, by publishing those Sermons for Originals, which, for ought he knew, might be only Transcripts; and thus those Thoughts were laid asleep until farther Satisfaction in that matter could be obtained. At length the Possessor of them (proud of such a Treasure) providentially shewed them to a Friend of his, who perfectly knew the Hand, and had by him several Letters and Papers of the Author's Hand-writing, which comparing with the Manuscript sermons, the Hands were found exactly to agree, to the Sa-

To the Reader.

tisfaction of Both Parties; whereupon the Design of Printing them was reviv'd, and is now executed.

This (*Reader*) is the Account of that Providence which has attended these Sermons. They might have fallen into the Hands of an Enemy, who might have evilly intreated them, by committing them to the Flames, or otherwise. They might have fallen into the Hands of one who knew not the Reverend Author, and who might, on that account, ignorantly have slighted them. The Person into whose Hands they did fall, might (when he came at them) have unwittingly thrown them by without a notice, as he had done many of their Companions before. And therefore that they have been thus preserved, is a Ground to hope, that God hath design'd them for singular Use and Service.

As

To the Reader.

As to the Reverend Author, to expatiate on his Praises were to hold a Candle to light the *Sun*: His Name and Memory is and will be precious to every serious Christian; and if it were possible these should fail, he has not only a *Name in Heaven*, which shall never be blotted out, but also a *Place there*, whence he shall never be removed: And as for the Sermons, they are of age to speak for themselves. It is enough to say of them, that they are the genuine Issue of the Reverend Mr. *Matthew Mead*, from whom nothing little, nothing mean, was wont to proceed.

As the Providence of God has preserved them, so may his Blessing attend them and thee in thy reading of them.

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To the Honourable the Lady DIANA VERNY.

M A D A M,

I Here present Your Honour
with the Transcript of that
Sermon which your Command, at
first to Preach, and since to Write
out, made a Duty. It is a great
Interest which your noble Favours
have purchased in all I call mine,
and therefore Obedience to your
Commands herein is but a just
Debt ; which I was the more
willing to pay, that so your Ho-
nour might have a fit Opportuni-
ty for a more leisurely Contem-
plation of those things which your
Attention and Affections were so
concerned in at the hearing. My
Design

Design was, to call your Heart off from the Pleasantries of Sense, and to be (if God would do me so great an Honour) an instrumental Redeemer of your precious Soul out of the hand of present Contentments, which the best of us are too willingly, by the strength of misguided Affections, captivated to.

The World is too little and too strait for our boundless Affections; the Soul is too much confined whilst Sense terminates its Regards, because this Bed is too short for a Man to stretch himself upon it, Isa. 28. 20. Perishing Comforts to an immortal Soul are as unsuitable as a short Bed to a Man of a tall Stature, there is little Ease or Rest in one or
the

the other. Love and Joy are never rightly placed but upon Things above: As the Strength of our Sorrows should be bestowed upon our Sins, so the Strength of our Joys should be bestowed upon Christ. I confess I know none who have a fairer Title to Satisfaction and Joy from an outward Condition than your Honour hath, to whom God hath given so noble an Extract, so hopeful a Son, so fair an Estate. Job 29. 3, 4, 6. The Candle of God shines upon your Head, and the Secret of God is upon your Tabernacle: Your steps are washed in Butter, and the Rocks pour you out Rivers of Oyl. Riches, Honour, Beauty, Parts, have all conspired to make

you as happy as the short Arm of
such finite Felicities can do : yet,
Madam, the joy of a Name
written in Heaven transcends all
these as far as the Light of a
Sun-beam doth that of a Glow-
worm. How happy therefore
is your Honour, who (I am fully
perswaded) have as good a Title
to this Joy as to the former ; for
surely that God who hath so fairly
written his Law in your Heart,
and his Name in your Forehead,
hath also written your Name in
Heaven. Which, that your Ho-
nour may, by the eye of Faith,
be enabled to read in the fairest
Character which divine Love can
make, is the hearty Prayer of,

MADAM, Your Honour's most
humbly devoted Servant,

Matthew Mead.

LUKE X. 20.

— *In this rejoice not, that the Spirits are subject to you : but rather rejoice, because your Names are written in Heaven.*

IT is the Philosopher's Opinion, that Joy (considering the effects which it accidentally produceth within) doth more harm in the World than sorrow and sadness; and they give this Reason, That Joy, naturally dilating the Spirits brings the Mind to a loose carriage, and takes the Sense of Weariness from about it : but sadness, contracting the Spirits, keeps the Mind within the limits of sobriety, and brings it to serious Thoughts. And the wise Man, in favour of this Opinion, tells us in *Eccles. 7. 3.* that

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Sor-

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Sorrow is better than Laughter, for by the sadness of the Countenance the Heart is made better.

But this seems a great Paradox, that joy should hurt, and sadness do good, that Sorrow should be better than Laughter. Is Hell better than Heaven? is not Hell a Place of sorrow? And who is made better by it? and is not Heaven a Place of Joy? And who is made worse by it?

The End of all our Motions and Desires is to avoid Sorrow, Perturbation, and to attain Rest and Delight; which is nothing else but the Sabbath of our Thoughts, and that sweet Tranquility of Mind which results from the Fruition of that Good whereto our Desires have carried us. The great End of Religion is to promote and stablish the Joy of the Soul, sin being the proper parent of Grief and Sorrow. Nay the great End of the coming of our Lord Christ was to bless the World with Peace and Joy, and therefore his Birth is called by the Angel that pub-

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published the News of it (*Luke 2. 10*)
good Tidings of great joy to all People.
The End of his Doctrine was to fill
them with Joy; *St. John 15. 11.*
These things have I spoken to you that my
Joy might remain in you, and that your
Joy might be full.

This then being the End of all
our Desires and natural Motions,
the End of Religion, the End of
Christ's coming and Doctrine, to
fill us with Peace and Joy in believe-
ing; it no way interfereth either
with the Opinion of the Philosopher,
or the Doctrine of the Preacher to
averr, that Joy is better than Sor-
row, as Peace is better than Trouble,
Light better than Darknes, Sweet
better than Bitter, and Heaven bet-
ter than Hell; the one being a Place
of boundless Joy, the other a Place of
endless Sorrow. That Joy therefore
which the Philosopher charges with
such mischievous Consequences, and
which *Solomon* prefer's Sorrow to,
is that which results from the Pre-
sence and Fruition of improper and

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unsuitable Objects, or which runs into excess and inordinacy, into which the Nature of Man, since the Corruption and Disorder of the Faculties and Passions, is too apt to degenerate: For this is certain, that there is nothing we can delight in much, without sin, but those things that lie most remote from Sense, the things of the invisible World.

And hence it is that our Lord Christ here in the Text, calls off his Disciples from rejoicing much in that which yet was as lawful and likely a Cause of Rejoicing as any, *viz.* Victory over infernal Spirits, and Successes against the Powers of Darkness; to fix their Joy upon a Good, infinitely to be preferred to that, and desired before it, and that is, a Name written in Heaven. *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the Spirits are subject to you; but rather rejoice, because your Names are written in Heaven.*

In the Words you have,

A Name in Heaven, &c. 5

A Prohibition,

An Exhortation :

Somewhat from which they are dehorted, somewhat to which they are invited.

That from which they are dehort-
ed is, rejoicing in their Success over
infernal Spirits, *rejoice not in this
that the Spirits are subject to you.*

That to which they are invited
is, to rejoice in a Mercy of a much
nobler Nature, and that is, their
Share and Interest in the Glory and
Blessedness above; *Rejoice that your
Names are written in Heaven.*

I shall begin with the Prohibition,
and speak a little to that, *Notwith-
standing in this rejoice not, that the
Spirits are subject to you.*

You will think a (rejoice not)-
very unwelcome Entertainment
when the Work you come about is
to rejoice, to remember the Mercy
of this Day, the Pangs and Throws
the Lord brought you through on
this Day; the hopeful Son that took
his Birth and Breath from this Day.

B 3

This

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This was doubtless a very great Mercy, if the Mother had been spared, though the Child had died, there had been Mercy in that, but that the Lord should preserve the Root and the Branch both; make your Honour the Mother of a Child, and that Child a Son, and that Son perfect, not a Monster, not misshapen, not born Blind, not Dumb, not Deaf, not deformed and crooked: How many Mercies are in this one Mercy! Now to affix *a rejoice not*, upon such a Cause of Joy as this; seems very unwelcome and unreasonable.

But I hope by that time I have done you will justify my choice of this Text, which hath not the least Design to suppress your Joy; but to raise it from Objects of sense to spiritual Delights, from lower and lesser Mercies to greater and higher Privileges, from a Name on Earth, to a Name in Heaven.

Rejoice not in this that the Spirits are subject to you.

A Name in Heaven, &c. 7

This Prohibition of our Lord Christ doth clearly imply that this casting out of Devils, by the Power of the Disciples Ministry in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, was matter of great joy to them; and one would think, if any thing in the World could justify the running out of their Joy below God, this casting out of Devils might.

For I. it was a great and miraculous Gift of Jesus Christ.

II. It was a Gift foretold by the Prophets, as reserved for Gospel time,

III. It was a Victory over the most potent Enemy, that laughs to scorn all humane Power, a stronger than he must come and bind him.

IV. It was a Victory very conducing to the Honour of the Lord Christ, that his naked Disciples in his Name alone, could make the Powers of Hell submit and stoop; so that certainly here was in the Success of this Service sufficient cause of Joy to the Disciples; and yet faith our Lord Christ to them, *Notwith-*

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standing in this rejoyce not. It is not an absolute Prohibition, but rather we may call it a cautionary Limitation, Rejoyce not so much in this; though it was a true Ground of Joy, yet the Lord Christ takes them off from it, by raising their Hearts above it, to a higher and nobler Cause of Joy; and that for a twofold End.

1. To free them from the Danger of spiritual Pride, which is very apt to insinuate it self into our rejoycing: The Success of Duty is too too apt to puff up and swell us beyond our Proportions. The Prosperity of the Creature in its Attempts, becomes a Temptation *to sacrifice to its own Net, and burn Incense to its own Drag.* When spiritual Pride mixeth it self with our Joy in God, we take from him more than we give to him, we rob him of his Glory, whilst we rejoyce in his Mercy.

Therefore the Lord Christ takes them off from this to a higher Object, the Devils are subject to you, it is true; the Power of the Gospel in
your

A Name in Heaven, &c. 9.

your Mouths and Ministry, hath cast Satan like Lightning from Heaven, it is true, and I know that your Hearts are filled with joy; for so it is said in the 17th Verse, *They returned again with joy*. Well, saith the Lord Christ, *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not*, why should your Affections, be terminated in these Things, when you have a nobler Object for your joy to dilate it self upon, and that is, the Electing Love of God, your Portion in the eternal Mansions.

Your joy in the subduing Infernal Spirits may be your snare, whilst they are subjected to you one Way, spiritual Pride may subject you to them another; and so though you conquer, yet they will overcome; *Therefore in this rejoice not*.

2. To teach us that no external Mercy should terminate the Delight of our Souls, but that we should use all outward Benefits as a Ladder whereby to ascend to God in our Affections.

The Way to allay and moderate the Joy of the Soul, in common and

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present Mercies is to realize the Things of the Invisible World, and let out our Hearts much to the Glories above. The Design of Christ and the Gospel is to spiritualize the Christians Joy, and place it upon the chiefest Good; *Therefore in this rejoice not, that the Spirits are subject to you.*

Quest. But you will say, why should we not?

Ans. I will give you a threefold Reason for it.

Reas. 1. Because this Gift may be vested where the Love of God is not enjoyed, Matt. 7. 22. *Many will say to me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecyed in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works; then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.* ver 23. Many may cast out Devils in the Name of Christ, and yet after all be cast out themselves by Christ. *Judas* was one of them that

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that cast out Devils; and yet Judas was cast out himself.

That Injoyment, whatever it be (be it Gifts, be it Relations, be it Honours) which may be seperated from the Love of God in Christ, can be no true Ground of Rejoicing. Therefore what our Lord Christ saith of casting out of Devils, I may (upon a Parity or Superiority of Reason) say of all things below which we place our Contentment in, and look upon as matter of Joy. *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not.*

Reas. 2. It is a Vanity to rejoice much in any thing which we cannot rejoice in long. What the Apostle saith, 1 Corinth. 13. 8. *Prophecies shall fail, Tongues shall cease, Knowledge shall vanish away;* the same I may say of all common and sublunary Mercies and Comforts, they shall fail and vanish. *The Fashion of this World passeth away,* 1 Cor. 7. 31.

What Pleasure can that Man take in his Expedition whose Voyage is for a Year, and his Victual but for

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a Day? who sets out for Eternity with the Pleasures and Contents of nothing but Mortality? Therefore though you may have all that Heart can wish of the Comfort and Prosperity of this World, yet *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not.*

Reas. 3. Why should we rejoice much in that which cannot rescue us out of the Hands of eternal Misery? None of these things we glory in can. They are poor lying Delights, which like *Jordan*, empty all their Sweetness into a stinking and sulphurous Lake.

When I see the rich Man in the Parable clothed with purple, and fine Linnen, and faring sumptuously every Day, Luke 16. 19. methinks I could with my Lot might lie at his Table, rather than with an Ulcerous Lazarus begging for Crumbs at his Door; but when I look again and find him paying his Reckoning in tormenting Flames, who would have his Pomp and Glory at this Price? He buyeth his

A Name in Heaven, &c. 13

his Pleasures too. Dear, who pays for them with the Loss of his Soul.

May we have all the Comforts that this World can afford, and yet die comfortless? May we be rejoicing in our Relations to Day, and yet shut out of all Relation to God to Morrow? then whatever we possess of the Comforts of this World, *yet notwithstanding in this rejoice not*

But rather rejoice because your Names are written in Heaven.

And this brings me to the Exhortation, in which the true Ground of a Christian's Joy is propounded, and preferred before all other. *Rejoice not in this, &c. but rather in that, that your Names are written in Heaven.* Joy in this Mercy is not absolutely prohibited, but a higher Joy is preferred; an Interest in Heaven is another-guise Mercy than casting out Devils on Earth, and therefore rejoice much more in this than that.

The Expression is in manner of Speech, much like that of our Lord

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Christ, in John 6. 27. *Labour not for the Meat that perisheth, but for that Meat which endureth to everlasting Life.* that is, Labour not so much for this as for that, or rather for that than this.

Let us a little consider the Expression, *Rejoice because your Names are written in Heaven.*

The Lord Christ might have said, *Rejoice in your Discipleship to me,* that I have called you out of the World; *when not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not many Noble are called,* 1 Corinth. 1. 26.

Rejoice that ye have followed me in the Regeneration, and that ye have become new Creatures, when the whole World lieth in Wickedness, 1 John 5. 19.

Rejoice that ye are inlightned in the Mysteries of the Gospel, when they are hid from the Wise and Prudent, Mat. 11. 25. But if Christ had fix'd their Joy in any of these, then the Fountain and Cause of all had been hid, and therefore our Lord Christ leads them to the Fountain from whence all these Privileges are derived,

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rived, and that is, the electing Love of God, this being the Cause of all future Good to the Creature.

Are ye called out of the World? It is *because your Names are written in Heaven.*

Are ye begotten of God, and born again? It is *because your Names are written in Heaven.*

Are ye taken into Membership to Christ, and thereby become the Sons and Daughters of God? It is *because your Names are written in Heaven.*

Have you the Earnest of your Inheritance in the Sealings of the Spirit upon your Hearts? It is *because your Names are written in Heaven.*

Can ye subdue Corruptions within, and resist Temptations without? Are the Devils subject to you? It is *because your Names are written in Heaven. Therefore rejoice not so much because the Spirits are subject to you, but rather Rejoyce because your Names are written in Heaven.*

Query, But what is meant by having our Names written in Heaven? How must we understand this?

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Answ. The Name is in Scripture Phrase frequently put for the Person. *Acts 1. 15. The Number of the Names together were about an Hundred and Twenty*; That is, the Number of the Persons. *Revel. 3. 4. Thou hast a few Names in Sardis, which have not defiled their Garments. A few, Names, that is, a few Saints in Sardis.*

So that we are not to understand it, as if God did Litterally write down the Names of Men; but the Expression is to shew us what a Peculiar and Distinct knowlege God hath of Persons in the World.

When our Names are said to be written in Heaven, it is a way of Speaking borrowed from the Customs of Men, whose Names are Registred and Inrolled in some Publick Records, to keep in Memory, and assure them of their Freedom and Privilege in that Corporation.

The Apostle in *Philippians 4. 3* speaks of Names written in the Book of Life; *whose Names are in the Book of Life.* And in *Revel. 13. 8. ye Read*
of

A Name in Heaven, &c. 17

of Names written in the Book of the Lamb. *All that dwell upon Earth shall Worship the Beast, whose Names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World.* And here in the Text, ye Read of *a Name written in Heaven.*

They that have an Interest in the Electing love of God, that are his Chosen Ones, their Names are written in the Book of Life. But these lying in a fallen State with the rest of the lost World, must be redeem'd with the Blood of Christ, and when they come to share in the redeeming Love of Christ, then they may be said to have their *Names written in the Book of the Lamb.*

And when the Spirit of Grace hath changed and sanctified them, and given them a Right to eternal Life, then their Names may be said to be *written in Heaven.*

If ye share in the electing Love of God, ye shall also share in the redeeming Grace of Christ; and if ye are redeemed by Christ, ye shall share

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share in the renewing and sanctifying Work of the Spirit.

If your Name be written in the Book of Life, it shall be written in the Book of the Lamb; and if it be in the Book of the Lamb, it shall be written in Heaven; and if it be written there, then Rejoice not that the Spirits are subject to you: But rather Rejoice, because your Names are written in Heaven.

But I conceive that all these various Phrases of the Holy Ghost, signify one and the same Thing, *to be written in the Book of Life, and in the Book of the Lamb*, is all one in Sense with this Phrase before us in the Text, *of having our Names written in Heaven*.

Now the writing our Names in Heaven, imports and implies Three Things.

1st. The Foreknowledge of God; the Names of Believers are said *to be written in Heaven*, because they are as certainly and as distinctly known

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known to God, as if their Names were written and recorded there.

God is said *not to know the Wicked*, Matthew 7. 23. But he knoweth all that are his, *you only have I known of all the Families of the Earth*, Amos 3. 2. *The Foundation of the Lord stands sure, having this Seal, the Lord knows them that are his*, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

2d. The writings our Names in Heaven, implies an Interest in the Electing Love of God, *Philip. 4. 3. whose Names are written in the Book of Life*; that is, who are in an elected State, chosen to Salvation and eternal Life. The Book of Life is God's immutable and eternal Decree; wherein, as in a Book, the Names of the Elect are written.

3d. The Writing the Name implies and supposes the begetting Faith in the Heart. A Man's Name may be said to be written in Heaven, when he can by Faith apply the Promises of Life and Glory to his Soul, and see his Part in them, and

Title

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Title to them.

A Man's Name is then written in Heaven, when by Faith in Christ he doth obtain a Right to the eternal Inheritance; and I will add this, when by a constant growth in Grace and Sanctification, he doth labour after a fitness for Participation and Possession.

For you must know that there is a double Right to Heaven, which every one must have that would Inherit.

There is a Right of Inheritance, and a Right of Fitness.

The one is appendant to Faith, the other is annexed to the utmost Degrees of Grace and Holiness.

Faith gives a Title to Heaven and Blessedness; we have a Right of Inheritance granted by Christ upon our first Believing, *John. 1. 12. To as many as received him, to them gave he Power* (in the Greek it is rather, he gave them the Right or the Privilege) *to become the Sons of God:* And it

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it is a great Privilege indeed, it is given but to few.

Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God, 1 John 3. 1. This is the new Name in the white Stone, which none can know but they that receive it, Rev. 2. 17.

But then there is a Right of Fitness, and this lies in our Attainments in Grace; when we are sanctified throughout, when Grace is improved to the utmost, and our Measure filled up, then we have a Right of Fitness for Heaven, and a State of Glory.

We are decreed to this State by the Eternal Love of God from before the Foundation of the World; we are redeemed to it by the Blood and Death of Jesus Christ; we are called to it by the Preaching of the Gospel; but we are not actually entered into it, till we are renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

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There are four Doctrines which the Words of the Text afford to us,

Doctr. 1. That rejoycing in outward Mercies is warrantable; the Lord Christ doth here allow of it, even when he preferreth the Joy of a Name written in Heaven before it.

Doctr. 2. That when the Lord vouchsafeth us any Matter of Rejoycing in the Mercies and Blessings he bestoweth upon us, the best of us are too prone to take up with a carnal selfish Joy; this Doctrine is imply'd in that, *Rejoice not.*

Doctr. 3. That though rejoycing in outward Mercies is good and warrantable, yet to terminate our Joy, and let our Hearts rest in them, is evil and sinful.

Rejoice not in this, that is, not in this as the chief Good, not as the highest Cause of Joy, not so as to hinder your Hearts from a higher and nobler Matter of Rejoycing.

Doctr. 4. That a Right to, and Interest in the Glories of the World to come, is a greater Ground of Joy than

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than any thing this World can afford. The greatest Ground of Joy imaginable is to have a Name written in Heaven.

I shall pass by the Two former Doctrines, being only implied in the Text, and speak a little to the Third, to make way to the Last, which I chiefly intend to insist upon.

Doctr. 3. That though rejoicing in outward Mercies is good and warrantable, yet to terminate our joy, and let our Hearts rest in them, is evil and sinful.

It proceeds from an evil Cause,
It hath an evil Effect.

1. It proceeds from an evil Cause, and that is inordinate Love of sensual Objects; for Joy in any thing is proportioned to Love; we never rejoice much in any thing but what we love much, now to have the choicest Respects of an immortal Soul, laid out upon, and center in present and perishing Comforts, is a great Evil.

2. It hath an evil Effect; hereby God is disparaged, the Lord Christ def-

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despised, the unseen Glories neglected, the Soul in Danger of being misled and ruined. See *Job* 21. from the 7th Verse to the 15th.

3. We hereby make a wrong Use of the Mercies of God, which are given to raise our Hearts, not for our Hearts to rest in; to elevate our Affections, not to terminate them; to Pull up our Hearts up, not to Swallow them up.

Present Injoyments should be as a Glas for the Soul to take a view of the Goodness of God in; *David* saith, *The Earth is full of his Goodness*, *Psal.* 33. 5. you may injoy God in every Creature, and have an account of his Goodness from every Comfort.

To the believing Eye there is a Transparency in the Creature; Faith can see divine Goodness and Bounty beaming thro' every Mercy; and they that cannot, can never rightly use them, nor innocently injoy them.

The

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The sensual Heart makes a Cloud to hide him, of that which God made for a Glass, in which we might see him. God made it for a Window to let in the Light of his Love, and we make it a Curtain to shut it out.

To let our Hearts rest in present Mercies, is to make them our Images, our Idols, and this is the highest Abuse of Mercy.

1. This God hath expressly forbidden, *Thou shalt not make to thy self the Likeness of any thing in Heaven above.* Exod. 20. 4. To make the Creature our chief Good, is to put it in the Room and Place of God, and make to our selves an Image like God.

2. This hazzards the Continuance of our Mercies: When once we begin to set up Idols, it is time for God to pull them down: When once our Hearts center in them, he will quickly remove them, one of these Two things God always doth in this case.

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Either he takes our Comforts from us to recover our Respects to himself, or if he leaves them with us, then he withdraws himself.

Application.

Would you not then that your Hearts should terminate in any thing below ? Hearken then to a double Exhortation.

1. Whatever you Love, let it be also your Fear ; Fear will be a Bridle to Love, nothing hath such Advantage upon us to Steal our Hearts from God, as the Things we love and delight in. Have you a Child or Relation you love, a Friend or Companion you love, &c. O be jealous of them, for these, like Wine, and New Wine take away the Heart. *Hos. 4. 11.*

If what you love be not your Fear, it will be your Loss and Sorrow ; if *Samson* had feared his *Delilah* as much as he loved her, he had sav'd both his Locks and his Life. *Solomon's* Wives became his Woe, fondling

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Fondling Children often repay their Parents Dotage in Tears and Troubles, being Thorns in their Sides, and a Grief to their Soul: Whatever thou overlovest look to find it thy Cross or thy Curse.

2. Then live above the Pleasures of Sense; what have you no nobler Delights? Have you not a God to delight in? A Christ to solace your Souls in Communion with? What a poor thing it is to put your Souls off with those Delights wherein the Bruits have as great a share as you! Where is peace with God? Where is joy in the Holy Ghost? Where is Peace of Conscience? Where is the Hope of Glory? Where is *a Name written in Heaven*? These are the only proper Pastime for immortal Souls. And this leads me to the Observation I chiefly aim at.

Doctr. 4. That the highest Ground of Joy imaginable is to have *a Name written in Heaven*. An Interest in the Glories of the other World is a truer and nobler Cause of re-

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joycing than any thing that this World can afford.

I need produce no other Proof of the Truth of this Doctrine than the Authority of the Text it self; it stands clear in the Light of its own Evidence; the Lord Christ himself hath said it, and therefore we ought to believe it is so.

But why is it so?

Reas. 1. *A Name written in Heaven* is a rich Result of Electing Love. Love is the most comfortable Attribute in God, the best Name the Creature knows him by. *God is Love*, 1 John 4. 16. There are three things to be considered in it.

1. Love acts with a Priority to all other Attributes; Wisdom contrives the Good and Felicity of the Creature; Power and Providence maturate, and bring the Contrivements of Wisdom to pass; but Love hath the first hand in the Work. It was Love that first summoned the great Counsel held by all the Three Per-

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Persons in *Elohim*, when neither Men nor Angels existed.

It was Love that first pitched upon the Son, and laid him as the Foundation of the whole Structure of Man's Salvation and Blessedness. Love sent Christ into the World, Love put him to Death, Love made him an Offering for Sin, *John 3. 16.* All the Attributes of God act in the Strength of Love, and all the Providences of God follow the Motions of Love.

2. Electing Love is the proper Source of all our other Mercies, so the Apostle makes it, *Ephes. 1st. 3d, 4th. Who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings; How so? according as he hath chosen us in Christ; and what those spiritual Blessings are he tells you v. 6. he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, the forgiveness of Sins according to the Riches of his Grace, v. 7.

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He hath abounded toward us in all Wisdom and Prudence, v. 8.

Having made known to us the Mystery of his Will, v. 9.

In whom we have obtained an Inheritance, v. 11. that is, a Name written in Heaven. All which the Apostle resolves again into Electing Love, v. 11. being predestinated according to the Purpose of him who works all things according to the Counsel of his own will.

3. Love is the only Attribute which God hath acted to the utmost: we have never seen the utmost of his Power, what God can do; but we have seen the utmost of his Love; *He hath found a Ransom for lost Souls; Job 33. 24. He hath laid help upon one that is mighty Psal. 89. 19. He hath tabernacled Divinity in Flesh, 1 Tim. 3. 16. made his Soul an Offering for Sin, laid upon him the Iniquity of us all, Isai. 53. 11. made us the Righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. 5. 21. accepted us in the Beloved, Ephes. 1. 6. made us to sit together in Heaven-*
ly

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by Places in Christ Jesus, Ephes. 2. 6. written our Names in Heaven. How can divine Love put forth greater Efforts of it self than these?

It is infinite Love, and it gives the Soul Interest in an infinite Good, intitles it to an infinite Blessedness, and so fills the Soul with an infinite Satisfaction.

And is not an Interest in Electing Love the highest Cause of rejoycing? The Scripture compares the Love of God to Wine, Cant. 1. 2. *New Wine is said to make glad the Heart, Psal. 104. 15 but the Love of God is better than Wine, Cant. 4. 10.* it gives *a Name in Heaven*, which causes an eternal Rejoycing.

Reas. 2. A Name written in Heaven is a Mercy with a Distinction, a peculiar appropriated Priviledge; *David prays, Psal. 106. 4, 5. Remember me, O Lord, with the Favour thou barest to thy People; but the Hebrew reads it thus, Record me, O Lord, in the good Will of thy People.* God in good will to his People re-

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cords their Names in the Book of Life, and there *David* would be recorded too; and why? *That I may see the Good of thy Chosen, that I may rejoyce in the Gladness of thy Nation, that I may glory with thine Inheritance.* Nothing is so great a Cause of rejoycing and glorying as this.

What if God give you Life, Riches, Relations, Honours? There is no Distinction in all this; can you prove your Title to the Love of God by any, or all of these? *Solomon* says no, *Ecclesiastes* 9. 1. *No Man knows love or hatred by all that is before him.* A Man may have Life, and yet be dead to God, dead in sin; a Man may be Rich and yet wretched, we may have Children, and yet be our selves Children of Wrath for all that; God doth not love us in giving us Sons, unless he give us his own Son: A Man may have Honour and yet not be honoured of God; *Herod* was honoured of the People, and yet eaten up of Worms, *Acts* 12. 21, 22, 23.

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Peculiar Mercy causes peculiar rejoycing, common Mercies can cause but common Joy; a Name in Heaven is a Mercy with a Distinction, this is not the Lot of all, the Names of the greatest part of the World are written in the Dust, *Jeremy 17. 13. All that forsake thee shall be ashamed, their Names shall be written in the Earth, because they have forsaken the Lord, the Fountain of living Waters.* The Expression hath much in it, it travels with a Curse.

The Earth is opposed to Heaven; as a Name in Heaven imports the greatest Happiness, so a Name written in the Earth implys the greatest Misery.

The Earth is a Place of short Duration, it shall not last always; *Heaven* (that is the lower Heaven) *and Earth shall pass away*, our Lord Christ says, *Matt. 5. 18.* A Name written in the Earth implys a short Duration, a Name of no Continuance; so says *Balaam* of the Wicked, *Job 18.*

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16. *His Roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his Branch be cut off.*

The Earth is a Place of Putrefaction and Corruption; what is buried in the Earth soon turns to Rottenness. so that a Name in the Earth implies Rottenness, according to that of Solomon, Proverbs 10. 7. *the Name of the Wicked shall rot.*

The Earth is a Place of Oblivion, what is written in Heaven is recorded for ever, but what is written in the Dust is soon forgotten; so says Bildad of the Wicked, Job 18. 17. *His Remembrance shall perish from the Earth, and he shall have no Name in the Street.*

V. 18. *he shall be driven from Light into Darkness, and chased out of the World.*

V. 19. *he shall neither have Son nor Nephew among his People, nor any remaining in his Dwellings.*

V. 21. *surely such are the Dwellings of the Wicked, and this is the Place of him that knows not God.*

The

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The Earth is designed for burning; it is decreed to be Fuel for the Conflagration of the great Day, *when the Lord Christ shall be revealed from Heaven in flaming Fire, 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. So saith the Apostle, 2 Peter 3. 10. The Day of the Lord will come, in which the Heavens shall pass away with a great Noise, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth also, and the Works that are therein shall be burnt up.* Whatever is of Affinity to Earth must feel the Flames of that trying Day; not only the Element of Earth, but the Treasures of the Earth, the Pleasures of the Earth, the Names written in the Earth, earthly Affections, earthly Fruitions, earthly Designs, earthly Hearts, all must together make Fuel for that Fire: For the Earth and all the Works that are therein shall be burnt up.

You see what a Curse a Name written in the Earth is; and yet the Names of the greatest part of Men and Women in the World are written

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ten there ; to have a Name written in Heaven is the Portion but of few, it is a special Privilege by which the Lord doth distinguish his from the rest of the World ; and therefore to have a Name in Heaven, is Cause of Rejoycing indeed.

Reas. 3. A Name written in Heaven speaks the Soul in the highest Relation to God ; you are his Children, his Sons and Daughters, the Adopted of the Lord, and what greater Ground of Joy imaginable ?

Whatever Excellency there is in the Relation, the Benefit of that Excellency redounds to the Correlate by Virtue of the Tie of that Relation.

What is it that first cloaths your Child with Honour and Name, but the Nobleness of his Descent ; and how comes your Honour and Greatness to descend upon him but by being of the same Blood ? It is the nearness of the Relation that intitles him to all. So all that is in God, all his Excellency's, all his Attributes,

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butes, his Wisdom, his Power, his Love, his Justice, his Providence, all are yours, and work for your Benefit and Advantage by Virtue of this Relation.

There is a twofold Relation to God.

A Relation $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{of Servants,} \\ \text{of Sons.} \end{array} \right.$

But the Difference between them is very great, especially in five Things.

1st The Relation of Servants is a common Relation; all the Creatures in the World are Gods Servants, as he is the great Master and Householder of Heaven and Earth. God hath Servants of all sorts, Good and Bad; *he hath good and faithful Servants, Matt. 25. 23. and he hath wicked and slothful Servants, v. 26.* he hath some that Honour him, and some that Honour him not, but rebel against him. God hath many Servants that take Wages of him, but do the Devils Work.

All Creatures stand in this Relation

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tion to God, the very Devils themselves are subject to his Command, *every Knee bows to him, both of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth, Phil. 2. 10.*

But the Relation of Sons is a peculiar special Relation, that appertains but to few. God hath many Servants, but he hath but few Sons; he hath many in Subjection, but few in this Relation: All are his Subjects, but all are not his Sons and Daughters.

2. The Relation of Servants is a mercenary Relation; the Duty of that Relation is drawn forth by the Rewards of it; Servants work for Hire, it is Wages they chiefly look at. God hath many such Servants, that are meerly mercenarys in all their Duties. They know, God is a good Master, pays well, and keeps a good Table; his Commands are equal, and his Rewards are bountiful, therefore they own him. As many followed the Lord Christ, when he was upon Earth, not because

cause of his Miracles, but because of his Morfels ; not because they would be *saved*, but because *they did eat of the loaves, and were filled*, John 6. 26. It was not for the sake of his Person, but his Provision ; not out of love to the Truth, so much as the Trenchard. The Lord Christ hath many such Servants now, that call themselves the *Servants of Christ*, and *Ministers of Christ*, but they are but *Trenchard-Chaplains* to him. It is the Salary they look at, more than the Service ; Dignities, more than Duty ; the Preferments of the Church, more than the Concernments of it : They have the *Flesh-hook* of the Law in their Hand, 1 *Sam.* 2. 13, 14. often to serve themselves, but the *Book* of the Law is in their Hand but seldom, whereby they should *save themselves, and them that hear them*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 16. These follow Christ indeed, but it is for the Loaves ; no Wages, no Work : Like them in *Matthy*, ch. 3. 14. that cry out, *What Profit is it to serve God ?*
But

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But now the Relation of *Sons* is more ingenuous : *Sons* obey and serve in Ingenuity ; not for Reward, but Duty , they Labour, because they Love. Not but that the Children of God may look at the Rewards promised. *Moses* was Ingenuous in all his Performances, and yet he had a Respect to *the Recompence of Reward*, Hebr. 11. 26. *Christ* was a *Son* in the highest Relation, the *Son* of God's choicest Regards, *Matth.* 17. 5. and yet it is said of Him, in his *enduring the Cross*, and *despising the Shame*, that He had an eye to the *Joy that was set before him*, Hebr. 12. 2. A Dutiful Child may look at his Inheritance ; yet he would pay the *Obedience of Children*, though he were to receive no *Father's Blessing*.

3. The Relation of *Sons*, is a Communicative Relation : The Relation of a *Servant* is not so. A Master doth not impart all his Mind, nor disclose his Secrets to his *Servant*,

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vant ; he lays upon him his Com-
mands, but doth not betrust him
with his Secrets. So saith our Lord
Christ, John 15. 15. *Henceforth I*
call you not Servants, for the Servant
knows not what his Lord doth. But a
Father will disclole and commun-
icate his Heart to his *Child*; he will
tell all his Mind, and Will, and
Counsels, to his *Son*.

4. The Relation of *Servants* gives
no Claim; it doth not intitle them
to the Estate of their Lord : The
Law allows them a present Main-
tenance, but no Share in the Inhe-
ritance.

But the Relation of a *Son*, is
Intitling ; it gives a Claim : By
Virtue of his *Sonship*, he hath a Title
to what is his *Father's*; his *Father's*
Riches, his *Father's* Honours, &c.

If you are the *Children of God*,
you are born *Heirs*, and your Inhe-
ritance is the greatest in this World
or the next ; for *God Himself* is
your Portion ; and all He is, and
all

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all He hath, is *the Lot of your Inheritance.*

5. The Relation of *Servants* is not lasting ; it is Arbitrary, founded in Will and Pleasure : You take one *Servant*, and put away another, at your Pleasure. But the Relation of a *Son*, is *abiding*, it lasts for Ever, to the end of Being : So says our Lord Christ, John 8. 35. *The Servant abides not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever.* If you are the Children of God, you are taken into a Lasting Relation that shall never end. : God is your Father for ever, and you are his Children for ever ; it is an Everlasting Relation.

How should we *rejoyce* in this near Relation to the *Great God !* *Sons and Daughters of God*, is the highest Title I ever heard of in the World. *David* was made but *Son-in-Law* to a King, not *born* a *Son* ; he was not of the *Blood-Royal*, but by Favour taken in and made

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made a Son, and it was but a Son-in-Law neither, by Marriage, and this Sonship was but to a King, that dies like other Men, *Psal.* 82. 7. and yet the Thoughts of it wrought to astonishment in him : *Seemeth it a light thing to you to be Son-in-Law to a King?* 1 Sam. 18. 23. What is it then to be taken into an Eternal Sonship to an Everlasting Father, before whom the Kings of the Earth are as *Grasshoppers* ; that *bringeth the Princes to nothing*, and *maketh the Judges of the Earth as vanity*, *Isa.* 40. 22, 23.

Reas. 4. A Name written in Heaven, gives an assured Hope of Heaven : We are by this, for ever set free from all fear of miscarrying. If ye have a Title, never question the Possession : If the Right be yours, ye shall surely Inherit. When you look over a company of Deeds, and see the Name of such a particular Person run through them all, and expressly mention'd in the Conveyance,

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veyance, and all things run in his Name; you conclude that Estate his, it belongs to him, and will come to him, for all the Law in the World is on his side.

It is so in the Case in hand; if ye have *a Name written in Heaven*, the Estate is yours, the Conveyance is made to you: The Covenant is the Main Deed, which is sealed in the *Blood of Christ*, and therein the Inheritance is made-over and conveyed to you.

There is an inseparable Connexion between *Election* and *Salvation*: Tho' there are many Links in the Golden-Chain that reach from one to the other, yet not one of them can be broken: *Whom he did predestinate, them he called; and whom he called; them he justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified*, Rom. 8. 30.

It is observable, in what Tense the Spirit of God puts it; not in the Future, as a thing to be done, but in a Tense that notes it done already,

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already, to shew the Certainty of it. If our *Names are written in Heaven*, we shall as surely share in the Glories of it, as if already in Possession; nay, we are already in Possession:

Partly in *Christ*, who is already enter'd upon the Inheritance in our Right, *Hebr. 6. 20. Whither the Forerunner is for us entered.* Hence that of the Apostle, *He hath made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, Eph. 2. 6.*

Partly by the *Promise*: We have the Deeds, though we do not enjoy the Estate; we keep the Title, though we do not possess the Inheritance.

Partly in the *First-fruits of Glory*, *Rom. 8. 23.* which we receive by the *Spirit of God*, and the *Graces of the Spirit in our Hearts.* Entrance upon the least Part of an Estate, gives a Right to the Possession, as well as Entrance upon the Whole: The least Turf of the Premises, conveys the Inheritance, and gives Livery and Seisin of all the Demesns.

Grace

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Grace in the Heart, is a Turf of the *Holy Land*, the *Land of Promise*, whereby God doth actually Instate us in the *Glorious Inheritance*.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

The First Use, shall be for *Examination*. Is a Name written in *Heaven*, the truest Cause of Rejoycing? Then let us see what Cause of Rejoycing we may have in our selves upon this Account. The Apostle's Counsel is plainly to this Purpose, *Gal. 6. 4. Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoycing in himself, and not in another.*

You have heard, That there can be no true Cause of Joy in the Heart, but a *Name written in Heaven*.

You have (*Madam*) set this Day apart for an *Anniversary* of Rejoycing in the *Birth*, and *Life*, and *Hope* of your Pleasant and Tender Son; and you do well: But doth your Joy begin here? or is *God* the

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beginning of it ? Is a *Name in Heaven* the chief ground of your Joy ?

Quest. But you will Reply, Who can say his *Name is written in Heaven* ? Who hath thus far known the Mind of the Lord ? To whom hath he at any time opened the Sealed Book of his Secret Decrees ? Was ever any Man admitted into the Regions above, to search the Eternal Records of the Divine Purpose ?

Answ. Surely, No : But yet let me, in Answer to this, lay down Two Conclusions.

1. The Knowledge of this, That *our Names are written in Heaven*, is attainable : Why else are we commanded to *make our Calling and Election sure* ? Wou'd the Lord *Christ* have call'd upon us to *rejoyce*, because *our Names are written in Heaven*, if it were a thing that cou'd not be known ? Surely therefore it is no such Secret, as lies out of the reach of *Faith's Attainment*.

Indeed,

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Indeed, to Wicked, Unbelieving, and Impenitent Sinners, the Knowledge of this is impossible. How can a Man that forsakes God, know that his *Name is written in Heaven*, when God says, *They that forsake him, their Names shall be written in the Earth*? But *Believers* may attain to the Knowledge of this.

2. As the Knowledge of it is attainable, so it is evident from Scripture-Instance, that many have attained to it: *God* hath sometimes unsealed the Book of his Decrees, and held it open to the Believing Eye; so that the Soul hath been enabled to read its Interest in Divine Love, by the Spiritual Opticks of *Faith*; For *Faith is the Evidence of things not seen*, Hebr. 11. 1. *Faith* can make its passage through all the Obstructions that lie in the way between a *Soul* at home in the Body, and an absent *God*; for that is the case of every Incarnate Christian. The *Soul* is as yet wrapt up
in

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in gross Matter, imprison'd in Flesh, and confined to an abode in a tabernacle of Clay; and therefore distanced from God, and utterly incapable of any farther Converse and Communion with him, than what is attainable by the Mediation of *Faith*.

Now *Faith* enters within the Vail, removes the Soul out of the Valleys of *Sense*, and sets it upon the highest Ground of Gospel-Consolation, that it may stand at the fairest advantage to get a Prospect into the Glory of the other World. *Faith* draws infallible Conclusions of the Goodness of its State, from the immutable Decrees of *Electing Love*: What else made *Job* say, *I know that my Redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and that though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for my self?* *Job* 19. 25, 26, 27.

And what made *St. Paul* glory in the Lord *Christ*, crying out, *Who*
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loved me, and gave himself for me ?
Gal. 2. 20. And what made the
Church say, with so much confidence,
I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine ? Cantic. 6. 3.

Quest. But the great Question is,
How shall a Man be able to know
that *his Name is written in Heaven ?*

Answ. There are certain Discoveries
of this in a Man's self; which
if we attend to, we may have a sure
Proof and Witness of.

1. *Effectual Calling* is a sure Proof
of this : If the Call of God hath took
hold of our *Hearts*, then *our Names*
are written in Heaven. There is an
inseparable Connexion between *E-*
lection and *Vocation* ; and therefore,
when the *Apostle* bids us give all dili-
gence to make our *Calling and Election*
sure ; though *Election* be before
Calling, (the one being an Immanent
Act of God in *Eternity*, the other a
Transient Act of God in *Time*) yet
the *Apostle* puts the making our
Calling

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Calling sure, in the first place, because a Man can never be sure he is Elected, till he is first Called.

Now then, if you wou'd know whether your *Names* are written in *Heaven*; satisfie your selves in this, That the *Call* of God hath took effectual hold of your *Hearts*. Hath it brought your Souls off from every thing below *Christ*, wholly to follow *Christ*? It is said, when *Christ* called *Peter* and *Andrew*, they presently left their *Nets*, and followed him, Matth. 4. 18, 19. Every Man hath his *Nets*, somewhat that his Soul is *entangled* in, till the *Call* of God take hold of him. Can you now, with *Peter*, when God calls, lay aside your *Nets*, to follow him?

For it is not every *Call*, that will witness the Truth of our *Election*: There is an *External Call* of the *Word*, that is ineffectual, it prevails not upon the *Sinner's Heart*, he turns a deaf Ear upon it; this *Call* leaves Sinners as it finds them, in their *sins and lusts*, Matth. 20. 16.

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But

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But then there is an *Internal Call* ; when *Word* and *Spirit* go together, and work together, to bring the Soul off from *Sin*, and *Lust*, and *Self*, and *World*, and all to *Jesus Christ*, to live upon him as its Portion, and conform to Him as its Pattern. Now if thou art thus Called, then is *thy Name written in Heaven* : And therefore thou may'st go and rejoice indeed ; for if any in the World hath cause, thou hast.

2. If the *Law of God* be written in thy *Heart*, then *thy Name is written in Heaven*. It is one of the great Promises of the *New Covenant*, That *God will write his Law in our Hearts*, *Hebr. 8. 10.*

Quest. Now you will say, What is this *Law of God* ?

Ans. It is the *Law of Love*, the *Law of Holiness*, a *Law* that takes in all the Duties that God requires of us, a *Law of Universal Obedience* : *Psal. 40. 8. Thy Law is within in my Heart ;*

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Heart; it is a *Law* that comprehends the whole Rule of the *New Creature*. The *Law Within* is a Counterpart of the *Law Without*; so that, look whatever the Word of God commands, the Soul is enabled to perform, when this *Law* is written in the *Heart*.

Quest. When is God said to write his *Law* in the *Heart*?

Ans. When He doth powerfully impress a Divine Principle of *Grace*, by his *Holy Spirit*, in the *Heart*. *Believers*, are said to be the *Epistle* of *Christ*, written not with Ink, but with the *Spirit of the Living God*, 2 Cor. 3. 3. An *Epistle*, is nothing else but a Paper, with the Mind of a Man written in it, and sent to another: *Believers*, are the *Epistle* of the *Living God*; there his Mind, and Will, and Law is written, not in Tables of Stone, but in the fleshly Tables of the *Heart*.

So that if the *Law* of God be written in your *Heart*, then may you know that your *Name* is written in *Heaven*:

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Converting Grace in the *Heart*, is the best Comment upon the *Election* of God ; without which, the *Eternal Decree* concerning us, can never be read with Clearness, nor understood with Comfort. The *Decree* travails and brings forth, in a work of Grace in the Heart : The *Mind* of God, concerning our *Eternal Condition*, is best known by a sound *Conversion* ; for there he speaks plainly ; that *Fountain of Love* which ran under Ground before, now bubbles up, and breaks forth. In *Election*, God spake within Himself ; but in *Conversion*, God speaks to the Soul : In *Election*, God wrote our *Names in Heaven* secretly ; but in *Conversion*, we see them written there openly.

A Work of *Grace in the Heart*, carries in it a Four-fold Witness.

1. That we are the Objects of *God's Election*.
2. That Sin is Pardoned through *Christ's Satisfaction*.

3. That

3. That God is Reconciled by *Christ's Intercession.*

4. That we are Secure, as to *Eternal Salvation.*

And the least of these is worth a whole World. Who would not be willing to know himself the Chosen of God? Who would not be glad to see *Sin* Pardoned? Who would not rejoice in a *Friendship* with God, whose *Wrath* burns to the lowest Hell? Who would not triumph, in an Assurance of being Saved for Ever? Now if *Grace* be wrought in thy *Heart*, this is thy Privilege, thou may'st say, with *Tamar*, Gen. 38. 25. *Whose this Staff, and this Signet, and these Bracelets are, his am I*, and thou may'st rejoice, in hope of Glory. No better Witnesses of our *Names* written in Heaven, than the Image of God engraven in the *Heart*: Say not, *Who shall ascend to Heaven?* &c. Rom. 10. 6.

As Sinners need not descend into the Deep, to search for Hell, to see if

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their Names be written, by the Wrath and Vengeance of God, in Eternal Misery : No, they may find it nearer home ; there is an Hell within them ; there is the Stench and Filth of Hell, in their vile Affections ; the Smoak and Flames of Hell, in their burning and raging Lusts ; the Darkness of Hell, in their blind Minds ; and sometimes the Torments of Hell, in their guilty and self-revenging Consciences, that *Worm that never dies*, Mark 9. 44. So may Believers find a Heaven in their own Souls, a Heaven of Light, of Love, of Holiness, of Joy and Praise ; the Kingdom of Heaven is within you.

3. If *true Faith* be wrought in thy Heart, then is *thy Name written in Heaven* : 1 John 5. 10. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.* Faith is a sure Fruit of Electing Love : As many as were ordained to Eternal Life, believed, Acts 13. 48. God doth not (you see

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see from hence) *Elect* us because we *Believe*, (*Election* upon *Faith* foreseen, is an *Arminian* Dream) but we *Believe* because we are *Elected*; it is some of the first-fruits which Eternal Love brings forth in the Heart; final *Unbelief*, is a sad Witness of a *reprobated State*: So says our Lord Christ, *Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep*, John 10. 26.

Wou'd you know then whether *your Name be written in Heaven*? Then see what *Faith* is wrought in your *Heart*. Have you ever truly closed with the *Lord Jesus Christ*? Do you heartily embrace Him, upon the Terms He is offered in the Gospel? Can you venture your Souls, your Salvation, your Eternal All, upon the single bottom of a *Redeemer's Righteousness*? Have you ever made actual Application of the *Blood and Righteousness of Christ* to your own *Consciences*, to take off that Guilt of Sin whereby your Souls stand Bound-over to Wrath and

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Damnation? This is *Faith* of the Operation of God; and where-ever this *Faith* is found in the *Heart*, the *Name* of that Man, that Woman, is found *in Heaven*. And therefore well may the *Apostle* say, *In whom believing, ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8.

4. If the *Father's Name* be written in our *Foreheads*, then are our *Names* written in *Heaven*. In *Rev. 14. 1.* it is said of those that stood with the *Lamb* upon *Mount-Sion*, That the *Father's Name* was written in their *Foreheads*.

The *Name of God* is written in the *Forehead*, when we openly confess the *Truths of God*, and are not ashamed of *Religion*, nor ashamed to own *God*, and his *Ways*, and *Ordinances*, and *People*, in the midst of a *Profane*, *Scoffing* and *Adulterous Generation*. Now says our *Lord Christ*, *He that confesses me before men*, (that's the *Name of Christ* written in the *Forehead*) *him will I*

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confess before my Father ; that is, he shall have a Name written in Heaven.

Now where is the *Name of God written*? Do ye Repine at Difficulties, Shrink at Sufferings, Blush at being counted Religious? Are you Ashamed of Christ, his Ways, his Name, his People? Why if so, his *Name* is not in your *Foreheads*.

Or can you lift up your Heads, and shew your Faces, in the Cause of *Christ*? It should be thus, *God is not ashamed to be called our God*, Hebr. 11. 16. And will you be ashamed to be call'd his *Children*, his *Saints*, his *Witnesses*? *Moses* was not, when he esteemed the reproaches of *Christ*, greater riches than the treasures of *Egypt*, Hebr. 11. 26. He had the *Father's Name* in his *Forehead*.

5. If your great Work be, to lay up treasure in heaven, then your *Names* are written in *Heaven*. This is the Counsel of the Blessed *Jesus*, *Math. 6. 20*. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven: And *Luke 12. 33*.

Pro-

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Provide your selves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not.

The Treasures of most Men are Perishing, Earthly Treasures, canker'd and Moth-eaten Treasures, Treasures of Vanity.

Christians ! Where is your Treasure ? Is it in this World, or the next ? Is it in present Vanities, or future Glory ? Is it in present Contentments, or in the Everlasting Inheritance ? Is it in Corn, and Wine, and Oil ; or is it in the Light of God's Countenance ? Is it in Profits, Pleasures, and Honours ; or is it in Grace and Glory ? Do ye build, and plant, and sow in the other World, that hereafter ye may reap in an Eternal Harvest of Blessedness ? If so, then are your Names written in Heaven.

6. If your Conversations are in Heaven, then are your Names written in Heaven. Phil. 3. 20. Our Conversation is in Heaven. Many profess

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less Hope of Heaven, but their Conversations are in the mean while upon the Earth: Like that foolish Actor, that whilst his Eyes were fix'd upon the Earth, cry'd, *O Heavens!* They favour only Earthly Things; Earthly Profits, Earthly Comforts, Earthly Vanities.

Let a Man's Profession be never so Heavenly, his Prayers and Duties never so Heavenly; yet if they are over-topp'd by an Earthly Conversation, that Man's Religion is vain. The Scripture says expressly, *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 John. 2. 15.*

Never talk of a Name in Heaven, so long as your Hearts are buried in the Earth: Where your Hearts are, there your Names are: If your Hearts are Earthly, your Names are in the Earth; Carnal, Worldly, Sensual, Enemy to God, that is thy Name, and the Scripture gives thee no other, *[Jam. 4. 4.] He that is a friend of the world, is the enemy of God.*

Now what is your Life? How do

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do ye live? Do ye live by *Sense* or do ye live by *Faith*? Do ye live upon the *Creatures*, or upon the *Promises*?

It is said of the *Vertuous Woman*, Prov. 31. 14. that *she fetcheth her food from far*. So doth the true *Believer*; he uses the Blessings of the *Creature*, but he lives upon the Blessings of the *Covenant*.

From far That is, far out of the sight and ken of the *Natural Eye*: For it is *Bread* the *World* knows not of. The *Natural Man* is blind, and cannot see afar off. *God hath sto the world in their hearts*. Eccles. 3. 11. They are strangers to this Joy.

From far A man's life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesseth, Luke 12. 15. His Life is hid with Christ in God, Col. 3. 3. and from thence are the Comforts of his Life. He fetches his food from far. It is God in Christ, and the Glories of the other Worldy chap are the Bread of his Soul. w well

Do

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Do ye fetch your Food from far,
or nearer home? Are you fed by
Sense, with what is next; or doth
Faith feed you, with Clusters fetch'd
from the Holy-Land? Do ye serve
Flesh, Lust, and Sins, and Times,
(which is the basest Thralldom) or
do ye serve God, and Christ, whose
servite is perfect freedom? Rom 6. 16.
His ye are whom ye serve. The
Apostle Paul will tell you whom
he serves; *The Lord whom I serve in
my spirit*, Rom. 1. 9. *Forgetting
the things behind, I press towards
the mark*, Phil. 3. 13. Outward
Privileges, Carnal Contentments,
Perishing Hopes, these were once
the things before him; but now he
hath turn'd about, and set his face
the other way, and left them all
behind him.

I press forward towards the mark.
He is now ascending upon the wings
of Faith and Love, above this Dung
and Darkness, to the Regions of
Light and Glory.

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If your *Conversation* be in *Heaven*, it is thus with you in one degree or other. Heavenly Concernments are your Work, and Heavenly Comforts are your Support. It is not the *Fig-tree blossoms*, nor the *Olive's labour*, Habak. 3. 17. that can comfort and glad you; but it is Fruit from the *Tree of Life*, in the midst of the *Paradise of God*, that feeds you.

If thus your *Conversation* be in *Heaven*, then is your *Name* written in *Heaven*.

The next Use shall be by way of
EXHORTATION.

Is a *Name* written in *Heaven*, the highest Cause of *Rejoicing*? And can you, upon examination, find that your *Names* are written there? Oh, then, set your *Setab* upon this *Mercy*! Fix your *Heart*, your *Joy*, your *Thankfulness* upon this *Privilege*. Other things you may rejoice in, in their place, and by the by; but

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but here your Joy should be fixed. See how the *Apostle* breaks out into Thanksgiving for this, *Ephes. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6.*

Ver. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus.*

Ver. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world; that we should be holy and without blame before him, in love.*

Ver. 5. *Having predestinated us to the adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.*

Ver. 6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

His Heart dwells in triumph upon this Mercy; and so should ours also; the Lord Christ, here in the Text, commands it; Rejoyce, because your Names are written in Heaven.

Now give me leave to propound to you Six Considerations, which are very proper Motives to stir up
your

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Hearts to the Practice of this Duty.

Consider, (1.) There is no Name like this.

1. It is an *Honourable Name*: Isa. 43. 4. *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been Honourable.*

If God poureth Contempt upon the Creature, it must needs be vile and base: God is the true Fountain of *Honour*; if he puts *Honour* upon us, it is the truest *Honour* in the World.

2. It is a *better Name* than that of Sons and Daughters: Isa. 56. 4, 5. *Thus saith the Lord to the Eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and chuse the things that please me, and take hold of my Covenant; To them will I give in my house a place, and a name better than of Sons and Daughters. Though they have no Children, yet they shall be my Children; though they are without a Name in the World, yet they shall have a Name in my House.*

Your

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Your *Honour* Rejoyces in the Name of a *Son*, this *Day*; and you do well : God forbid that I should make your *Rejoycing* void : Nay, to encourage it, let me tell Your *Honour*, That God takes it kindly, that you own him, in the *Mercies* and *Blessings* of *Providence*. But I am, in *Duty*, to mind you of a better *Name* than that of *Sons* and *Daughters*; and this is it, to have a *Name written in Heaven*. To have a *Child* from God, is an inferior *Name* to this of being call'd a *Child of God*. *Solomon* saith, *If a Man beget an hundred Children, and live many years, and his soul be not filled with good, I say, that an untimely birth is better than he, Eccles. 6. 3.*

3. It is a *Durable* and *Lasting Name*. A *Name* in the *World* may be lost : The *Wicked* may *Defame* it. *Wickedness* may *Corrupt* it. God may *Blast* it : *Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever, Psal. 9. 5.*

Time

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Time may eat it out of the Records of Honour.

But a *Name written in Heaven*, is a *durable Name*, it can never be blotted out: *I will give them an everlasting Name, that shall never be cut off*, Isa. 56. 5. As the *Inheritance* is *Inc*-*corruptible*, so the *Title* is *Unal*-*terable*, and the *Heir* *Immortal*.

Consider, (2.) *A Name written in Heaven*, is a Blessing that sweetens all our other Blessings. This *Land* is mine, and these *Riches* are mine, and this *Child* is mine, and this *Honour* is mine ; yea, and *God* is mine, and *Christ* is mine, and the *white Stone* and the *new Name* is mine, and *Heaven* and *Eternal Life* is mine: Ay, this, this sweetens all.

What if you could be supposed to enjoy all *Outward Blessings* imaginable? the fairest Estate, the highest Honours, the sweetest Children, the richest Pleasures ; yet, in the midst of all these, if *Conscience* should secretly gripe you within, and tell you,

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you, ye are Strangers and Enemies to God, ye have no part in Christ, no portion in his Death, your Names are blotted out of the Book of Life, ye are Children of God's Curse : Oh, what a Heart-sinking would this cause, under all your Fruitions ! This one thing left in doubt, *I know not what will become of my Soul to Eternity*, is enough to bring us into *Streights*, in the midst of all our Sufficiencies, *Job 20. 22.* to soure all our Possessions, and to make the face of all our Enjoyments look dim and unpleasant.

Consider, (3.) This is that which gives confidence and comfort in Death, and makes us strong, to grapple with that *King of Terrors*.

What is it which makes even *Believers* themselves (many of them) shrink at the thoughts *Death* ? Why it is want of Evidence , they have never seen their *Names* written in the *Book of Life*. The sight of this, by *Faith*, makes the Soul triumph over

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over Death, and despise the Grave, and say with Simeon, Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Luke 2. 29, 30.

We know (saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 1.) that if our earthly tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

This we know, and are assured of; Well, and what is the fruit of this Assurance? He tells you, in the 2d and 4th Verses; In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from Heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

What is Death, to the assured Believer, but a speedy Conveyance to the Possession of that Glory which Divine Love hath Intitled him to from Everlasting.

Consider, (4.) Herein Joy can never run into Excess: In temporal things it may; it is possible and

com-

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common to rejoice and delight in Outward Mercies too much ; for they are every way disproportionable to the vast Capacity of the Soul ; as unable to fill it, as the dim Light of a Candle is to give Day to the World, in the absence of the Sun.

Hear what the Prophet says in the Case, *Isa. 28. 29. The bed is too short for a man to stretch himself upon it, and the covering too narrow for a man to wrap himself in it.*

How unsuitable is a short Bed for a long Body ! so are perishing Comforts to an Immortal Soul. And from hence it is that the Apostle adviseth, (in 1 Cor. 7. 30.) That *they that rejoice, should be as though they rejoiced not* ; that is, in worldly things. But in Spiritual and Eternal Concerns, Joy cannot exceed ; for infinite Blessedness calls for infinite Joy and Delight.

Consider, (5.) This will be a *lasting and perpetuated Joy* : Therefore

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fore it is congruous and equal that we now *Rejoyce* in that which shall be our *Joy* for Ever. Other Joys have their Periods and Intermiſſions, their Terms and Vacations; they ebb and flow, bloſſom and wither; a Fit of Sickneſs, or a pang of Conſcience, extinguishes all: But this *Joy* is abiding; *Your joy ſhall no man take from you*, John 16. 22.

Is it true, That the *Children of God* have many cauſes of ſorrow, if they look inward; ſtrong Corruptions, hard Hearts, weak Graces, many Temptations: But yet in *God* they have continual cauſe of *Rejoycing*.

A Name in Heaven, is an induring ground of Comfort; not like theſe tranſcient Shadows. Can Stability be moved, or Eternity expire?

Nothing is Matter of laſting Joy, but that Good which is commensurate in Duration to the Soul that is to be ſatisfy'd with it.

The Times we live in are changeable, and uncompoſed; the hatreds of Religion great; we ſee Diſtra-

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Etions at home, Distresses abroad ; the Lord is shaking Heaven and Earth, Church and State : Our Experience tells us how mutable are the Wills, how fickle the Favours, how sudden the Frowns of Men ; how vain the Hopes, how unsuitable the Delights, which are drawn out of *broken Cisterns* ; how full of Dross and Dregs the most refined Comforts and Contents of the World are. Nothing can be an enduring Joy, but this, which our Lord *Christ* propounds in the Text, as Matter of Joy.

Who would not therefore retire from the Noise of Laughter, from the Courtships of flattering Gallants, the Clutter and Vain-glory of a distracted World, to solace his Soul in the Joys and Delights of the World to come ?

Consider, (6.) What Heaven is ; and that will raise your Hearts to glory in this Privilege, of a Name written in Heaven.

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1. *Heaven* is the Habitation of the Great God, where He dwells in his Infinite Glory. So that a *Name written in Heaven*, imports our future Inheritance of that Glory ; according to that of the Apostle, Col. 3. 4. *When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory.*

2. *Heaven* is a freedom from all Evil both of Sin and Suffering ; so that a *Name in Heaven*, intitles us to a blessed Redemption from all Evil.

There is no *Sin* there. *Grace* weakens *Sin*, but it is *Glory* that abolishes it. *Old Adam* shall there be put off, never be put on again. The *Lord Christ* will present his *Church*, in that day, *faultless before the throne of his glory, with exceeding joy*, Jude ver. 24.

There is no *Affliction* there : *Sin* and *Sorrow* came in together, and they shall go out together. There the *Shunamite's Son* complains no more of his *aching head*, nor *Mephibosheth*

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boseth of his lame feet. There *Job's blotches* are perfectly cured, and *Lazarus's sores* are all dried up.

3. *Heaven is a Place of all Perfection.* So that a Name written in Heaven, intitles us to a Perfection of State, which we cannot hope for in this World: Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, Phil. 3. 12.

All Perfection is above.

There is Perfection of *Faculties*: The *Understanding* shall be elevated by the *Light of Glory*, into the *Vision of God*, 1 Cor. 13. 12.

The *Nature of God*, the *Mystery of Three in One*, the *Union of Two Natures in One Person*, the *Counsels of God's Decrees*, and *Providence*; these are the *Deep*s of God, and at present there is *Darkness* upon the face of these *Deep*s; but there the glorified Eye shall see all. 1 Cor. 13. 12.

The *Will* shall There be perfectly Holy, and swallowed up into the Will of God.

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There is Perfection of *Privileges* ; perfect Union and Communion. Here we lay hold of *Christ* ; but There we shall have full Possession : Here we hang upon him, but There we shall dwell in his Embraces.

There is Perfection of *Graces* : Here the Children of God have Perfection of Parts, but not of Degrees.

Holiness in the best *Saint* Here, is mixed with some Dregs of Flesh and Defilement ; but There it shall be compleat ; we shall appear *not having spot or wrinkle*, Ephes. 5. 27.

Love shall There be Perfect : Here we are either weary of the Act, or apt to make a change of the Object of our Love, ever and anon swerving and starting aside to the Creature ; but then we shall act Love without ceasing, upon one and the same Object, without changing. There shall be an Eternal Solace and Complacency in God.

4. *Hea-*

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4. *Heaven* is the Abstract of all Blessedness, the Sum of all Felicity. Reckon up all Comforts and Pleasures, and Satisfactions, and Delights, and Happineses, and put them all together, and then separate from them Finiteness, and Imperfection, and that is *Heaven*.

So that a *Name written in Heaven*, imports our future Fruition of all Blessedness. Yet a little while, and ye shall be let into all this.

All the Objects of Joy which are scatter'd among the Creatures, are everlastingly heap'd up in *Heaven*: So that say what it is you delight and joy in, and I will shew it you there.

Is it *Wealth*? Why there are *unsearchable Riches in Heaven*, Ephes. 3. 8. *durable Riches*, Prov. 8. 18. *Unsearchable*, and therefore without Bottom, and without Bound: *Durable*, and therefore without End.

Do ye delight in *Honour* and *Dignity*? Why in *Heaven*, the *Glory*

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Glory of the Great God Himself shall be put upon you, Col. 3. 4.

St. John tells us, It doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, 1 John 3. 2. Such honour have all his Saints, Psalm 149. 9.

Is it Pleasure you delight in ? Why in Heaven there are Rivers of Pleasures, Psal. 36. 8. In thy presence is fulness of Joy, at thy right-hand there are Pleasures for evermore, Psalm 16. 11.

Do ye delight in Feasting ? Why in Heaven there is Plenty and Variety, Fulness without Satiety ; Bread of Life, the Tree of Life, the Fountain of Life.

Do ye delight in Musick ? (it is not fit that such a Feast should be without it :) In Heaven the Saints and Angels are all in one Concord, singing eternal Hallelujah's to Him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.

Do you delight in stately and magnificent Structures ? Why in Heaven

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is a house not made with hands, 2 Cor. 5. 1. This is a City, whose walls are jasper, whose foundations are precious-stones, whose gates are pearl, whose streets are pure gold, Rev. 21. 18, 19, 21. whose Builder and Maker is God, 2 Cor. 5. 1.

Thus you see *Heaven* is the Comprehension of all Good, the Abstract of all Felicity. And your Name is written upon all this ; it is all yours, as the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22. All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours.

Ministers are yours, to Instruct you.

The World is yours, to Supply you.

Life is yours, to Prepare you for *Heaven*.

Death is yours, to Convey you to *Heaven*.

Things present are yours, to Support you in the Way.

Things to come are yours, to Reward you in the End.

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What then remaineth? but, as *David* adviseth, *Be glad in the Lord, and rejoyce, ye righteous, and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart,* Psalm 32. 11.

Whatever ye enjoy in the World, yet let your Joy be in God. Have ye *Riches, Honours, Pleasures, Children, Health, Beauty, Parts?* &c. Notwithstanding in this rejoyce not; but rather rejoyce, because your Names are written in Heaven.

THE END.
