

Thomas Goodwin, *A state of glory for the spirits of just men upon dissolution* (from *Works*, 1681)

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CHAP. XIV.

A particular enumeration of the glories of that state, into which the separate soul enters immediately after death.

The Revelation being for the most part the representation of a long and sad story of martyrdoms and sufferings of the church, ending in a glorious Kingdom of Christ, God was pleased to intermingle special comforts suited to those sufferings in the mean while, till that Kingdom shall appear. The deaths and martyrdoms of saints are very where up and down related in that book in several Ages; as Chap. 2.3, 10, 13, 19. Chap. 3.10. chap. 6. 9,10,11. Chap. 11.7, 8, 9,10. Chao. 12.11, 13. 17. Chap. 13. 7, 10, 15. Chap. 14.12, 13.

2. Our character of the primitive saints (for all the rest) is in Rev. 12. 11. *They loved not their Lives unto the Death* : I may say that, as the *Apostles were set forth unto Death Last*, so these Christians *first*, not in Time only but for Eminency. Saints have more cause to prize their lives for the opportunity of serving God in this life than other men. Yet that part of life they might have lived until natural death and therein have done service unto god, they valued not. Those that were young did not value it, but gave it up.

Now observe we his method of comforts them, and all the saints from first to last, and all along.

1. In the very prologue to that body of prophecy that follows (Chap. 5.10.) e're any seals were opened or trumpets blown, the representative of the whole church comfort themselves with this, *we shall reign on Earth*. They look'd at this as that which would be the close and conclusion whatever falls out in the mean time until then. And as answering thereunto at the very end, and close of all we find the event to correspond, Rev. 20. 4,6. Then when all enemies are destroyed and after so long a time in suffering run out, this Kingdom fore-understood by then is then given them. But yet still to shew what their souls should have in the mean time (for twas a long time unto the kingdom, especially to those first saints well nigh 2000 years) Christ takes special care to insert in this book that the state of their souls after death should be till then, and he doth set it by, and at large upon two eminent occasions. There were two eminent times of sufferings and ranks of sufferers: 1. Those under *heathenish Rome* till Christinaity overcame the Red Dragon; 2. From *Antichrist*, or *Christian Rome*, the Beast. Now observe:

1. That in the midst of , or rather against the Time of the greatest persecutiouons under Heathenish Rome, Christ to comfort them all tells them what Glory he would in the mean time give their souls, Rev. 6.9,10,11. *And when he had opened the fifth Seal, I saw under the altar the*

souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held, And they cried with a loud Voice, saying, How long, O Lord, Holy and True dost thou not judge and avenge our Bloud on them that dwell on the Earth? And White Robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them that they should rest yet for a little season until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed, as they were should be fulfilled. This is spoken, but to the first rank of sufferers, the first fruits of sufferers by Heathenish Rome' and that now under the fifth seal, at the last and greatest of their sufferings in Diocleian's Time. He chose there to insert it, though it was intended for all that suffered afore alsom as those Words shew, O Lord, how long? They had Brethren you see to come, they had another company that were to suffer under another power, Antichristian Rome, Rev. 13.10. *He that leadeth into Captivity shall go into Captivity, he that killed with the sword must be killed with the sword, here is the patience and the faith of the saints.* Lo, God who speaks once and twice, speaks a second time in special to those as he had done to those other, and that upon the occasion of a most eminent and general suffering by that Beast. Rev. 14. 12, 13. *Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their Labours, and their Works do follow them.*

Wherein, 1. Observe the Juncture of time wherein 'tis spoken; and to this purpose take notice, that this 14th Chapter describes that company which Christ had had all along Antichrist's Reign, ver. 1,2, &c. (as the 13th Chapter had done Antichrist's Adherents) and the 14th Chapter describes also the several progresses of the Gospel by three degrees, and when it came to the third degree (ver. 9) that professors enlightened by the Gospel began boldly and with a loud voice to challenge the Beast of Rome to be the Beast or Antichrist, and that they would all be damned (ver. 10) if they entertained not the Gospel, which was done by Luther &c. Then arose the greatest persecution that ever had been afore. The time hereof lasted long between Luther's first preaching and the Reformation, or quiet Harvest by Supream Authority crowned, which follows; ver. 14,15,16. *And I looked, and behold at white Cloud, and upon a Cloud one fate like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the Temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sate on the cloud, thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the Earth is ripe. And he that sate on the throne thrust his sickle on the Earth, and the Earth was reaped;* it was a great time of sufferings. Thus twice God spake it, and that a part unto each.

Then, 3, at the 20th chapter he speaks at once to both, when all sufferings were over, and comforts them with the coming in of that kingdom or new Jerusalem, which they had rejoiced so to think of afore-hand at the first, when it was as then almost 2000 years off.

1. The first sort is those that had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the word of God, those who were the primitive sufferers, witness that Jesus was their Lord, and King, and Saviour, and that themselves were Christians ; that was their testimony.

2. Another sort is those which *had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.*

And, 3, the first promise made, Chap. v., is prophesied of, to be fulfilled. *They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, and had the honour of being priests and kings, which from the first was said of them.* Chap. 1 ver. 6. *And hath made as kings and priests unto God and his Father.*

Let me add this ; I take it. The promises unto the overcomers at the close of every epistle to the seven churches are for the most part, if not all of them, made concerning the blessed state of the souls of saints in heaven, and in Christ's kingdom afore the day of judgment, which I shall now describe to you, from particular instances concerning the state of a believer's soul departed, collected for the most part out of the Book of the Revelation.

Having by these generals made my way, I come to the particulars that any way concern, or that are ingredient into, the glory of souls separate.

1. When the soul goes forth out of the body at death, the second death hath no power over it : Rev. 2. 11, *He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.* This promise is unto one who hath finished his course with a victory, which is at death; and so still in the close of all those epistles it runs, to *him that overcometh* ; and in the verse afore (ver. 10) it is expressly declared that that overcoming is at death, as having been a conflict until then *Be faithful unto death, &c.* The promise therefore concerns the soul at and upon, and so after, death ; and hence, to comfort them at and against that first death, it is said that the second death shall not hurt them, namely, then. This negative in view may seem but a small matter to the expectations of believers, but it is a great matter to us as sinners. For

1. It imports, that the Devil that hath the power of death, shall not lay an Hand, or so much as a finger touch, on them. A believer doth then, after Christ's example, commend his soul into the hands of God, *and God, as a faithful Creator* (1 Peter iv. 19), will be sure to keep them from Satan's clutches. When thy soul goes forth, he shall not hurt nor fright thee ; for God will give him a charge, as he did to *Laban* concerning *Jacob*. There was a dispute indeed between a good angel and the bad in *Jude*, what should be done with Moses's body, but not the least altercating word passed about his soul; and God will cut all disputes about thy soul also, as he did about the soul of Moses. God himself secured that from all debates of angels, good or bad, about it. Some have understood those words, Deut. 34. 5 (which according to the Hebrew are read, *Moses died, ad os Domini, at the mouth of the Lord*), with this paraphrase (which some of the Jewish writers also did conceive to be the sense), *Od osculum oris Domini, at the kiss of the mouth of the Lord.* Even as the nearest loving friend (as was the Roman manner) useth to take the last breath of his dying friend into his body with a kiss, that so did God suck out Moses's soul into himself.

But believers have a plainer warrant, and clearer word of testimony (however that paraphrase is elegant), from the apostle, Heb. 2. 14, *that Christ through death, having destroyed him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil, hath (thereby) delivered us from the fear of death* (and so of the fear of the devil at our death), unto the fear of which all men are justly subject, not at death *only, but all their lifetime.* But believers have no cause at all of any such fear, for that of our Saviour added may mightily add to our comfort at that hour : John. 5. 24, *Verily, verily, I say unto you. He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent*

me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. This is a great privilege for a man apt to fear that when his soul is forth the devils may appear about him. But do not fear ; Hands off, says Christ. Thou carriest a pass-port and safe conduct with thee, signed and sealed ; and if thou need not fear the second death, thou needest not fear the Devil, that hath the power of that death.

2. Thy Soul shall have Angels to wait on thee, to take thy soul when it comes forth, as the midwife doth the child, when it comes forth of the womb. The angels carried Lazarus's soul into *Abraham's bosom*, Luke 16. 22. The devils take others souls away. Of apostates while they live, Christ says, that *men shall take them*, (John 15.), as the *Pharisees* did *Judas*, which is an heavy judgment. But at death the devils take their souls: Luke 12. 20, *This night they shall require thy soul*. Who are those they ? Hell is a prison; so in *Peter*, 1 Pet. 5. Luke 12. 58, *And the judge delivers to the officer, and the officer casts in prison*. This officer is the Devil, that hales souls to that prison, and therefore Paul says of him, that *he hath the power of death*. Indeed, at the day of judgment the good angels. (Mat. 25.) are said to throw both men and devils to hell, but until then the devils are the chief leaders of wicked men's souls to hell.

Now that the good angels should do this for us at death, it is for state, and to grace us, as kings send some great noblemen of their court to attend those they would honour into their great city, and unto court ; and it is by this Christ shews his value of us. And as at the latter day, when the wedding is to be solemnised, he will come himself and fetch us (John 14. 3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also*), so now at death in the mean while he sends his angels to bring his espoused unto him.

3. The soul is in heaven instantly. 'Twas three o'clock afternoon when Christ died, and about after six the day ended; and the even of the passeover the next day began soon after, as the *Jewish* scruple shews, about the thieves hanging on the cross any part of that day to come; for which they brake their legs to despatch them afore the evening, which was the beginning of that next day. As you read, John 19. 31, 32. And Christ knowing what would fall, and that they should die afore that evening of that next day began, spake unto the good thief on this wise *This day thou shalt be with me in paradise* that is, afore night comes. Heaven is ready long since, and reserved for you, (1 Pet. 1. 4, 5) and thy soul hath been preparing and making meet for it, and in an instant it is *swallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. 5. 4. And the angels, like the sun-beams or flames of fire, are swift of flight, *flying swiftly* as the angel Gabriel said to Daniel, Dan. 9. 21. And hence, as soon as thou beginnest to be *absent from the body*, or ceasest to be at home in the body, *thou art present with the Lord*. And if this body be dissolved, [greek characters] *we have an house ready prepared*, for Christ went to prepare it, John 14., and he hath prepared for every soul his proper apartment. Mat. 20. 23.

4. At thy dying, so far as thou hast been *rich in faith and good works*, thy heart will be strengthened, both at death and thy passage to heaven, *to lay hold upon eternal life*. And as thou art just a coming thither, and near to set thy first foot on that most holy ground, thou shalt find a rich entrance [greek characters], or an *abundant large entrance* into those holy courts. *Those*

everlasting doors, the broad gates of heaven, will be thrown wide open for thee, for lo, here comes an heir, a rich heir of life.

5. Either at the instant of death, or in that passage to heaven, thy soul shall be fully purified from sin, and made perfectly holy, Heb. 10. 23. The church in heaven is said to consist of angels (whose style is the holy angels), and of the spirits of just men made perfect. These just men, whilst men, and their souls abiding in their bodies, were but just imperfectly, though just in God's acceptance (as Job, and others we read); but the souls of these men now when separate are made perfect, that is, in that sort of righteousness (their sanctification) wherein they were deficient afore. To the same purpose the apostle speaks: 1 Cor. 13. 9, 10, *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* It is to be understood of a comparison between the state of this life, which is the time and condition wherein we are imperfect, and oppositely to that other state, when this life is ended. *Now we know but in part, and prophesy in part.* And there is the like reason of holiness. We are holy but in part. And that it is after this life ended that that which is perfect doth begin, is evident from these words, *when that which is perfect comes, that which is imperfect is done away.* And contra, when that which is in part is done away, then that which is perfect comes. Now at and upon death it is that knowledge and prophesying are done away, and therefore then it is that perfection begins, and although that way of knowledge or faith, which now we have, is done wholly away, yet love (ver. 8), and so holiness, fails not, but is perfected. And the reason for this is because God then takes up our souls into *the presence of his glory*, for us to *know him as we are known*, &c., which though it may admit of degrees, as the comparison of that after the day of judgment shews, yet it is for the kind of it, a being admitted unto the glory of God, and not to know *as in a glass*, but *face to face*. Now though the knowledge of God, as imperfectly revealed in the way of faith, may consist with an answerable imperfect holiness (as here it doth), yet the communication and revelation of the glory of God itself unto sight cannot consist with imperfect holiness. For if so, then it would be with a mixture of sin remaining, which God, who is a consuming fire to all sin, and every degree thereof, will not, and cannot bear, and the soul itself would have more torment than happiness in such a sight. Moses could not see God's face and live, but when he was made perfect he might. David says, *I will behold thy face in righteousness*, Ps. 17. 15, which otherwise he could not behold. The substance of this reason we find in Jude 24, *Now to him that is able to keep you from falling*, that is, into *any grosser evil* (for he speaks that of his keeping us in the midst of indwelling corruptions in this life); *and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.* This is when this life is ended, and immediately succeeds the former, for there is no keeping us from falling in that other world, for the danger of sinning is over. But then we, being to be admitted to the presence of his glory, must be found faultless, for that presence of his glory can endure no spot, or imperfection in our grace, no, not the least. That the souls of saints *are present with the Lord*, the apostle often tells us, 2 Cor. 5. 8; and that we are admitted to the presence of his glory, that instance of Stephen shews, that Stephen when dying saw his glory, Acts 7. 55, and ver. 59, he died crying, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* That is, in respect unto a being received unto that presence of his glory, it was that our dying Stephen, when his soul was now departing, cries, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

Now unto what it is that Christ receives our souls that Rom. 15. 7 informs us, *as Christ* (says he) *hath received us unto the glory of God*. There indeed it is spoken of his having received us into the right of that glory in this life ; but this new receiving us at death is, and must therefore be, his receiving us unto the possession of it, which in this life we have not, and otherwise there were no new act of receiving, nor addition to the former, now when we come to die.

If any doubt or scruple ariseth in thee from hence, that thou findest at present an infinite depth of sin, lusts, and corruptions, and the greater part of thy heart like that of the earth overflowed with that sea; if thou art troubled, that thou hast had experience of so slow a procedure, and of so difficult a winning ground upon them for many years, though thou hast by faith been continually applying Christ's death to them; and if hereupon thou art ready to say. How then shall I hope and believe, that in an instant all those corruptions will be purged out, and holiness perfected in me? For answer, consider,

1. That in this work thy soul is merely passive, whereas in working out of corruptions whilst thou livest here, God goes the pace of thine own faith and endeavours, and attempers his work thereto; Rom. 8. 13, *If you through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh*. But in this last completing and filling up of holiness, God doth that alone upon thee, as a reward of thy former imperfect endeavours, and as a part indeed, or rather foundation, of glorifying of thee. And therefore, look as in believing thou art passive, so in this.

2. It is a new state and condition that thou art at death entering into, differing from faith. Thy enjoyment of God after death is to be by sight, and accordingly thy soul must be disposed for it, which it cannot be but by perfect holiness; and therefore the like time and pauses to work out corruption as were during the life of faith are not to be expected. God suits the dispensation answerable unto the state and condition he puts us into.

3. You may help your faith in this, by considering the great change which at the latter day shall be in a moment wrought upon the bodies of the saints, by him who *shall change our vile bodies to be like unto his glorious body, through his power by which he subdueth all things to himself*. The bodies of these saints that are then alive shall, *in the twinkling of an eye, be changed*, and of mortal be made immortal, and of natural bodies spiritual, and the bodies of them in the grave, that not stink only, but are rotted there, and the atoms and dust of many of them scattered and dispersed, in an instant God will work that great change which the apostle so much celebrates (1 Cor. 15.) And why shouldst thou not believe the same for thy soul? especially seeing thou hast had experience of so great a change wrought in thee in thy regeneration, from the state and power of sin that once held thee, which was a far greater change than this, being but of degrees of holiness; but *that* was a change from a total state of sin, and the power of it, unto holiness, though imperfect.

6. There is a great solemnity used upon the soul's arrival and first coming thither. I shall take my first rise from that 24th of *Jude*, *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*. There are two words that import thus much: 1. *A presenting to himself afore the presence of his glory*; 2. *A doing this with exceeding joy or triumph*.

1, That latter of exceeding joy is a joy on all hands, both on the soul's part, which now first enters into joy, and which, to be sure, hath good cause to rejoice. The believing soul rejoiced when it saw not Christ, but only believed on him; and it rejoiced with a joy unspeakable, much more now than when it sees him. There is joy also of the glorified saints, especially of those that knew thee, and were there afore thee, who are therefore said to receive us when we die into their eternal habitations, Luke 16. 9. It is spoken after the manner of men, as friends use to entertain and welcome strangers formerly known to them that come from far, though they belonging to the same country themselves were in afore them. And if there be joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner among the angels, as Christ says, then there is joy at the new coming of such a soul to heaven, especially among those angels that bring them thither, and among those other saints fore-mentioned. But, above all, there is joy in the heart of God and Christ. For if there be joy in thine own heart, and in the angels and saints, much more in Christ's heart; for Christ hath the great purchase of his blood now come home, and his long expected venture is now arrived safe, and past all danger. And there is the same joy in the heart of God, who chose thee, and had set his heart upon thee from everlasting, and thou comest home to himself, having been sent for by him, when thou hadst been long absent from him, and wandering in a sinful miserable world. Did the father of the prodigal rejoice, and make a feast, and justify by this that *it was meet he should make merry and be glad, because he that was lost is found* ? Luke 15.; then meet it is also in its proportion that there should be the like joy when a soul that hath been absent from God his Father and his Father's house, John 14. 1, 2, so many years, and during all that space in great danger of having been lost through manifold temptations and hazards, and which had been all along so miraculously kept, and preserved in Christ (as is said in the first verse of this our Jude), it is very meet that when he first arrives, and appears in the presence of his Father, there should likewise be great rejoicing. And there is great cause for it and indeed the same reason is for this as was for the other. And truly, whosoever will consider each word used here, as, 1, *presented to himself* (now so as not afore), and, 2, but now first made perfectly *unblameable* and *faultless*, and now new come into God's presence as not afore, may easily discern that such a thing as this (though spoken thus after the use and manner of men) should be intended in this exceeding joy.

As also it is evident that it is intended of this first appearing of such separate souls afore the presence of God, which begins after this life ended upon dissolution. For at the first appearing in any one's presence that love us among men, there useth such exceeding joy to follow and accompany it. Besides, that this joy refers to their having escaped and passed through so many rocks and hazards which other souls had ship wrack'd upon, as the whole fore-gone scope of that Epistle had shewn, and thereby is to be understood in the first place of that first admission into God's presence, as also that this time is the first when we are made completely faultless, [greek characters] that devils nor angels cannot find any matter of blame, nor any such thing, no, not the least.

The first word (that imports solemnity) is, that 'tis said *God presenteth them unto himself*, as Christ elsewhere is said to present us unto God. The Greek word [greek characters] here used signifies both to make and to establish. And, so understood, it imports God's making or establishing us in perfect holiness afore his presence. It also signifies to make present, or to set

before one's presence. And farther, if we compare this with other like scriptures it will prove in sense and scope the same [greek characters]; for we find, Ephes. 5. 26, that word in like manner spoken of Christ: *That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, hut that it should be holy, and without blemish.* And that faultlessness there is especially spoken of sanctification, as by the verse afore appears, *that he might sanctify it,* &c. So, when he presents it perfectly sanctified to himself, as being her husband, and she his spouse, he is likewise said to present us to his Father, in whose sight and presence we are to appear, Col. 1. 22, *To present you holy and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight,* &c. In his sight there is meant of the Father, and the word present in those places is a word of solemnity, used of presenting the male children unto God (and accordingly it is spoken of Christ when presented in the Temple, Luke 2. 22), or of a spouse unto an husband hen first brought into his presence, as of Eve it is said. Gen. 2. 22, *God brought her to Adam,* as his wife. So, then, God the Father here, when he hath completely rendered and made us perfectly holy, presents us to himself as his chosen children, according to Ephes. 1. 4, 5, *He hath chosen us to be holy, and without blame before him in love, and hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children to himself.* And we being now at death accordingly made perfectly holy, and without blame, he then presents us to himself (saith Jude here); and Jesus Christ, when any soul his spouse being made without wrinkle, and now cometh first so unto him, presents it to himself and to his Father as his spouse and his child. And he doth this by the same reason as when the whole Church shall come together, being become without *fault, spot, or wrinkle,* or any such thing (as at the latter day he then will present her to himself) and solemnly to his Father; though that is done with infinitely greater solemnity when it is of the whole church, as the apostle (Eph. 5. 27) tells us; but in the mean time he doth it to every particular soul, at first approach into the presence of that glory. The same reason in a proportion holds for this latter as well as the former; so it is confirmed by this, that at the saint's conversion Christ is said to present us to his Father, to own and take us as first given to him by Christ; and he doth this often afterward by intercession.

It was a memorable speech of an holy man, when dying, to this effect: *Though I am now (said he) at present filled with the assurance of God the Father's love, and that he will receive me, yet I should dread to appear afore so great a glory, were not Christ there in heaven to present me to him.*

CHAP. XV.

Of the glories of heaven, and the happiness of glorified saints therein.

Rom. VIII. xviii.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

My design is to raise up your hearts to heaven, and to consider that great glory which God hath prepared for them that love him, to open and describe heaven, whereof there are many uses, both to those that are in the state of nature, and those that are in the state of grace. There is nothing

more powerful to bring men to Christ, nothing more proportionable to a principle of self-love ; and there is nothing that is a greater encouragement to the godly, that they may willingly and with cheerfulness pass through the afflictions of this life, that they may pass through the evil world with their hearts raised up to heaven. The apostle, from the 17th verse to the end of this chapter, sends it in, beating this upon the hearts of God's people in stealing their hearts, and raising them up against tribulations. And among the rest this is one encouragement, to consider the joy which shall not only be revealed to us, but in us, which we shall be made partakers of. The consideration of heaven, which is so little thought on by us Christians, this I would lay open to you. In the excellency of which glory, that we might more clearly behold it we might look upon many things, but I will only name two.

First, I will consider it comparatively; and this the text leads us unto, *For I reckon not the sufferings, &c.* *Secondly*, Simply as it is in itself.

First of all, to know this great glory, let us compare it with all other things, with all the goods the creature can afford, with all the things here below, which our hearts dote so much upon, as pleasures, honours, riches, beauty, &c. They are not to be compared to it; it transcends all the glory of this world, all the good things we are capable of; one leaf of this tree of life is better than all the fruits that grow in this world, Rev. 22. Out of the bowels of this earth are raised gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones, which serve but for the materials of the walls of this city and for paving the streets of it; the most glorious things this world hath, serve only for the gates of the temple. If the outside be so glorious, consider how glorious must the inside be, how beautiful must it be within? No creature this world hath, is worthy so much as to shadow it, all the creatures be swallowed up with this glory, even as a drop is swallowed up with the ocean. *Solomon*, in all his royalty, the most magnificent, rich, and glorious prince the world ever had, lived indeed at the best rate; he had the very quintessence of all earthly glory and joys, insomuch that a queen herself was amazed to see his great glory. Yet let me tell you, this *Solomon*, which is now in heaven, ten thousand times exceeds all the glory and pomp he had on earth ; I say, the glory he hath now in heaven excels that glory he had on earth, being on his throne in all his royalty, even as much as he did then excel himself above what he was in his mother's womb. We see then the good things of this life are not worth talking of; they come far short, they are not worthy to be compared with the glory of heaven.

In the second place, compare this glory with the afflictions we suffer here, and it doth, as the apostle saith, weigh them all down, not only the afflictions which befall one man, but all men. Take all of them, be they what they will be, and lay them in one balance, and heaven and its glory in another, and it will weigh them all down, even as a grain of sand will be weighed down of the whole world. There is no reckoning to be made of them in respect of heaven, and yet one of these afflictions will eclipse all the good we enjoy here; for if we are afflicted, we take no pleasure in all our worldly contentments. Therefore we see that the afflictions of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.

In the third place, to make a further demonstration of this to you, there is a joy which God's people are capable of in this life, the joy of the Holy Ghost, which is unspeakable and glorious, one drop of which transcends infinitely all the joy the creatures can afford us. My brethren, have you ever heard of this joy? have you over tasted of it? hath God ever raised your hearts to see it and his glory? If you have but tasted, as the apostle saith, how good the Lord is, you will say with David, Psalm 4. 6, 7, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me. Thou hast put gladness into my heart, more than in the time when corn and wine and oil increased.* This is the joy which comes fresh from the fountain. If the devil himself, when he transforms himself into an angel of light, affords more comfort to the heart of an hypocrite than the world can do, why then how much more doth the joy of the Holy Ghost, which comes from the true fountains, if it be shed abroad in your hearts. And hence it was that the martyrs suffered so willingly, and ran through so many persecutions, and yet the glory which is in heaven, if it be compared to this, infinitely transcends it. The joy which shall be revealed swallows up all these joys which we have here, even as the sea swallows up mole-hills, it is nothing in comparison of heaven, it is but as a drop to the ocean, and yet one drop of this joy of the Holy Ghost is more excellent than oceans of worldly comforts. All the joy of this world is but as a drop to the ocean, nay, the infinite drops will make a sea, yet infinite worlds will not make heaven, but indeed infinite drops of this joy will make heaven, because it is of the same nature. Yet this *joy of the Holy Ghost* is not comparable to the joys of heaven. Why? It is but the earnest of our inheritance. 2 Cor. 5. 5. *Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.* God doth fashion and prepare his people here, by some small revenues of their joys, which shall come in hereafter; and all that the Holy Ghost makes us partakers of in this life is but as a sixpence in respect of the whole payment of glory we shall have in heaven, Phil. 3. 14. The Scriptures calls it no more but the sealing of the Holy Ghost, the earnest of our inheritance. Indeed, it is of the same nature with the great sum of which it is an earnest. For you know an earnest differs from a pledge in this, a pledge is of another kind, but the earnest of the same kind with the payment. And so the joy of the Holy Ghost is of the same kind with that which is laid up for us, but it is but an earnest. And there is a difference in the manner of producing it. Whatsoever we have here as our earnest is but from the light of faith. We cannot see Christ from whom we have it, we only believe on him as he is absent. We never saw him, and yet this works a joy unspeakable and glorious, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Whilst we apprehend him by faith, it is but as absent from him, *Therefore we are always confident, 2 Cor. 5. 6, Knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.* And if we have such joy in his absence, and seeing but a small glimpse or cranny of light coming to us by faith, if this, I say, be so glorious, what will it then be when we shall see him as he is, in which is fulness of joy? By faith we see him, but not all; and this causeth joy unspeakable and glorious; what then to see him in perfection, and have his presence in the fullness of it, whose presence in the least degree of it goeth far beyond all the sight of him we have in the highest degree of faith, yea, in all the degrees of faith. And yet the least degree of faith excels all the joy the world can give; and therefore do but think with yourselves what heaven is.

Compare it with those joys and that glory the saints that are now in heaven enjoy, which infinitely transcends both the good things of this world and the joy of the Holy Ghost; and yet there is a glory to be revealed after the day of judgment that will transcend the present joy of the glorified saints. The least drop of joy here that comes from the Holy Ghost transcends the joy of the world, the joy the saints in heaven now have as much transcends the joy of the Holy Ghost as it doth that of the world; yet after the day of judgment there is a fuller treasure of joy to be broken up; and therefore let this raise up your hearts to conceive of the exceeding weight of glory laid up for the elect, the saints who are now in heaven at the well-head of comforts, who bathe themselves in these rivers of pleasures they have, and are capable of more joy than we can conceive of. One saint in heaven hath more glory and joy in his heart than all the joy that is on earth, and yet at the latter day, their glory will as far transcend that they have now, even us it doth ours upon earth. I may say of their condition as the apostle doth, Heb. 11. 40, *God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* While the saints are without their fellows, they are not come to the highest degree of perfection, Heb. 12. 23, *To the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.* There is a perfection to be given them (which they yet have not) when all their fellow-saints, all their fellow brethren, when the whole number of the faithful are together; then shall a new treasure be broken up, 2 Thess, 1. 10, *who shall come* (saith the text, speaking of Christ) *to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired by all those that believe.* We do usually admire a thing when our expectation is exceeded, now the angels and the souls of the glorified saints in heaven have seen and enjoyed many glorious things already, and they look for far more glorious things, but yet Christ will bring forth a glory at that day beyond their expectations : he will not only be admired by wicked men, but all that believe shall admire this, he will then put them to a new amazement. Let now the consideration of this glory raise up your hearts to seek for it, that so such an unvaluable and great price may not pass out of your bauds, even the exceeding great riches of glory laid up for us. Again, stand amazed at the love of God, that hath prepared such glory for you.

Thus much comparatively now, secondly, let us consider this heavenly glory simply as it in it self and because things are best known by their causes, we will begin with them.

And first of all, I shall consider the efficient cause of this great glory; and that is the great God of heaven and earth, whose greatness and glory we cannot comprehend, but only by his works. He is the efficient cause of heaven and all its glory; he built this great city, and all his works shall be like himself. If king Ahashuerus make a feast, he will make it like a king; much more the King of kings will provide for his servants whom he feasts. He made a world, and how glorious is it. But if he make a heaven, think with yourselves what a heaven it will be. The Scriptures, Heb. 11., commend this to us, comparing the 10th and 16th verses together, *For he looked,* saith he, *for a city* (speaking of Abraham) *which hath foundations, whose builder and founder is God;*

and then verse 16, *God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath built for them a city*; mark the reason. In the first place, it is said to be a city, whose builder and founder is God; God is the artist of it, he shewed his art in it; in this building of heaven God shewed himself an artificer; indeed, God hath made other great works, as the world, but he hath shewed no art upon this in comparison of heaven. The heavens which we see are but the feeling of this heaven which God hath prepared for his saints, and yet they are very glorious. But yet he hath bestowed no cost in comparison, he hath shewed no art on it in respect of heaven. He hath bestowed all his cost on this, and in making heaven he shewed himself an artificer. And would you know the reason of it? It is because heaven is his standing house. Kings, you know, use to enrich their standing houses; they bestow more cost upon them than others. Now this world, my brethren, is not a house that hath foundation, but it was builded by God as a stage upon which, when men have acted their parts, it is to be thrown down. It is set up for a few thousand years, which are nothing to him, and then he means to pull it down, and he will then burn it; but heaven is God's standing house, his palace. And therefore consider what great cost God hath bestowed on it. Again, it is said to be a city prepared, Mat. 25. 24, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world*. He speaks as if God had been a great while in making heaven (God hath been long in contriving it). Nay, further, saith Christ, *I go to prepare a place*, as if it were still in finishing, or as if it were not yet finished. Not but that all God's works are perfect from the beginning, but it is spoken after the manner of men, that we might expect great glory, for which there is such great preparation. And, saith Christ, *If it were not so, I would have told you*. Think what you will think of it, and it will be answerable, God will fulfil it. Heaven is a city prepared. If there be but preparation for a coronation of an earthly king a month or a quarter of a year, there are great things expected, and yet more is shewed; but now God hath been always in preparing heaven, he hath been making of it from the beginning of the world. *David* laid up materials for the temple, and *Solomon* builded; so God prepares heaven, and Christ builds it. And therefore, consider with yourselves, there are great things to be found; expect what you can, and it shall be answered. And thus you see God hath made a heaven with a foundation. He hath been long in preparing of it. He set up the world in six days, but he hath been setting up heaven, as I may so say, six thousand years. And therefore let this raise up your hearts to consider what a weight of glory God hath laid up for those that love him.

Secondly, Consider the meritorious cause of it, which is Christ the Lord of glory. Christ Jesus himself hath purchased it for us in his blood, he hath laid the foundation of it, his blood was laid out for it. He spun this thread of glory out of his own bowels, and therefore we may well argue the greatness of this glory, seeing that his blood hath obtained it, Eph. 1. 18. It is there called *the riches of the glory of his inheritance*. All the inheritance that Christ hath, he distributes unto the saints. This is said to be a purchased possession; why, now my brethren think with yourselves, what shall be the revenues of glory purchased by his death? Think what a large possession the blood of Christ will procure. Consider with yourselves that this will amount to. And this is heaven, heaven is the revenues of Christ's blood. Think, I say, what glorious heaven it must

needs be which Christ's blood hath purchased for us. This is that he aimed at in laying down his life for us; for justification, adoption, and sanctification, are but the way to glorification; and we are justified, adopted, and sanctified all to this end, that we might be glorified. Consider, therefore, what Christ's blood will be worth, what the revenues of it will come to; and therefore what hath been said of heaven, let it move you, and work upon you. If I should single out any man present, any particular man in this congregation, as our Saviour did the young man in the gospel, and bid him forsake all, and he shall have treasure in heaven, this would be a great offer. Now, I single out every man here present: consider with yourselves, you all stand arrested before God, you deserved to be accursed, and to be eternally so, yet if you leave all your iniquities, repent and believe, you shall have glory in heaven. Methinks now you should lay hold on this offer, and think no strictness too much, so you could get heaven. If you were merchant-like men, you would not let heaven, this precious heaven, pass you. You would lay hold on it, and spend all you had to get it, and to be made partakers of those invaluable treasures. Do but think with thyself, thou canst not bid enough for it: 1 Cor. 9. 25, *Strive and run, so run that you may attain ; and every one that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it that they may have a corruptible, but we an incorruptible, crown.* And if men be so careful here on earth to obtain temporal preferments, much more, then, run to get that preferment which of all other is the chief, even everlasting happiness in heaven. It is for heaven, an incorruptible crown, for heaven that transcends all other things, and think with yourselves how it will trouble you if you come short of your prize? What a fearful and sorrowful voice will it be to you, who can express your anguish, when you hear heaven and your crown is parted from you? It was a pitiful saying to *Nebuchadnezzar, Thy kingdom is departed from thee ;* much more will it then be to any of us to hear that we have lost heaven. How will it astonish thee to hear Christ say, *Heaven and thy crown is departed from thee, thou must be turned to devils for ever, this will be thy condition to the end?* It is our duty to speak unto you, we can but exhort you, we can do no more. Mat. 10. 14, *If they will not retain it, saith he, shake off the dust of your feet as a testimony against them.* If ye look not to yourselves in his life, this will be the event of it. Oh, how will it fret you to the heart what unutterable perplexities will you be in, when you see others follow Christ to his Glory, and you yourselves have that curse denounced against you, *Go, you cursed, &c.* Alas, then, it will be too late to get heaven. Oh! what terror and amazement, what bitter anguish, to think heaven came near unto me. It was offered me, and yet, because I would not part with some darling sin, some beloved corruption, some base lust, I have lost my interest in it. I must not partake of those rivers of pleasures in Heaven. This certainly will be the issue, except here, whilst you have space, you make sure of this crown to yourselves by faith and repentance.

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