

Heaven, when they see that Sun of Righteousness without a Cloud, they themselves shine forth as the Sun, and shall be as little Suns, without a Spot. For then is come the Time when CHRIST presents his Saints to himself, in *glorious Beauty*; *not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing*; and *having Holiness without a Blemish*. And then the Saints Union with CHRIST is perfected. This also is begun in this World. The *relative* Union is both begun and perfected at once, when the Soul first closes with CHRIST by Faith: The real Union, consisting in the Union of Hearts and Affections, and in the vital Union, is begun in this World, and perfected in the next. The Union of the Heart of a Believer to CHRIST is begun when his Heart is drawn to CHRIST, by the first Discovery of divine Excellency, at Conversion; and consequent on this Drawing and Closing of his Heart with CHRIST, is established a vital Union with CHRIST; whereby the Believer becomes a living Branch of the true Vine, living by a Communication of the Sap and vital Juice of the Stock and Root; and a Member of CHRIST's mystical Body, living by a Communication of spiritual and vital Influences from the Head, and by a Kind of Participation of CHRIST's own Life. But while the Saints are in the Body, there is much remaining Distance between CHRIST and them: There are Reminders of Alienation, and the vital Union is very imperfect; and so consequently, are the Communication of spiritual Life and vital Influences: There is much between CHRIST and Believers to keep them asunder, much indwelling Sin, much Temptation, an heavy-molded frail Body, and a World of carnal Objects, to keep off the Soul from CHRIST, and hinder a perfect Coalescence. But when the Soul leaves the Body, all these Clogs and Hindrances shall be removed, every Separating Wall shall be broken down, and every Impediment taken out of the Way, and all Distance shall cease; the Heart shall be wholly and perfectly drawn, and most firmly and forever attached and bound to him, by a perfect View of his Glory. And the vital Union shall then be brought to Perfection: The Soul shall live perfectly in and upon CHRIST, being perfectly fill'd with his Spirit, and animated by his vital Influences; living as it were only by CHRIST's Life, without any Remainder of spiritual Death, or carnal Life.

IV. Departed Souls of Saints are with CHRIST, as they enjoy a glorious and immediate Intercourse and Converse with him.

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While we are present with our Friends, we have Opportunity for that free and immediate Conversation with them, which we cannot have in Absence from them. And therefore, by Reason of the vastly more free, perfect and immediate Intercourse with CHRIST, which the Saints enjoy when absent from the Body, they are fitly represented as present with him.

The most intimate Intercourse becomes that Relation that the Saints stand in to JESUS CHRIST: and especially becomes that most perfect and glorious Union they shall be brought into with him in Heaven. They are not meerly CHRIST's Servants, but his Friends (*John xv. 15.*) His Brethren and Companions; (*Psal. cxxii. 8.*) yea they are the Spouse of CHRIST. They are espoused or betrothed to CHRIST while in the Body; but when they go to Heaven, they enter into the King's Palace, their Marriage with him is come, and the King brings them into his Chambers indeed. They then go to dwell with CHRIST constantly to enjoy the most perfect Conversation with him. CHRIST conversed in the most friendly Manner with his Disciples on Earth; he admitted one of them to lean on his Bosom: But they are admitted much more fully and freely to converse with him in Heaven. Though CHRIST be there in a State of glorious Exaltation, reigning in the Majesty and Glory of the Sovereign LORD and GOD of Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men; yet this will not hinder Intimacy and Freedom of Intercourse, but rather promote it. For he is thus exalted, not only for himself, but for them; he is instated in this Glory of Head over all Things for their Sakes, that they might be exalted and glorified, and when they go to Heaven where he is, they are exalted and glorified with him; and shall not be kept at a more awful Distance from CHRIST, but shall be admitted nearer, and to a greater Intimacy. For they shall be unspeakably more fit for it, and CHRIST in more fit Circumstances to bestow on them this Blessedness. Their seeing the great Glory of their Friend and Redeemer, will not awe them to a Distance, and make them afraid of a near Approach; but on the contrary, will most powerfully draw them near; and encourage and engage them to holy Freedom. For they will know that it is he that is their own Redeemer, and beloved Friend and Bridegroom; the very same that loved them with a dying Love, and redeemed them to GOD by his Blood; *Matt. xiv. 27. It is I; be not afraid. Rev. i. 17, 18. Fear not: ---- I am he that liveth, and was dead.* And the Nature of this Glory of CHRIST that they shall see, will be such as will

will draw and encourage them, for they will not only see infinite Majesty and Greatness; but infinite Grace, Condescension and Mildness, and Gentleness and Sweetness, equal to his Majesty. For he appears in Heaven, not only as *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, but as *the Lamb*, and *the Lamb in the midst of the Throne*; (Rev. v. 5, 6.) and this Lamb in the midst of the Throne shall be their Shepherd, to feed them, and lead them to living Fountains of Waters; Rev. vii. 17. so that the Sight of CHRIST's great kingly Majesty will be no Terror to them; but will only serve the more to heighten their Pleasure and Surprize. When *Mary* was about to embrace CHRIST, being full of Joy at the Sight of him again alive after his Crucifixion, CHRIST forbids her to do it, for the present; because he was not yet ascended; John xx. 16, 17. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned her self, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my Brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my GOD and your GOD.* As if he had said, "This is not the Time and Place for that Freedom, your Love to me desires: That is appointed in Heaven, after my Ascension. I am going thither: and you that are my true Disciples, shall, as my Brethren and Companions, soon be there with me in my Glory. And then there shall be no Restraint. That is the Place appointed for the most perfect Expressions of Complacence and Endearment, and full Enjoyment of mutual Love." And accordingly the Souls of departed Saints with CHRIST in Heaven, shall have CHRIST as it were unbosomed unto them, manifesting those infinite Riches of Love towards them, that have been there from Eternity: And they shall be enabled to express their Love to him, in an infinitely better Manner than ever they could while in the Body. Thus they shall eat and drink abundantly, and swim in the Ocean of Love, and be eternally swallowed up on the infinitely bright, and infinitely mild and sweet Beams of divine Love; eternally receiving that Light, eternally full of it, and eternally compassed round with it, and everlastingly reflecting it back again to the Fountain of it.

V. The Souls of the Saints, when they leave their Bodies at Death, go to be with CHRIST, as they are received to a glorious Fellowship with CHRIST in his Blessedness.

As the Wife is received to a joint Possession of her Husband's Estate, and as the Wife of a Prince partakes with him in his princely

princely Possessions and Honours; so the Church, the Spouse of CHRIST, when the Marriage comes, and she is received to dwell with him in Heaven, shall partake with him in his Glory. When CHRIST rose from the Dead, and took Possession of eternal Life; this was not as a private Person; but as the publick Head of all his redeemed People. He took Possession of it for them, as well as for himself; and they are quickned together with him, and raised up together. And so when he ascended into Heaven, and was exalted to great Glory there, this also was as a publick Person: He took Possession of Heaven not only for himself, but his People, as their Forerunner and Head, that they might ascend also, and sit together in heavenly Places with him; Eph. ii. 5, 6. CHRIST writes upon them his New Name, Rev. iii. 12. i. e. He makes them Partakers of his own Glory and Exaltation in Heaven. His new Name is that new Honour and Glory that the Father invested him with, when he set him on his own right Hand: As a Prince, when he advances any one to new Dignity in his Kingdom, gives him a new Title. CHRIST and his Saints shall be glorified together. Rom. viii. 17.

The Saints in Heaven have Communion, a or joint Participation with CHRIST in his Glory and Blessedness in Heaven, in the following Respects more especially.

1. They partake with him in the ineffable Delights he has in Heaven, in the Enjoyment of his Father.

When CHRIST ascended into Heaven, he was received to a glorious and peculiar Joy and Blessedness in the Enjoyment of his Father, who in his Passion hid his Face from him; such an Enjoyment as became the Relation he stood in to the Father, and such as was a meet Reward for the great and hard Service he had performed on Earth. Then GOD shewed him the Path of Life, and brought him into his Presence, where is Fulness of Joy, and to sit on his Right-Hand, where there are Pleasures for evermore, as is said of CHRIST, Psal. xvi. 11. Then the Father made him most blessed forever: He made him exceeding glad with his Countenance; as in Psal. xxi. 6. The Saints by Virtue of their Union with CHRIST, and being his Members, do in some Sort, partake of his Child-like Relation to the Father; and so are Heirs with him of his Happiness in the Enjoyment of his Father; as seems to be intimated by the Apostle in Gal. iv. 4--7. The Spouse of CHRIST, by Virtue of her Espousals to that only begotten SON of GOD, is as it were, a Partaker of his filial Relation to GOD, and becomes the
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King's Daughter ; Psal. xlv. 13. and so partakes with her divine Husband in his Enjoyment of his Father and her Father, his GOD and her GOD. A Promise of this seems to be implied in those Words of CHRIST to *Mary*, John xx. 17. Thus CHRIST's faithful Servants *enter into the Joy of their LORD* ; Matth. xxv. 21, 23. and *CHRIST's Joy remains in them* ; agreeable to those Words of CHRIST, John xv. 11. CHRIST from Eternity is as it were in the Bosom of the Father, as the Object of his infinite Complacence. In him is the Father's eternal Happiness. Before the World was, he was with the Father, in the Enjoyment of his infinite Love ; and had infinite Delight and Blessedness in that Enjoyment ; as he declares of himself in Prov. viii. 30. *Then I was by him, as one brought up with him ; and I was daily his Delight, rejoicing always before him.* And when CHRIST ascended to the Father after his Passion, he went to him, to the Enjoyment of the same Glory and Blessedness in the Enjoyment of his Love ; agreeable to his Prayer, the Evening before his Crucifixion, John xvii. 5. *And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the Glory I had with thee, before the World was.* And in the same Prayer, he manifests it to be his Will, that his true Disciples should be with him in the Enjoyment of that Joy and Glory, which he then asked for himself ; Ver. 13. *That my Joy might be fulfilled in themselves.* Ver. 22. *And the Glory which thou gavest me, have I given them.* This Glory and Joy of CHRIST, which the Saints are to enjoy with him, is that which he has in the Enjoyment of the Father's infinite Love to him ; as appears by the last Words of that Prayer of our LORD, Ver. 26. --- *That the Love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.* The Love which the Father has to his Son is great indeed ; the Deity does as it were wholly and entirely flow out in a Stream of Love to CHRIST ; and the Joy and Pleasure of CHRIST is proportionably great. This is the Stream of CHRIST's Delights, the River of his infinite Pleasure ; which he will make his Saints to drink of with him ; agreeable to Psal. xxxvi. 8, 9. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House : Thou shalt make them drink of the River of THY Pleasures : For with thee is the Fountain of Life : in THY Light shall we see Light.* The Saints shall have Pleasure, in partaking with CHRIST in his Pleasure, and shall see Light in his Light. They shall partake with CHRIST of the same River of Pleasure ; shall drink of the same Water of Life ; and of the same new Wine in Christ's Father's Kingdom ; Matt. xxvi. 29. *That new Wine*

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Wine is especially that Joy and Happiness that CHRIST and his true Disciples shall partake of together in Glory, which is the Purchase of CHRIST's Blood, or the Reward of his Obedience unto Death. CHRIST, at his Ascension into Heaven, received everlasting Pleasures at his Father's Right-Hand, and in the Enjoyment of his Father's Love, as the Reward of his own Death, or Obedience unto Death. But the same Righteousness is reckon'd to both Head and Members; and both shall have Fellowship in the same Reward, each according to their distinct Capacity.

That the Saints in Heaven have such a Communion with CHRIST in his Joy, and do so partake with him in his own Enjoyment of the Father, does greatly manifest the transcendent Excellency of their Happiness, and their being admitted to a vastly higher Privilege in Glory than the Angels.

2. The Saints in Heaven are received to a Fellowship, or Participation with CHRIST, in the Glory of that Dominion to which the Father hath exalted him.

The Saints, when they ascend to Heaven as CHRIST ascended, and are made to sit together with him in heavenly Places, and are Partakers of the Glory of his Exaltation, are exalted to *reign with him*. They are through him made Kings and Priests, and reign with him, and in him, over the same Kingdom. As the Father hath appointed unto him a Kingdom, so he has appointed to them. The Father has appointed the Son to reign over his own Kingdom, and the Son appoints his Saints to reign in his. The Father has given to CHRIST to *sit with him on his Throne*, and Christ gives to the Saints to *sit with him on his Throne*; agreeable to CHRIST's Promise Rev. iii. 21. CHRIST, as GOD's Son, is the Heir of his Kingdom; and the Saints are Joint-Heirs with CHRIST; which implies that they are Heirs of the same Inheritance, to possess the same Kingdom, in and with him, according to their Capacity. CHRIST in his Kingdom reigns over Heaven and Earth; he is appointed the Heir of all Things; and so *all Things are the Saints*; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the World, or Life, or Death, or Things present, or Things to come, all are theirs; because they are CHRIST's, and united to him; 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22, 23. The Angels are given to CHRIST, as a Part of his Dominion; they are all given to wait upon him, as ministring Spirits to him: so also they are all, even the highest and most dignified of them, ministring Spirits, to minister to them who are the

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Heirs of Salvation. They are CHRIST's Angels, and they are also *their Angels.* Such is the Saints Union with CHRIST, and their Interest in him, that what he possesses, they possess, in a much more perfect and blessed Manner, than if all Things were given to them separately and by themselves, to be disposed of according to their Discretion. They are now disposed of so, as in every Respect, to be most for their Blessedness, by an infinitely better Discretion than their own; and in being disposed of by their Head and Husband, between whom and them there is the most perfect Union of Hearts, and so the most perfect Union of Wills; and who are most perfectly each other's.

As the glorified Spouse of this great King reigns with and in him, in his Dominion over the Universe, so more especially does she partake with him, in the Joy and Glory of his Reign in his Kingdom of Grace; which is more peculiarly the Kingdom that he possesses as Head of the Church, and is that Kingdom wherein she is more especially interested. It was especially to reign in this Kingdom, that GOD the Father exalted him to his Throne in Heaven: He set his King on his holy Hill of Zion, especially that he might reign over Zion, or over his Church, in his Kingdom of Grace; and that he might be under the best Advantages to carry on the Designs of his Love, in this lower World. And therefore undoubtedly the Saints in Heaven are Partakers with CHRIST in the Joy and Glory of the Advancement and Prosperity of his Kingdom of Grace on Earth, and Success of his Gospel here, which he looks on as the peculiar Glory of his Reign. *The good Shepherd rejoices when he finds but one Sheep that was lost; and his Friends and Neighbours in Heaven rejoice with him on that Occasion.* That Part of the Family that is in Heaven, are surely not unacquainted with the Affairs of that Part of the same Family that is on Earth. They that are with the King, and are next to him, the Royal Family, that dwell in his Palace, are not kept in Ignorance of the Affairs of his Kingdom. The Saints in Heaven are with the Angels, the King's Ministers, by which he manages the Affairs of his Kingdom, and who are continually ascending and descending from Heaven to the Earth, and one or other of them daily employed as ministering Spirits to each individual Member of the Church below: Besides the continual ascending of the Souls of departed Saints, from all Parts of the militant Church. On these Accounts the Saints in Heaven must needs be under a Thousand Times greater Advantage

vantage than we here, for a full View of the State of the Church on Earth, and a speedy, direct and certain Acquaintance with all its Affairs, in every Part. And that which gives them much greater Advantage for such an Acquaintance, than the Things already mentioned, is their being constantly in the immediate Presence of CHRIST, and in the Enjoyment of the most perfect Intercourse with him, who is the King who manages all these Affairs, and has an absolutely perfect Knowledge of them. CHRIST is the Head of the whole glorified Assembly; they are mystically his glorified Body: and what the Head sees, it sees for the Information of the whole Body, according to its Capacity: and what the Head enjoys, is for the Joy of the whole Body. The Saints, in leaving this World, and ascending to Heaven, do not go out of Sight of Things appertaining to CHRIST's Kingdom on Earth; but on the contrary, they go out of a State of Obscurity, and ascend above the Mists and Clouds, into the clearest Light; to a Pinnacle, in the very Center of Light, where every Thing appears in clear View. They have as much greater Advantage to view the State of CHRIST's Kingdom, and the Works of the new Creation here, than while they were in this World, as a Man that ascends to the Top of an high Mountain, has greater Advantage to view the Face of the Earth, than he had while he was in a deep Valley, or thick Forest below, surrounded on every Side with those Things that impeded and limited his Sight. Nor do they view as indifferent or unconcerned Spectators, any more than CHRIST himself is an unconcerned Spectator. The Happiness of the Saints in Heaven consists very much in beholding the Glory of GOD appearing in the Work of Redemption: for 'tis by this chiefly that GOD manifests his Glory, the Glory of his Wisdom, Holiness, Grace and other Perfections, to both Saints and Angels; as is apparent by many Scriptures. And therefore undoubtedly their Happiness consists very much in beholding the Progress of this Work, in its Application and Success, and the Steps by which infinite Power and Wisdom brings it to its Consummation. And the Saints in Heaven are under unspeakably greater Advantage, to take the Pleasure of beholding the Progress of this Work on Earth, than we are that are here; as they are under greater Advantages to see and understand the marvellous Steps, that divine Wisdom takes in all that is done, and the glorious Ends he obtains, the Opposition Satan makes, and how he is baffled and overthrown: They can better see the Connection

of one Event with another, and the beautiful Order of all Things that come to pass in the Church in different Ages, that to us appear like Confusion. Nor do they only view these Things, and rejoyce in them, as a glorious and beautiful Sight, but as Persons interested, as CHRIST is interested; as possessing these Things in CHRIST, and reigning with him, in this Kingdom. CHRIST's Success in his Work of Redemption, in bringing home Souls to himself, applying his saving Benefits by his Spirit, and the Advancement of the Kingdom of Grace in the World, is the Reward especially promised to him by his Father in the Covenant of Redemption, for the hard and difficult Service he performed while in the Form of a Servant; as is manifest by *Isai. liii. 10, 11, 12*. But the Saints shall be rewarded with him: They shall partake with him in the Joy of this Reward; for this Obedience that is thus rewarded, is reckon'd to them, as they are his Members, as was before observed. This was especially the Joy that was set before CHRIST, for the sake of which he endured the Cross and despised the Shame. And his Joy is the Joy of all Heaven. They that are with him in Heaven are under much the greatest Advantages to partake with him in this Joy: For they have a perfect Communion with him, through whom, and in Fellowship with whom, they enjoy and possess their whole Inheritance, all their heavenly Happiness; as much as the whole Body has all it's Pleasure of Musick by the Ear, and all the Pleasure of its Food by the Mouth and Stomach; and all the Benefit and Refreshment of the Air by the Lungs. The Saints while on Earth pray and labour for the same Thing that CHRIST laboured for, *viz.* the Advancement of the Kingdom of GOD among Men, the promoting the Prosperity of Zion and flourishing of Religion in this World, and most of them have suffered for that End, as CHRIST did; have been made Partakers with their Head in his Sufferings, and filled up (as the Apostle expresses it) *that which is behind of the Sufferings of CHRIST*: And therefore they shall partake with him of the Glory and Joy of the End obtain'd; *Rom. viii. 17. We are Joint-Heirs with CHRIST; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 2 Tim. ii. 12. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.* CHRIST when his Sufferings were past, and he left the Earth, and ascended into Heaven, was so far from having done with his Kingdom in this World, that it was, as it were, but then begun: And he ascended for that very End, that he might more fully possess and enjoy this Kingdom, that he might reign in it,

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it, and be under the best Advantages for it; as much as a King ascends a Throne in Order to reign over his People, and receive the Honour and Glory of his Dominion. No more have the Saints done with CHRIST's Kingdom on Earth, when they leave the Earth, and ascend into Heaven. CHRIST came (i. e. ascended) with Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and was brought near before him, to the very End, that He might receive Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him, (Dan. vii. 13, 14.) Which shall be eminently fulfilled, after the Ruin of Antichrist; which is especially the Time of CHRIST's Kingdom. And the same is the Time when the Kingdom, and Dominion, and Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most high GOD. (As Ver. 27. in the same Chapter) It is because they shall reign in, and with CHRIST, the most High; as seems intimated in the Words that follow; whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions shall serve and obey him. This Verse is true not only of the Saints on Earth, but also the Saints in Heaven. Hence the Saints in Heaven, having respect to this Time, do sing, in Rev. v. 10. *We shall reign on the Earth.* And agreeable hereto 'tis afterwards represented that when the foremention'd Time comes, the Souls of them that in former Ages had suffered with CHRIST, do reign with CHRIST; having as it were given to them, new Life and Joy, in that spiritual blessed Resurrection, which shall then be of the Church of GOD on Earth, and thus it is that it is said, Mat. v. 5. *The Meek (those that meekly and patiently suffer with CHRIST, and for his Sake) shall inherit the Earth:* they shall inherit it, and reign on Earth with CHRIST. CHRIST is the Heir of the World; and when the appointed Time of his Kingdom comes, his Inheritance shall be given him, and then the meek, who are joint Heirs, shall inherit the Earth. The Place in the Old Testament, whence the Words are taken, leads to a true Interpretation of them; Psal. xxxvii. 11. *The Meek shall inherit the Earth, and shall delight themselves in the Abundance of Peace.* That there is Reference in these latter Words, *The Abundance of Peace*, to the Peace and Blessedness of the latter Days, we may be satisfied by comparing these Words with Psal. lxxii. 7. *In his Days shall be Abundance of Peace, so long as the Moon endureth.* And Jer. xxxiii. 6. *I will reveal to them the Abundance of Peace and Truth.* Also Isai. ii. 4. Mic. iv. 3. Isai. xi. 6 ---- 9. and many other parallel Places. The Saints in
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