

As the members are in the body, or the branches in the vine, or Christ in the Father,—so is the believer in God, “In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me and I in you.” To be in God—in Christ is just to realize by a gracious experience the fulfilment of the ancient promise, “I will walk in them and dwell in them”—making the bodies of the people the temple of the Holy Ghost!!

If our exposition of the first phrase “in the Lord,” be correct, the second—“dying in the Lord,” will be very easily understood and soon explained: To “die in the Lord” presupposes our walking by the same rule and minding the same thing, holding fast wherunto we have already attained, to be enduring hardship as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, to endure to the end—overcoming through the blood of the Lamb, the world, the flesh, and the devil. To die in the Lord is just to depart this life in the firm and unshaken belief of realizing the blessed provisions of the covenant of mercy exhibited in the promise of Jesus, “In my Father’s house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you, I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you”! To die in the Lord, is to die in submission to his will, cheerfully drinking the cup he has mingled; in the hope, (strong even in death,) that we shall be like him and see him as he is, and be ever with the Lord.

II. In what their blessedness consists.

“Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord.” We are not to suppose that they were never blessed till they died, *that* would be a tremendous argument against religion, as showing that whatever excellency it might possess, and whatever blessing have in reserve for the godly in the world to come; it is not exactly the thing for the *present* world; but it *has* the promise of the life that now is—a promise in every case fulfilled to a greater or less extent. God does not require the people to wait till they come to the heavenly country *ere* they are blessed, an *instalment* is graciously paid now! Godliness meets the sinners present necessities—it *finds* him guilty and takes away his sin, and gives him peace—peace in believing. It finds him under the *influence of fear*, but it takes away the spirit of a slave, and gives him that of a *son*; from the moment the soul is enabled by grace to repose its whole confidence in finished work of the Redeemer—all condemnation is gone and it is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, in the course of his journey, he often finds it good to draw near unto God—he drinks of the brook by the way—the Lord is his shepherd and leads him into green pastures and beside the still waters, his cup of spiritual comfort is often full to overflowing; goodness and mercy follow him, and compass him about. David’s experience may be considered a fair type of God’s dealings with his children, who find him continually with them, taking them by the right hand, guiding them with his counsel, that he may bring them to glory!

2. And as they are blessed in *living* so they are in *dying*. Look at David, walking through the valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil—and at Stephen, how calm, composed and happy! *happy?* how could he be otherwise, spending his last breath in prayers for his murderous assailants. and, beholding the blessed Redeemer at the right hand of God, waiting to receive his spirit: and Paul, *even in a prison*, in his last moments thought only of the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge would give him in *that day*!

It is a special part of the blessedness of those that die in the Lord, that they are saved from the uncertainty,—the awful uncertainty—the terrible dread of the future, in which many die, not knowing what is before them. Infidel men may speak of a leap in the dark, but light is sown for the