

chapter i. 9, where Paul, speaking of the marvellous discoveries which God has given in the Gospel relating to the plan of human redemption, says, "Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him." There is a similar passage in Colos. i. 19, where Paul says of Christ, "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace by the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things on earth or things in heaven."

Now, it is necessary to state here, that in various places of the New Testament the terms *earth* and *heaven* are used in a sense more or less limited. In the two comprehensive passages which have been quoted, they do not just signify this globe of ours, and the celestial abode of the blessed; but they signify the universe at large,—the whole of God's material creation distributed throughout space; and in very striking language they indicate the vast extent of the work effected by Christ the Lord, according to the benign pleasure of God the Father of all intelligent existences. They tell us that Christ's work, viewed in its full bearing, consists in gathering together in one all things in Christ,—all things in heaven and earth; that peace having been made by the blood of Christ's cross, by His penal death as a moral satisfaction for sin, God thus reconciles all things unto Himself, whether things in heaven or on earth.

Now, we know from Scripture revelation, that in regard to mankind sinners, God reconciles unto Himself those of them who from age to age believe in Christ, receiving through Him the atonement, or reconciliation, which he has made by becoming obedient unto death as the propitiation for their sins; and by Christ's procuring for them the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. But the passages cited above, and others like them, further teach us that the complete results of Christ's work of mediation will be a most happy harmonizing of God's rational creatures throughout the universe. Not, indeed, the realizing of the baseless dream of *universal salvation*, extending to all, both of the good and the bad who continue so, unchanged; but the forming into one immense family of brotherhood all on earth and in heaven, viz.: in the universe, who have become the willing subjects of Christ, the Son of God, as constituted Head over all things every where.

What is to be the particular nature of this widely extending and blissful union is not a question for us peremptorily to decide. Some have thought, that this gathering together in Christ, of all things, implies that there are rational inhabitants of other worlds besides ours who have fallen into sin, and under divine condemnation, and who shall experience the benefit of what Christ hath done, by the offering up of himself, for reconciling transgressors unto God, and