

acquisition of human merit, but the munificent donative of Divine mercy; that our final as well as present salvation, is not of works but of grace;—that, while death is the *wages* of sin, eternal life is the *gift* of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And this evangelical view of the matter is further illustrated and confirmed by the fact, that, as the kingdom of heaven is, in regard to man, not an original possession, but an inheritance; so that inheritance devolves to no human being by virtue of natural relationship or legal transmission; but purely by the gratuitous *promise* of God, who is in Christ reconciling an alienated world to himself. The Pauline argument in the third chapter of the epistle to the Galatians, on the topic of justification, is equally applicable and cogent here: “For if the inheritance be of the law it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. * * * The scripture hath included all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

It is as “heirs of promise,” then, and not as legal claimants, that believers are entitled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God; and, therefore, just in proportion as the Holy Spirit enables them thus to rejoice, are their hearts in unison with the sublime ascription—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

The transcendent grandeur of the inheritance of the saints in light, it is reserved for that day fully to disclose, when Christ shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. Not till then—shall these bodies of our humiliation, restored from the dishonors of the grave, be assimilated to the glorious body, in which our Redeemer now sits on His mediatorial throne. Not till then—shall the evolutions and accomplishments of the great redeeming plan reach the grand crisis of their consummation, and the acclaim of final triumph thunder through the temple of God. But, while this is freely admitted, far from our hearts be the thought that the blessed