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(1) "The hope of His calling." The calling consists in our election to sainthood, our predestination to sonship, our redemption through His blood, and our sealing with the Spirit of promise. Now what is the hope of this calling? We speak of hope as of some uncertain thing which we desire. We often hear one say, "I hope I'm a Christian : I hope my sins are forgiven, and I hope I shall go to heaven when I die." But this is not the hope of His calling. The hope of the Gospel is not an uncertain thing. The word is never used in that sense in the Scriptures. It always refers to a certain, definite object, which is to be realized in the future, and which is to be the consummation of our desire and expectation. It is the fulfilment of the promise. It is as sure as anything in the past or present. It is simply future. "Hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it," (Rom. 8 : 24-25).

This hope is the end and purpose for which we were called ; it is the consummation of the eternal purpose of God, as set forth in the previous section. It is, therefore, the dispensation of the fulness of times, when all things in heaven and earth are headed up in Christ, we shall enter upon our inheritance, and share with Him in His throne and His glory. This they had already been promised should be their portion, but his heart goes out in earnest prayer for them, that their hearts might be opened to receive it in and realize it as a certain thing. Beloved, we know these things ; but if they took hold upon our hearts as living realities, what kind of people should we be? How would they transform our lives, and make us app