

raised or changed into His likeness, when our poor earthly body shall have been fashioned like His glorious body. (Phil. iii. 21.) God hath wrought us now, already, for this self-same thing, and given to us the earnest of the Spirit. (2 Cor. v. 5.) To be with the Lord and like the Lord forever is our everlasting joy, and that the fruit of God's love, who has made us His children, and will bring us into the mansions prepared in our Father's house.

Two things belong to us: first to be like and with Christ Himself; and secondly, to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him. Redemption has made this ours; but we are not in possession. We have only the earnest of the Spirit, though God hath wrought us for that self-same thing. The first point, being like Christ, we have already spoken of, though what has been cited there introduces us with scriptural authority to the second, "So shall we ever be with the Lord." But I add here other proofs of the second point, namely, that our portion is in heavenly places. It is distinctive of believers who have believed and suffered with Him. God, we are told, will gather together in one, under Christ, all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth. (Eph. i. 10.) So we read, all things were created by Christ and for Christ (Col. i. 16, 20) all things will be put under His feet as man. Heb. ii.; 1 Cor. xv. 57, 28; Eph. i. 22. But we read in Heb. ii. that all things are not yet put under Him. He sits now on the Father's throne, not on His own. (Rev. iii. 21.) God has said, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool." He is (Heb. x.) expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. The time will come when not only all things in heaven and earth will be reconciled (Col. i. 20), but even things under the earth, infernal things, will be forced to recognize His power and authority. Every knee shall bow to Him, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ, the despised and rejected of men, is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 10, 11.) For this we must wait.

But in this gathering of all things in heaven and earth under one head—Christ, our part is in heavenly places; and as it is our portion now in spirit, so it will be our part in glory. Nor is there any real separation between

these two. Of course we are not in glory now,—there is no need to insist on that; but that is our calling now, that which we are redeemed to and wrought for and wait for. Now we have the treasure in earthly vessels, and groan, being burdened. When we are out of the body, groaning, is over, and we are with Christ in joy; when He comes, we shall have a body suited to that heavenly place,—we shall be in glory. Thus, in Eph. i. 3, "He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." In 2 Cor. v. 1, We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." In Phil. iii. 20, "Our conversation (citizenship—our relationship in life as Christians) is in heaven;" and in the same chapter (v. 14), where you have "high calling," the true force of the word is, "calling above," as may be seen in a Bible with a margin. We are called to be up above there. So in Heb. vi. 19, 20, we read that Christ is entered within the veil,—that is heaven itself ix. 24, and as our forerunner. So, Heb. iii., we are partakers of the heavenly calling. As united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, we are sitting in heavenly places in Christ—not with Him yet, but in Him,—that is our place. So when the Lord comes, He gathers indeed, as Son of Man, out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity. But the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Hence Moses and Elias, not only are manifested in glory on earth, to show the state of the saints in the kingdom, but they enter into the cloud, God's dwelling-place, whence the Father's voice came.

It is thus clear that, as God will gather together in one all things both which are in heaven and on the earth, our part is, to be like Christ in glory, and with Him forever, and that in heaven itself, blessed with all spiritual blessings (as Israel with temporal ones), and in heavenly places (as they in earthly). If we are joint-heirs with Him Rom. viii. 17, we have what is yet better—to dwell in the Father's house, where He is gone. Hence it is clearly and distinctly expressed Col. i. 5, that our hope is laid up for us in heaven, and Peter tells us 1 Pet. i. 4 that an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled,