

demption, Christ stands in a similar relation to His people as the head in the human body to its inferior limbs and members. In other words, Christ and His people are so identified in the eye of the Divine government, that His merits are accounted theirs, and their prospects bound up with His. Before coming to Christ, men abide in the state of guilt and misery bequeathed to them by their original progenitor. But whenever they come to Christ, they are dis severed from the first Adam, and brought into vital union with the second Adam. From that moment, all that Christ did and suffered to propitiate an offended God, is placed to their account, even as if they had been confederate with Him in the doing and the suffering. From that moment the peace of God and the hope of glory, which he earned by His obedience unto death, became theirs. The Holy Spirit which was poured upon Him without measure, is shed down upon them to an extent commensurate with their necessities. In short, becoming, as it were, a part of Christ, they fall to be dealt with, as if, instead of having incurred the Divine wrath by their apostasy, they had with Christ fulfilled all righteousness, and earned a title to everlasting glory. And how exalted such a privilege! That men, who are but sinful dust and ashes, should not only be brought out of the kingdom of darkness into a society of which Christ is the Head, but should be united to Christ—identified with Christ—invested with His merits—endowed with the same Holy Spirit—encouraged to anticipate the same celestial reward; what words can express, what numbers reach, the height of such an honor! Yet this honor have all saints.

The second privilege is—*Association with the whole body of the faithful.*

Union with the Head necessarily ensures union with all the members; and the honor of connection with them is only second to the honor of connection with Him. To be associated with any body of spiritual men, however small, so as to enjoy their sympathy and co-operation, is no mean benefit. But the privilege of Christian believers is far more extensive, and far more exalted. The Church of Christ is not limited to any single congregation, or to any one communion. It includes the faithful of every sect; it includes the excellent of the earth of every country; nay, it reaches to the world unseen, and comprehends all departed saints, from righteous Abel down to the last redeemed soul just gone to glory. Believers "are come," not only "to the general assembly of the first-born which are written in heaven," but also "to the spirits of just men made perfect." It is an error to separate the Church militant and the Church triumphant, as if they were two unconnected communities. They are not unconnected; they are not two,—they are one. Christ's holy and beautiful house comprises under its spacious roof, alike the outer court of this

earth, and the holy of holies within the temple. The rainbow of the covenant embraces with its glorious span both sides of the river of death. And all of us here, therefore, we are united to Christ, are really in fellowship and brotherhood with even yon bright throng of redeemed spirits on high. True, our present condition is in many points inferior to theirs; true, we are a little flock, they an immense multitude; we are in the wilderness, they in the land of promise; we are struggling in the battle, they celebrating the victory. Yet, despite these diversities, we are one with them still; part and parcel of the same redeemed company; members of the same mystical body; heirs of the same bright inheritance.

"One Brotherhood, we dwell in Him.  
One Church above, beneath;  
Though now divided by the stream—  
The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,  
To His commands we bow;  
Part of the host have crossed the flood,  
And part are crossing now."

And is not this, too, an ennobling privilege? The Roman sage deemed it much to be able to say, "We depart to join the divine assembly of exalted spirits." But, as Christian believers, our communion with the glorified dead is not a thing merely in reversion. It is a present immunity. We are already "come" to them. We are already on the same sacred mount, though farther than they from its resplendent summit. We are already within the same holy temple, though divided from them by a temporary veil. Nay, that veil is itself waxing thinner and thinner every day, insomuch that the celestial radiance which encircles them is already beginning to shine through to us. Yet a little longer, and that veil shall altogether melt away, and we shall be with them around the throne!

There is yet a third kindred privilege,—*the right to the heavenly inheritance.*

Union with Christ ensures, not only present fellowship with the redeemed, but eventual participation in their reward. In purchasing heaven by His obedience unto death, Christ acquired its felicities, not for himself alone, but for every member of His mystical body; and not more certain is it that Himself, the Divine Head and Forerunner, has already entered into glory, than it is that all His members shall eventually follow Him thither. The believer is thus a citizen of heaven, even while he dwells on earth. His abode here may be a squalid hovel; but he is an heir of glory. A heavenly crown has been purchased for him, and is preparing for him, and will ere long encircle his brow. The ancient Hebrew could boast, under whatever sky he sojourned, that he was a freeman of Jerusalem, the city of God. The Christian believer has a holier city and a nobler home to boast of. He is a freeman of the Jerusalem above. He possesses in the present blessing