

Christian's Inheritance

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THE
CHRISTIAN'S INHERITANCE.

BY REV. IRA TRACY,
MISSIONARY TO CHINA.

All things are yours. 1 Cor. 3:21.

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THE
CHRISTIAN'S INHERITANCE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHRISTIAN IS HEIR TO A GREAT ESTATE.

If a Christian could have this world all set off to him as his share of the estate to which he is an heir, and have all it contains and all it produces minister to his pleasure, and all its inhabitants to be his servants and do his bidding, and have it all for ever, he would be unwise to accept it. God has prepared for him a better inheritance than all this would be.

The Christian is *a child of God*. This you know to be a doctrine of the Bible. It is plainly and repeatedly taught. For example: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are

the sons of God." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:14, 16. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." "Thou art no more a servant, but a son." Gal. 3:26; 4:7.

Being a child of God, he is also an heir. This, too, is clearly and fully stated in the Bible; as in Rom. 8:17: "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." "If a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Gal. 4:7.

Now where there is an heir, there must be an estate for him to inherit—something that he is heir to. God having made the Christian his child and heir, he is of course an heir to the estate of God. That is his inheritance.

And what is the estate of God? THE WHOLE UNIVERSE—nothing less. God made it all. It is all his property, his estate. And the Christian being his heir, is heir to this estate.

Is there any defect in this proof; any uncertainty about it? No; God is witness; and his testimony is plain and positive. He says to the Christian, "All things are yours;" and his word is true and faithful.

CHAPTER II.

HE WILL INHERIT THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE.

Go forth, in thought, and survey it. See its vast extent; observe its beauties; consider its value. Begin where you are. Notice,

1. *The earth.* It is a little thing, compared with the whole estate; but the value of even this is not small. It has mines rich in silver and gold and diamonds; it has fields innumerable of fertile soil, that may be made like Eden for beauty, loveliness, and utility; and it has gardens and orchards, cottages, mansions, and palaces, and other improvements, of countless worth. These all belong to God by highest right, and are a part of the estate which the Christian is to inherit. They will be his to enjoy with highest pleasure and use for his greatest advantage. If the prospect of having a little spot of it, and a few of its treasures, now cheers his spirit, how will he rejoice when he shall feel that it is all his own?

2. *The other planets of the solar system.* Several of them are much larger than the earth.

Saturn is a thousand times as large, and Jupiter about thirteen hundred times. We cannot see them distinctly enough to ascertain precisely what they are, or what they contain; but it seems reasonable to suppose that they are greatly superior in value to the earth. They certainly are in size; and why is it not probable that they are in other respects?

3. *The sun.* See that glorious orb, a million and four hundred times as large as the earth; bright as well as great; sending forth its beams to enlighten every planet of our system, and reach the distant stars.

Our earth is dark as well as small; dependent on the sun for light to make its days and cheer its nights; so small and dark that we could not see it, if we stood on even the nearest of the stars. But the sun shines brilliant and conspicuous among the starry host. It is the head, the crown, the radiant glory of the solar system; marching on in his majestic greatness, independent of the worlds around him; while the earth and all the planets are but his attendants, dependent, under God, on him for their stations, their light, their heat, and their continued being.

It seems therefore reasonable to believe, that

when we shall come to see the whole estate, and be divested of the belittling selfishness that now so miserably perverts our views, the sun will appear to us, and that it now does to the inhabitants of heaven, better than thousands and tens of thousands of such worlds as this.

4. *The stars, those other suns belonging to the same cluster with our sun.* With our unassisted eye we can see but few of them, but if we aid our sight by the telescope, we may see millions and tens of millions.

Among these millions of glorious orbs, we have our place. We stand in the midst of them, and our eyes look upon them. By the same faculty of sight by which we know of things around us on earth, we know of *their* existence. By the selfsame laws of vision by which we daily judge of the size of objects about us here, we may learn the size of some of them, and determine their distance from us. The nearest of them is two hundred thousand times as distant as the sun ; so far from us, that if you were to travel thirty miles an hour, and stop neither day nor night, it would take you more than twelve thousand times as long as it is since Adam lived to reach it.

These millions and tens of millions of stars

all belong to God. As the earth is his, "for he made it," so are the stars his, "for he made the stars also;" and they are a part of the estate to which the Christian is an heir.

Go forth now and look at it. Go northward. Fly with swiftest railroad speed for thousands and millions of years, and you are still among these glorious worlds. Suns, bright and beautiful, shine all around you; some of them larger by far than that which gives us light.

Retrace your way, and go forth southward equally far, and they shine around you there also. Return again, and go forth eastward or westward, upward or downward, or in any other of the ten thousand directions you might take, and you are still in the midst of them. They shine on every side—shine in their glory, varied in their beauty and usefulness by the skill and goodness of the infinite Creator.

Each one of all this host is worthy to be rejoiced in "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Yes, I have sometimes thought, as I looked upon the evening sky, that could I rise up to view these material heavens as they really are, it would fill my soul with unutterable delight; and that I should never, never weary of gazing, and admiring with ecstatic joy, the truly

glorious scene. But we have not yet seen the whole estate. Let us look again, and see,

5. *The stars of other clusters.* Astronomers observed, long ago, spots in the heavens, where there was some kind of matter. They knew not what it was; and some of them, supposing it to be material for the formation of new worlds, called it "world dust." But when they were viewed with more powerful telescopes, they were seen to be composed of distinct stars; and thus it was ascertained that there are other clusters of stars besides this one to which our sun and all the stars visible to the naked eye, and all the vast numbers that compose the milky-way, belong. More than four thousand such clusters have been seen already. How large they are, how many stars each contains, and how large stars, we do not know; but it would be unreasonable to suppose them all inferior to our cluster; as unreasonable as it would be for a farmer living in sight of twenty farms, to think that his own must be the largest and best, merely because it is nearer and he can see its excellences more clearly.

Those thousands of clusters of stars all belong to the estate of God, and the Christian's inheritance. In each star of every cluster he

has cause for joy. Each is a bright world, and we have reason to suppose it worth far more than all that earth contains: it is his; and he may well rejoice over it as a portion of that glorious estate, from every part of which there will flow in upon his soul streams of purest and sweetest pleasure.

Thus far we can proceed in looking at the inheritance of the child of God. We see the planets; we behold the sun; we look upon many stars. We know of them by the same faculty by which we most easily know of things near us, we *see* them. Taking in our hand the telescope to aid this faculty, we may see millions of other stars belonging to this cluster; and perceive, far in the distance, thousands of other clusters. Thus we actually look upon worlds on worlds, till the number rises to thousands, all belonging to the great estate; and aided by the telescope, we can look upon millions on millions of them; and can discern far distant clusters of sunny worlds, till we have counted thousands of such clusters, each containing, probably, its millions of stars.

Here we must stop. Our sight can penetrate no farther. What lies beyond the circle of our thus aided vision, we cannot tell. And surely

we need not be anxious to know. We can *see*, we can actually look upon glorious worlds by millions on millions, and tens of millions on tens of millions; each of them brighter, and we have reason to believe, more glorious, and better for our eternal enjoyment than ten thousand such worlds as this: and if we are Christians, ALL THESE WORLDS ARE OURS.

What an inheritance is this! Well might the apostle say, "the riches of the glory," when he spoke of it. It is indeed rich in glory: thousands on thousands of glorious worlds, and millions on millions even, shining with brightness too great for our feeble eyes to look upon, save at the distance of millions of miles; all so filled with glory by Him whose infinite wisdom and power has doubtless made them as pleasant and useful to enjoy, as they are bright and glorious to behold.

Turn, now, and look on the earth. How small does it appear. If, on your heavenward journey which we have supposed, you were to look back to see it, it would rapidly dwindle, and soon become a mere speck in the distance: then it would vanish from your sight, and become *nothing* to you.

And how small, how exceedingly small are

the greatest possessions that any man can hope to obtain here. Take the largest map of the world that you can find, and put down your finger where your state is. The point of your finger will probably cover it all. The head of a pin will cover the township in which you dwell. Suppose that you owned a farm of six hundred and forty acres—a mile square; it would be but the thirty-sixth part of a pin-head's size on such a map. And shall *man*, immortal man, made in the image of God, capable of weighing the planets and measuring the stars by his intellect, and of embracing the universe in his affections, and rejoicing in all that Jehovah has made—shall man, invited as he is to look up and be an heir of God, and have the heavens for his own, bind down his soul to some tiny spot on this little earth? “The thirty-sixth part of a pin-head's size” is no extravagant representation of the littleness of any estate you can hope to possess on earth, compared with the inheritance which God offers to give to each of us, and invites us to enjoy. Indeed, it reaches not the literal truth. Ah, how low has he fallen, that thus binds down his soul! How has he degraded and belittled himself! How unworthily of the nature that

God has given him, and the station he is called to occupy, is he acting.

But even this glorious universe of worlds displays not to us the full brightness and loveliness of the Christian's material inheritance. God our Father has the care of it, and will doubtless make it more and more excellent and glorious. It is not to be supposed that he will suffer it to decline from the excellence to which he has raised it, or stop his improvements of it at the point which they have now reached, or at any which they will soon reach. God will be carrying on his work towards perfection, as a means of enjoyment to his children. They will be witnesses of his wonderful doings for them, and be filled with rejoicing in view of the love he thereby displays, and the new excellences that will appear in their inheritance. Thus new fountains of rejoicing will be opening around them, and make their heavenly bliss to rise ever higher and higher. God's creative and governmental skill are not yet exhausted, nor will they ever be. They will continue to be exercised, to increase the glory of his universe, and raise to higher ecstasy the happiness of them that love him.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE CHRISTIAN WILL POSSESS AND
ENJOY HIS INHERITANCE.

PERHAPS the reader has been asking, "How can this inheritance be properly said to be mine? God is the Maker, and continues to be the owner of it all; and there are many others to inherit with me: how then can it all belong to me?"

Here, among selfish beings, one must generally be the exclusive owner of property, if he would have the full enjoyment of it, and use it to the best advantage. But to such use and enjoyment, exclusive ownership is not essential. The man who employs a tenant or a steward, still owns and enjoys the estate. In a good family, each member is made more happy by the happiness of the other members. The home is made worth the more to each by the fact that the rest enjoy it with him. The husband's enjoyment of the estate is increased by the wife's having it with him. It is not worth the less to him, but the more, because it is hers as well as his. Her possession of it makes it more per-

fectly his. So with each brother and sister in the family. For the love they bear each other, each rejoices in the estate more than he would if he alone were owner of it.

Thus is it in the family of God above. There love reigns; and each member is made richer and happier by the riches and happiness of the rest. When the Christian leaves this world and enters upon his heavenly inheritance, he becomes a member of that family more perfectly than he is now. He is freed from the pitiful selfishness which is here so apt to degrade and vex him, and filled with the benevolence of heaven—"filled with all the fulness of God." Then he can rejoice in the joy of all the members of that great and happy family, and feel that their interests are identical with his own. When we come to that home of the saints, we shall so delight in the happiness of others, that we shall enjoy their advantages and pleasures as we shall our own. Our happiness will be increased by seeing them happy. The great estate will become more precious to us by their enjoying it with us. It will be more perfectly ours by being theirs also. God will have the superintendence of it. It will be so used as to promote the objects in which the Christian

chiefly delights, and in the advancement of which will consist his highest good, the happiness and improvement of himself and other immortal beings, and the glory of his Creator and Redeemer.

All there is in the heavens above and the earth beneath will be his, to be used for the improvement of his character and the advancement of his happiness. This is what the Bible teaches. God says to Christians, "All things are yours: whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas; or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;" that is, the best of men and the worst; the affairs of this life, and of that which is to come; the events that are past, and those that are future; all shall be yours, to promote your interests and increase your happiness.

When we shall look upon this world and the things in it with the vastly increased knowledge we shall have in our future state, and with the Spirit of heaven reigning in us, we shall enjoy it more highly than we could now, if it were all our own exclusively. With each planet of our solar system, with the sun, with the stars of this cluster, and with those of other clusters, we shall doubtless become far better

acquainted than we are with this world now ; and we may find in each of them all, sources of higher pleasure and greater benefit to us than the richest that earth affords, save those which spring from the love of God in Christ here peculiarly manifested.

All *events* will be the Christian's. They are among the "all things" that "shall work together for good to them that love God." •His Father rules the universe in perfect wisdom, and for the highest good. Whether a nation or a sparrow fall, he knows that the event took place under his Father's eye, and is to be the means of good.

To him who is in harmony with God, all things belong. All minister to his present or his future good. When he shall be released from his present state of discipline, and go to his mansion in heaven, he will be prepared to enjoy with exquisite delight, and use to the best advantage, the inheritance that God will give him. It will be all his, for the sweetest enjoyment of it, and to derive from it the most important and lasting benefits ; all his to improve his character, advance his education, and increase his spiritual wealth and happiness for ever.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHRISTIAN WILL INHERIT THE SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE.

THE material universe, including its millions of brilliant suns and smaller worlds innumerable, great and glorious though it be, is but the *inferior* part of the Christian's inheritance; as much inferior to that which we have yet to consider, as the body is inferior to the soul.

If we begin with the lowest of spiritual beings, and proceed to the highest, we shall find that they all are to be his.

1. *The devil and his angels.* They were made the unwilling means of glorifying Christ, accomplishing his objects, and promoting his interests, when he dwelt visibly among men; and alike against their will, they are made useful to the Christian. Their temptations are made the means of strengthening him to resist the evil, and cleave to the good, while passing through the scenes of his trial here; and they will cause heaven to be the sweeter to him when he reaches it. Their doom warns him against walking in their steps, and so is a means of

preserving him from apostasy and ruin ; and they are “ set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire,” doubtless not for the benefit of men in this life only, but also for the benefit of Christians in the life to come. They are among the “ all things ” that “ work together for good to them that love God.”

2. *Wicked men.* They are useful to the Christian in ways similar to those in which wicked spirits are. They are means of exciting him to prayer, and thus drawing him nearer to God ; and of cherishing in him the benevolent spirit of Christ. Thousands have been raised into a higher sympathy with their Redeemer, and made more like him, by the calls for the gospel that come to us from the heathen world ; and other thousands, by the need of efforts for the salvation of their neighbors and countrymen at home. When the spirit of benevolence is cherished in us, our highest interests are promoted. There is no more precious possession than this. Even God possesses nothing better. His benevolence is his essential attribute. “ God is love.” By being the means of promoting the benevolence of the Christian, wicked men are useful to him in this life. And in the life to come, doubtless the dealings of God with them will be such as

to make them the means of promoting his interests for ever. They, like the fallen angels, are among the "all things" of which it is said to the Christian that they are his.

3. *Good men.* They are his now—his friends, his brethren. He accounts them precious. Not few nor small are the benefits that flow from Christian friendships here. When they that love our Saviour unite in prayer and praise, and conversation on the love of Christ, the bliss of heaven, and other high themes that religion brings before us, they many times enjoy a happiness better than the richest of earthly possessions could give, and obtain benefits to their souls that will endure for ever; and the revenue of joy and improvement, which still more affectionate friendship and brotherhood with them in heaven will afford, will flow in to the Christian there for ever. There is truth in the saying, "Who gains a friend, doubles his joys." The joys of his friend are also his. He rejoices in his friend's happiness and prosperity, as well as in his own. It will be eminently so in that better world where the friendships are between sinless ones, continue uninterrupted and without alloy, and are ever increased by mutual benefits. There the happiness of every

Christian will be promoted, and his interests advanced by his connection with those who were once good men here.

4. *The inhabitants of other worlds.* It can hardly be supposed that our little earth is the only world inhabited by rational and moral beings. Can we believe that all those millions of suns, many of them vastly larger than our own, were made for the sake of this little world; made merely to twinkle in our evening sky? Most of them do not even do that. The unassisted eye of man never sees them; and shall we suppose that God made them for people to whom he gave no natural power to see them? There is nothing improbable in the supposition, that they are inhabited by myriads of happy beings who rejoice in God their Father, as do good men here. If so, their Father is our Father. They are our brethren. Yes, the Christian may look up, and say of every star he sees, "Doubtless I have *brothers* there." He may rejoice in them now; and as the years of eternity roll on, he may become acquainted with many of them, and feel that millions of happy and noble ones in those worlds are his beloved friends. They will be his to multiply his enjoyments; he will rejoice in their happi-

ness, and gain instruction from them respecting God and his works.

One worthy friend is a possession of priceless value; a source of higher pleasure and greater improvement than bushels of gold or diamonds would be. What, then, will be the value of this part of the Christian's inheritance, when he comes to number among his friends the inhabitants of those countless worlds?

5. *The angels.* Even now they are said to be his. "*Their* angels," said our Saviour, "do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Angels are friends to the Christian, and his helpers in times of need, being "sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation." As children of God, they are his *brothers*. He may rejoice in the relationship now, and reap some benefits from it; but in heaven they will be his in more endearing friendship, more happy communion, and to his greater benefit.

Behold him there; the beloved and loving friend, companion, brother, of ten thousand, and ten thousand times ten thousand saints and angels. He moves among them a happy spirit, blessed and a blessing. All the happy ones around smile upon him with sweet affec-

tion. Abraham and Moses, David and Isaiah, Paul and John, martyrs and missionaries, angels and the archangel—all the hosts of heaven are his associates now. They rejoice in his joy, and he in theirs. They tell him of the things of the kingdom of heaven. They bid him look forth from his new station and with his new powers, among the works of God, and see new wonders of beauty, grandeur, and goodness displayed in them. They teach him the history of one and another and another of the starry worlds, or clusters of worlds, and reveal thus more fully to his admiring soul the excellence and loveliness of Jehovah. They narrate to him the story of their own ever happy lives, or dwell on the wonders of mercy and grace exhibited in their salvation—in their conversion, and guidance and help to pursue the path to heaven, and in the deliverances and refreshments given to encourage and cheer them on the way. As he listens and learns, his soul is knit to theirs in warm affection, and his admiration and love of God are increased. Enraptured, filled to overflowing with joy and gratitude to his God and their God, he bursts forth in new and more fervent ascriptions of praise “to God and the Lamb,” and calls on all the

rapt souls around him to join their voices with his to magnify and bless the Lord ; and they gladly join, and offer songs of noble praise worthy of heaven.

Nor is he learning of them merely, and thus receiving from them heavenly good. He is teaching too, and giving good. He verifies in heaven, as he did on earth, his Master's saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The happy ones around him are his to be taught by him, as well as to teach him ; for they are not omniscient, and may learn from us that are of earth, new facts respecting the works and ways of God. He tells to the pure and noble spirits there, the saints and angels, the story of his Christian life—the wonders of divine goodness shown in saving him, and bringing him on in all the way to heaven. He knows now, more perfectly than he did on earth, how often his God and Saviour guarded him from dangers that beset his soul, and gave him victory over temptations to sin, and fed him with the bread of life ; and his soul, kindling with grateful and admiring joy as he proceeds, swells with new rapture at the view he obtains of the grace of his Redeemer. Anew he bursts forth in adoration and thanksgiving, and calls on every

saint and angel, on every principality and power in heaven, to rejoice with him and help him praise the Lord. And they do it. They are all *his*—his for this his soul's chief delight, to praise and glorify God.

Nor is he narrowly limited in his sphere of observation, action, and enjoyment. The starry worlds, but dimly seen, or not seen at all by men on earth, are shining in full glory around him. He sees them, in a good degree, as they are. From every star that shines, and every orb that rolls, there flow in upon his soul streams of sweet enjoyment. By the wisdom of God seen in them and his government of them, he gains new knowledge of his God and Saviour. And there seems to be reason to believe that he will go forth, from time to time, on errands of blessing among those worlds. Angels are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation;" the Christian in heaven will be "like the angels," and it seems probable that he will go forth likewise to do good. Perhaps he will tell to the inhabitants of other worlds "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and so kindle to higher rapture their joy in his God and their God, and raise to nobler strains their songs of praise.

Thus, for getting and for giving good, the whole created universe, material and spiritual, will belong to the Christian.

And when will he have told to all the inhabitants of every world that is or shall be, all that he has experienced, or will in future experience, of the grace of God in his life of trial here, and his life of glory there? When will he have no more good to communicate thus? And when will he have learned all there is to be learned of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God displayed in all the worlds that he has made, or will make, and in his government of them? May he not study them with new profit from day to day for ever? Will they not be his, as his books are the student's, to study eternally? Yes; they will be his for ever. His possession of them will be a lasting, *ever lasting* possession.

Finally, *God will be his*. He is, even now, his Father, his Saviour, his Comforter, his dearest Friend. He loves to converse with him. He thinks of him, speaks to him, listens to him, and communes with him. He is his to teach him, guide him, guard him, help him, comfort him, save him, and crown him with blessings rich as heaven can give, and lasting as eternity.

“The Lord is my portion,” the Christian may

say. And what treasures of wealth are here! He is "all in all." He will supply all the Christian's need.

Will you there desire knowledge? God will give it. He will be your teacher. He will open to you the books of creation and providence, and instruct you out of them. He will show you their meaning; and by means of his past, present, and future works, cause you to "understand knowledge." He who "is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all," will teach you as never man taught; and your treasures of knowledge will rapidly increase. You will no longer "see as in a glass, darkly." You will feel that you have a teacher of priceless worth.

Would you have safety? He will be your keeper. He will so keep you that you shall never fall, nor have one fear of falling. The strength of the Almighty shall be yours to guard you from evil; and "nothing shall by any means harm you."

Would you have honor? God will give it; and give "according to the riches of his grace." He will introduce you into the best society. He will associate you with princes, kings, and angels. He will crown you with "glory, and

honor, and immortality." He will call you to sit with Christ on his throne, and "reign with him."

Would you have the joys of friendship? He who is "the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely," will be your Friend. He will be yours, and you will be his, in sweetest affection, that shall endure for ever. No change in him shall make him less affectionate towards you; and with all the loveliness of his character, and all his loving-kindness, he will so charm you and draw you to himself, that you will never turn away from him.

As you shall view him your Friend, arrayed in the full glories of his nature, infinite in his knowledge, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth, and especially in his benevolence, his love; and as you shall see him exalted "head over all," and smiling divinely on you as his beloved friend; with what raptures of delight, with what fulness of joy, will you rejoice in this crowning excellence of your inheritance. As you shall gaze upon his face, and bask in the sweet shining of his loving and lovely smiles, how infinitely precious will seem this friendship; how infinitely rich this "portion of your soul."

Ah, how low are my poor thoughts of those infinite riches ; and how inadequate to describe them the words that mortals use. As the apostle calls the glory of the inheritance "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," so we may say that in God the Christian will have "a far more exceeding and eternal weight" of wealth.

Who would sell a real friend, even an imperfect earthly one, for gold? What then shall we say of the value of this crowning glory of the Christian's inheritance? To have GOD for ours—the infinite One who speaks the word, and worlds are made ; whose glory- ten thousand times ten thousand suns, all shining in their radiant brightness, but faintly show ; whose goodness all that is admirable and useful and lovely in all the millions of worlds that he has made, but feebly begins to reveal ; whose tender mercy and loving-kindness and affectionate sympathy the blood shed in agony more than mortal on the cross declares : is this any thing less than to have INFINITE RICHES? The whole universe besides were nothing to it. This is worth more than all things else. "One smile from God outweighs them all."

CHAPTER V.

HE WILL INHERIT ALL THE PRIVILEGES OF
THE FAMILY OF GOD.

THE possession of these privileges is implied in his having God for his friend and father, but they are so great and precious that it is well to consider them separately and more fully. The following are some of these privileges.

1. *Freedom from evil.* When the Christian shall have come to the full possession of his inheritance, *sin* will no more trouble him. He will feel no reluctance to duty. He will not then have to mourn over his carelessness and neglect to obey and honor his God and Saviour. He will no longer be inclined to act contrary to the laws of God ; he will have no transgressions of them to regret and weep for. No sense of ingratitude and coldness towards his Redeemer will grieve him. He will not have to strive against the waywardness of a wicked heart. No discontent with any of the works or ways of God will disturb the peace of his soul. Wicked thoughts and feelings will no longer torment him, and he will have no wrongs done

to God, his fellow-creatures, or his own soul, to lament.

Temptations will not worry him then. The great tempter and his helpers cannot reach him, to trouble him more with their assaults. A wicked world will no longer allure him from the path of duty, and persuade him to conform to its wrong spirit and practices. No rising of unhallowed passions in his own bosom will afflict him. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" will never more pollute his secret feelings, nor prompt him to wrong words or conduct. From all such trials he will be at peace, and free for evermore. No painful watchings and strivings against sin will weary him. He will be for ever free from all temptations to it, from without and from within.

The sins of *others* will not vex him then. Relatives, neighbors, and fellow-men will not shame nor trouble him by their wrong doings. No sounds of profanity will grate upon his ear. The language of hateful passions he will hear no more, nor will the actions to which they lead afflict him. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." How happy thus to rest from sin. How sweet the

repose of the soul, after all the trials and strug-
glings which have troubled it here.

Then he will be free from *weariness*. Pain-
ful labors, exhausting toils, will no more be his
lot. A frail body, easily fatigued, will not
hinder the free and vigorous actings of his
soul, nor afflict him with its depressing and
painful exhaustion. He will study, and not be
weary. He will do good in the service of God,
and not be fatigued.

He will have no more *pain* or *sickness* to en-
dure. There will be no aching head, or tooth,
or eye, to trouble him ; no limb will throb with
pain, nor heart feel distress. None then will
say, "I am sick ;" nor will any complain that
they are weak.

He will feel no *sorrow* then. Death will not
come to tear away the dear objects of his love,
and rend his soul with anguish at the parting.
The family circle will no more be broken. Nor
will the misconduct of living friends grieve
him worse than parting would, as it sometimes
does in this world. He and his friends will
dwell together in the home of the blessed, and
go no more out for ever.

Disappointment will not trouble him there.
His plans will not be thwarted by opposition

or accident, nor fail for want of power or skill.

No *darkness* will there perplex him. The path of duty will never seem uncertain or obscure. Light will shine for him on all the works and ways of God, solve many a question that now perplexes him, and show him cause for joy in things that now often seem reasons for regret. He will "know even as he is known." The glories of the universe will be open to his view; worlds on worlds, in grandeur too great for us now fully to perceive, will lie before him; and God, the sun and chief glory of the whole, will no more be seen "as through a glass, darkly, but face to face," in all the infinite loveliness and glory of his goodness.

And no *danger* will attend him then. His trial state will be past, his education for heaven completed, and God will secure him from all danger of the evils to which he has been subject. He will be in no danger of sin, nor of temptation to it; nor of weariness, pain, sickness, sorrow, disappointment, perplexity, or death. His freedom from these, and from every evil, will be secure for ever; and so his soul can *rest*, rest in the paradise of God, and be at peace for evermore.

2. He will have *heaven for his home*. It is his Father's house. It is peculiarly God's dwelling-place. There, more than here, He dwells as a Father in his home. There his sweetest smiles are seen, his most affectionate expressions made, and his infinite goodness most fully shown. There Christ, our loving Saviour, dwells in all the infinite plenitude of his affection and riches of his grace. There all "the sons of God" abide. Angels and saints, all loving and lovely beyond what earthly families have ever known or thought of, belong to the happy circle of our heavenly home. No misunderstandings, no clashings of interests, no unholy passions ever disturb the full peace and joy that reign for ever there.

3. He will have *Christ for his Brother*. Jesus, who is "the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely," will call him to his side, and bid him sit with him in his glory. Freed then from the sins and imperfections which now so much interrupt the communion of his soul with Christ, he will enjoy the full bliss of his fraternal love. A younger brother who has been dependent upon an elder one, and cared for and aided by him, is sometimes very tenderly loved by his benefactor, even

here among selfish and cold-hearted men ; and he looks up to that elder brother and benefactor with most confiding and sweet affection. But with far more tenderness of affection, even with infinite love, will Christ look upon the Christian in the heavenly home ; and with all the fervor of grateful and confiding love and sweet affection that his soul can feel, the Christian will look up to his "heavenly Brother."

4. He will have *union with God in universal dominion*. It is a truth well known, and generally recognized, that the saints, or Christians, will reign with Christ. Thus the Scriptures teach. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given unto the people of the saints of the Most High." "He that overcometh and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers"—that is, all opposition

will be subdued—"even as I received of my Father." The Christian will have his crown, and reign with Christ in glory. "O to grace how great a debtor!"

5. He will have *whatever God provides for the happiness and improvement of his children.* The full treasures of God's infinite riches of wisdom and power and goodness will be open to him. God will "supply all his need," and "no good thing will he withhold" from him. He will give him "glory, and honor, and immortality." He shall "be filled with all the fulness of God." His knowledge will be increased, his faculties for learning and enjoying strengthened, his sphere of action enlarged, and the whole universe given him to study and to enjoy. The saying, "all things are yours," will be verified to him in its fullest and richest meaning. God will be his God, Christ his brother, heaven his home, and all the treasures of infinite goodness will be his, to make him perfect in happiness for ever.

And is it not enough? What more would we have? "*All the privileges of the family of God.*" It is enough. We can ask no more. The inheritance is INFINITE. It is boundless as the universe, enduring as eternity, lovely,

excellent, exhaustless as God. It includes all *things* that he has made, all *persons* that he has created, all worlds that he governs, all the privileges of his family, and Himself, greater and better than all.

And they all belong to the Christian by the most *endearing* ownership; an ownership that enhances their value beyond all the power of human language to express. They are *the gift of a Friend, and an infinitely excellent Friend*. The book, the garment, or other article, that we hold as a present from a beloved friend, is more dear to us than it would be if we had obtained it otherwise. We value it more highly, and it gives us more pleasure. It affects pleasingly and beneficially our higher nature, our nobler sentiments, and so is ours to our greater benefit.

Thus is the Christian's inheritance ours, if we are Christians. It is a gift from our best Friend. It cost him much to procure it—cost his blood to purchase it for us. It is a token of his dying love.

And this, this will be the richest part of all, and afford the Christian the greatest, noblest, sweetest joy: Christ, the divine Redeemer, will be his—his to love, to praise, to honor, to please,

to enjoy for ever ; and his by the gift of *dying love*.

Yes ; *all*, absolutely ALL, is ours, if we are Christians. The infinite original Proprietor of all has directed one to say of him, "No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." No possession, no privilege, no advantage belonging to the family of God will be withheld from the Christian. He is one "of the household of God," and is entitled to all the privileges and advantages of it. Now he occupies the place of a little child, or an immature youth, "and is under tutors and governors"—under a course of discipline and instruction, and has unpleasant restraints put upon him, and duties somewhat hard for him to perform, that he may be improved thereby, and fitted to enjoy more and use better the inheritance to which he will soon come. Ere long he will be released from all the afflictive hindrances to his happiness to which he is now subject, and feel himself to be an heir of God, enriched, honored, and beloved by his heavenly Father ; enriched even with boundless wealth, honored with heavenly glory, and beloved with infinite affection.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THIS VIEW OF THE INHERITANCE
SHOULD AFFECT US.

WHAT if you are poor in earthly goods? It is but a momentary poverty. Bear it a little while, and then you will be rich, as rich as you could wish to be. What if you are despised and ridiculed for your religion? You may well bear the scorn of fools, since you know that you are acting wisely and rightly, and have such prospects before you. Soon you will be above their scorn and ridicule; so rich, so honored, so happy. What if you are sick, feeble, tempted, and troubled? Remember the inheritance before you, especially the friendships there, and the love of God in Christ; and surely you will feel that it is worth bearing trials for. You can afford to struggle on, enduring all that can come upon you here, in your course towards the bliss and glory there. "If we suffer with him, we shall be also glorified together," and "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." And when the last trial comes, and you must part

with all you have loved here, instead of sorrowing, you may lift up your head with joy. You are going home, then—going to your inheritance, to your riches, your honors, your friends; to your Saviour, your God, your glorious and eternal home.

Look up then, Christian, look up often to your inheritance; look, “that your joy may be full.” God our Saviour has told us of this glorious inheritance, that we might “rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Remember often, as you look upon the sun, that it is a part of your estate. And as you look upon the stars, consider that they are all suns, and that millions on millions of such glorious orbs, shining in their brightness, moving in their beautiful and useful harmony, and full of the riches of Jehovah's goodness, shall be yours to enjoy for ever. And all these are but the *inferior* part of the estate; the furniture and ornaments of the pavilion in which your heavenly Father, and Jesus your elder Brother, and the divine Comforter, with their friends the angels and saints, will welcome you, and feast you with the delights of heaven.

And is it a matter of indifference to you, that your friends, your neighbors, or any of your

fellow-men, are ignorant or careless of this inheritance, and seeking only the inferior objects of earth? Can you be content to have the hope of it yourself, and make no effort to communicate to them the rich blessings you thus enjoy? If you can, how dwelleth the spirit of Christ in you? Was that his disposition? He was earnest to persuade men to seek first the kingdom of God, and lay up treasures in heaven. All true Christians have his disposition. They have the spirit of adoption, causing them to be obedient to God, and to feel an interest in his cause; and they so partake of the spirit of Christ, that they long for the salvation of their fellow-men. Christ desired the salvation of men so earnestly as to deny himself much, and even die for it. If you do not desire it enough to make any sacrifices for it, how dwelleth the love of Christ in you? But if you have his spirit, then live like him; not for your own gratification or advantage, but to promote the salvation of our lost world. Strive to persuade your friends and neighbors to seek this inheritance, and do your utmost to send the glad tidings of it, and make it to be known and duly sought through all the world by all mankind. This do for others.

For yourselves, be worthy of the noble station and great estate to which you have been called. *Gratitude* becomes you—hearty, deep, life-controlling gratitude to Him who redeemed you with his blood, and has given you this glorious inheritance.

“If human kindness meets return,
And owns the grateful tie,
How should our hearts within us burn,”

when we think of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ; his rescuing us from hell, raising us to heaven, and making us children of God and heirs of this rich inheritance? Well may we say,

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small :
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

If we can do any thing to please and honor him, shall we not gladly do it? Say, Christian, would you, if you might, withhold from your Saviour any little services you can render him now? Surely the answer of your heart must be,

No; “if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my Lord with zeal so great,
That I should give him all.”

See, then, that you "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Lift up your head with joy every morning, and lay it down with gladness every night. Believe habitually, and feel that you are heir to an inheritance infinitely rich and glorious. Debase not yourself to love much the infinitely inferior things of earth. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." The things above are worthy of much love. Act worthy of your station as a child of God and heir to so great an estate, to an eternal weight of riches and glory. Never be mean and low in thought, word, or deed ; but always noble, dignified, good. Go on your way rejoicing. Serve the Lord with *gladness*; knowing that by this service you are preparing for the high and happy station to which the love of Christ has called you, and testifying the gratitude of your heart for that saving love.

If you are one of those that have been careless of this inheritance, let me ask you to consider what infinite riches, what noble privileges, what wondrous glories you have been slighting. Think of it ; to have the riches of all the

universe to enjoy, the privileges of the household of God, the glories of a throne and a crown in heaven, of association with angels and seraphs there, and of reigning with Christ over all the universe.

And why have you been so careless of all these riches and glories? God has not left himself without witness to you of his parental goodness and infinite riches, nor without calls to you to come and enjoy with him the glories and the bliss of heaven. He has made the sun to shine upon you, and thus, day by day, he has called you to know and note the fact, that there are greater things than those of earth for you to regard. That sun, larger than a million worlds like this, bids you look upward and care for those greater things, and not bind down your soul to the little things of this little world. And by every star that has shone upon you, God has virtually spoken to you, called your attention to the things above, and bade you "seek superior bliss." "At sundry times, and in divers manners," he has called you to seek salvation, and be an heir of God. Look up, fellow-mortal, and behold the estate which God your heavenly Father would fain give you to enjoy for ever. Consider its won-

drous extent, its endless riches, its noble honors ; the fulness, the perfection, and the eternity of its happiness ; and say, *Is it not worth your seeking ?*

Be persuaded to seek it, and do it immediately and earnestly. It is worth ten thousand times more than any thing else that you can seek. God is offering you a better portion than this world would be, if you could have it all to minister to your pleasure and give you honor. He is inviting you to a richer inheritance, a more honorable station, a happier condition, than all this would be ; and as much better as heaven is higher than earth.

And will you continue to neglect those noble offers and those kind invitations ? Will you slight all the calls of God, contemn his kindness, and lose this rich inheritance ? Is it not better to turn now from your neglect of it, and seek immediately and earnestly to be a child of God and heir to this estate ? *It is better.* It is folly, sin, and ruin to neglect it. And hear me, my friend, while I testify to you of it.

By that sun which rolls above you day by day, I adjure you, remember that there are greater things than those of earth for you to regard. That sun testifies to you of them, and

bids you care for them. And by those more distant suns that shine upon you at night, I adjure you, think, think often, think earnestly of greater things than this little world, this speck of earth. You were made for greater, nobler, better purposes. Belittle not yourself by caring much for things so small and momentary. Things that are not greater than this world, and that will not affect you more than a thousand years, are not worth minding much. Use the things of earth and the affairs of this life to promote your greater and more lasting interests.

Remember, day by day, the position in which God has placed you. Here, for the brief period of your probation in your earthly life, you stand in the midst of bright and glorious worlds. Riches, ten thousand times greater than those of all the mines the earth contains, shine all around you. God makes you see them. There is no uncertainty about the matter. He not only tells you of heavenly glories, but he also *shows* you thousands of splendid worlds. He points you to them as a part of the inheritance that his infinite goodness would bestow upon you. He offers them, and all the universe of worlds, to you. Day by day, and night by

night, as you behold them, he calls your attention to them. He bids you come and be an obedient and affectionate child, and have them for your own. He sets before you honors, pleasures, joys, greater, sweeter, better, ten thousand times better, than all this world can give, and assures them to you for ever, if you will rightly seek them.

If you will not seek them, then, when you shall be removed from among these shining witnesses for God, and your probation shall be ended, every day that this glorious sun has shone upon you, and every star your eyes have seen at night, will testify against you. They will bear witness that you would not heed the voice of God calling you to heaven, but foolishly, wrongly, inexcusably would fix your mind and heart on inferior things, and so made yourself unfit for the inheritance of the Christian, and unworthy of it; and God the Judge will exclude you from it.

Therefore hear now his kindly speaking voice. Seek, and seek with due earnestness, the inheritance so rich and glorious, so excellent and enduring, to which he calls you. By every star that shines upon you, God virtually bids you look up, and seek for glory, and honor, and immortality. He points you to the "things

which are above"—things worth infinitely more, infinitely more worthy of your regard than any or all on earth.

It is the voice of paternal wisdom and kindness, your Father's voice, that bids you seek them. Be persuaded to listen to him. Turn to him, and obey his directions. Then you will have God for your Father, heaven for your home, and the whole universe for your inheritance, and have them all for ever.