

Title:           **ARE YOU A PARTAKER?**

Text:            Hebrews 2:14-18

Subject:        *Things of Which God's Elect are Partakers*

Date:            Sunday Morning — September 20, 2009

Tape #        Z-71a

Reading:      *1 Peter 2:1-25*

Introduction:

**ARE YOU A PARTAKER?** That is the title of my message. — **ARE YOU A PARTAKER?** There are some things set before us in the Word of God of which all who are born of God are partakers. — **ARE YOU A PARTAKER?** Let's begin in Hebrews chapter 2.

## **HEBREWS 2**

1. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.
2. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward;
3. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*;
4. God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?
5. For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.
6. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?
7. Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:
8. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.
9. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

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10. For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

Now, let me show you some of those things of which all who are born of God are partakers. The word “*partakers*” means possessors in common and united in. Here are nine things all God’s elect are united in and possess in common.

**1. PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD**

The first thing I want to talk about is that which is obvious. In Hebrews 2:14 the Spirit of God tells us that we are, like all other men, “*partakers of flesh and blood.*”

14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16. For verily he took not on *him the nature of angels*; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.

17. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Flesh and blood is that which we all have in common. We are all fallen, depraved, sinful, weak and helpless human beings, frail, dying mortals. That is true of all men; but here the Holy Spirit calls our attention to the fact that this is the state and condition of God’s elect, “*the children*” God gave to his

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Son to redeem and save. But “*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*” (1 Corinthians 15:50).

- Mortality cannot become immortality.
- Corruption cannot enter into and become incorruption.
- Death cannot possess life.
- That which is carnal cannot become spiritual.
- That which is earthly cannot be made heavenly.
- That which is terrestrial cannot become celestial.

Therefore, in order to redeem and save his people, in order to bring these many children God the Father gave him into heaven’s everlasting glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, God’s darling Son, became what we are. — We could never become what he is, did he not first become what we are. Do you see that? — “*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.*”

(John 1:14) “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

(2 Corinthians 8:9) “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

(Philippians 2:5-11) “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; (11) And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

“*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.*” Read on. Here’s the reason why Christ became a partaker (*took part*) of flesh and blood. He did it, the Son of God became one of us that he might...

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- “Through death destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” — That he might crush the serpent’s head!
- “And,” by crushing the serpent’s head, “deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” — Christ came here in our nature to deliver God’s elect from all the consequences of the fall into everlasting life!

**Then, in verse 16, the Spirit of God shows us God’s great sovereignty in the exercise of his saving mercy.** — “For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” The Son of God did not come here to save fallen angels; and he didn’t come to save the fallen sons of Adam. He came here to save his covenant children, “the seed of Abraham.” And the only way God the Son could save the chosen sons of men was for him to become what we are, “flesh and blood.”

(Hebrews 2:17-18) “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (18) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

Let’s just stay here in the Book of Hebrews for a little while.

## **2. PARTAKERS OF THE HEAVENLY CALLING**

Second, in the opening verse of chapter 3, we are declared to be “*partakers of the heavenly calling.*” We are called with and possessors of a common heavenly calling.

(Hebrews 3:1) “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;”

Here the Holy Spirit tells us three things about all true believers, all who trust the Lord Jesus Christ.

- All true believers are “*holy.*” – Made Holy by Grace (Imputed Righteousness and Imparted Righteousness)
- All true believers are “*brethren.*”
- All true believers are “*partakers of the heavenly calling.*”

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There are some people in this world described by the Holy Spirit as “**The Called**” (Romans 1:6; 8:28). Those who are the called of Jesus Christ are God’s elect, those sinners redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, who have been saved by his almighty, irresistible grace. All the rest of the elect shall be called, but those who are saved are “*the called*,” called from death to life, from unbelief to faith in Christ.

All who are privileged to hear the gospel preached are called externally, by the preaching of the gospel. But those who are saved, “*the called*” have been called internally, effectually, and irresistibly by God the Holy Spirit. “*The called*” are like the Thessalonian saints. Their election, redemption, and calling is made manifest by the fact that the Word of God has come to them, not in word only, but in the power of the Holy Ghost.

Salvation comes to chosen, redeemed sinners in the experience of grace by the almighty, irresistible, effectual call of God the Holy Spirit.

It is this call of which David sang, when he said, “*Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee.*” This is the call the Apostle Paul was talking about when he said, “*God separated me from my mother’s womb, called me by his grace, and revealed his Son in me.*” Paul was talking about this internal, effectual call when he wrote to Timothy, in **2 Timothy 1:9-11**.

(2 Timothy 1:9-11) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: (11) Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

Notice how the Apostle Paul describes this call of God. When he speaks of it, he seems to be so overwhelmed by it, in such awe of it that he cannot find words sufficient to describe it. He calls it...

- “*An Holy Calling*” (2 Timothy 1:9).
- “*The Calling of God*” (Romans 11:29).
- “*The High Calling of God*” (Philippians 3:14).
- “*Your Calling*” (1 Corinthians 1:26; Ephesians 4:4).

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- “*The Heavenly Calling*” (Hebrews 3:1).
- God has called “*you out of darkness into his marvellous light*” (1 Peter 2:9).
- “*Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty*” (Galatians 5:13).
- “*Ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*” (1 Corinthians 1:9).
- “*God hath called us to peace*” (1 Corinthians 7:15).
- “*God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness*” (1 Thessalonians 4:7).
- We have been “*called into the grace of Christ*” (Galatians 1:6).
- God “*hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*” (1 Thessalonians 2:12).

“Am I called? And can it be!  
Has my Savior chosen me?  
Guilty wretched as I am,  
Has He named my worthless name?”

Vilest of the vile am I,  
Dare I raise my hopes so high?  
Am I called? I dare not stay,  
May not, must not disobey.

Here I lay me at Thy feet,  
Clinging to the mercy-seat:  
Thine I am, and Thine alone;  
Lord with me Thy will be done.

Am I called? What shall I bring,  
As an offering to my King?  
Poor, and blind, and naked I,  
Trembling at Thy footstool lie.

Nought but sin I call my own,  
Nor for sin can sin atone.  
Am I called? An heir of God!  
Washed, redeemed by precious blood!

Father, lead me in Thy hand,  
Guide me to that better land

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Where my soul shall be at rest,  
Pillowed on my Savior's breast!"

### **3. PARTAKERS OF CHRIST**

Glance down to verse 14, and you will see that God the Holy Spirit declares, third, that all who continue in the faith are "*made partakers of Christ.*"

(Hebrews 3:14) "For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end."

**What a glorious privilege of grace!** — "*We are made partakers of Christ!*" **All saved sinners hold and possess Christ in common, fully!** This is a very great privilege, accomplished by Divine grace. This particular privilege, though it is taught and implied throughout the Word of God, is not stated anywhere else.

**The text does not say,** "We are made partakers with Christ." That is a precious, comforting truth of Scripture. We are joint-heirs with Christ. Because all things are his, all things are ours. But that is not the teaching of our text.

**The text does not simply say** that "We are made partakers of the rich benefits of God's grace in Christ." That, too, is a fact in which we rejoice. All the grace of God in Christ is ours, fully, freely, and perfectly. In Christ, we are partakers of pardoning mercy, adopting love, regenerating grace, sanctification, preservation, and eternal glory. All the blessings of the covenant of grace are ours in Christ.

But our text goes further. It includes all this and much more. Here, Paul tells us that, "*We are made partakers of Christ.*" — **We are made partakers of Christ himself!** — **We possess Christ in common, fully!** This is a privilege that no tongue can describe. It is beyond the thought of our finite minds. We who are God's are one with the Son of God, members of his body, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Truly, this is a great mystery! Yet, this is the privilege of all true believers. **The moment any sinner believes on Christ, that sinner is so vitally and really joined to Christ that he becomes a partaker of Christ.** To be partakers of Christ, what can this mean?

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- **To be a partaker of Christ means that his merits are my merits.** — Sinful, though I am, vile, wretched, and unclean, I come to the fountain filled with his blood, I am washed in it and I am made as white as snow. In that moment I become a partaker of God's eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Being a partaker of Christ, his merits are my merits.
- **That which Christ did as my Substitute I did in him. His obedience is my obedience. His death is my death. It really is all mine.** — Did he bear the wrath of God as my Substitute? Then all God's wrath against me is gone. — Did he take my sin upon himself? Then my sin is gone. — Did he pay the debt I owed to the law and justice of God? Then my debt is paid, nothing more is owed. Yes, it is true!

“Jesus paid it all, all the debt I owed,  
Sin had left a crimson stain:  
He washed it white as snow.”

Since my debt has been paid, since in the Person of my Substitute, Jesus Christ, I have paid all that God's law required, God cannot require me to pay more.

“Payment God cannot twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Surety's hand,  
And then again at mine.”

We are partakers of Christ — The Sin-Atoning Substitute.

- **Moreover, being partakers of Christ, his righteousness is ours.** — He is “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*” Not only are we freed from sin by his atoning sacrifice, we are rendered righteous before God by Christ's obedience in life as our responsible Representative. Christ, having obeyed God's law as our Representative and fulfilling all righteousness for us, we have obeyed God's law in him, fulfilling all righteousness. There is nothing which God in his law requires us to do which we have not done in Christ our Surety.

“With His spotless garments on,  
We're as holy as the Holy One!”



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- **Being thus partakers of Christ, we are “accepted in the Beloved.”** — Is Christ accepted of God? Is he fully, perfectly, completely, eternally accepted? Even so, all who are partakers of Christ are accepted in him. God looks upon all his people, all true believers in Christ, and says, “These are my beloved sons, in whom I am well pleased.”

“Near, so very near to God,  
Nearer we cannot be,  
For in the Person of His Son,  
We’re as near as He!”

Can you grasp what Paul is saying? — *“We are made partakers of Christ!”*

- We are partakers of Christ by faith in this sense too: — **We live and feed upon Him.** — His life is our daily bread. It sustains our souls. His blood is the wine that makes our hearts glad. He is our meat and drink (John 6:53-56).

“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” (John 6:53-56 )

- Still there is a deeper spiritual lesson for us. Our union with Christ is so real, so constant, so vital that **He is our Life.** — **To be a partaker of Christ is to derive life from him constantly.** — We live upon Christ, just as the walls of a building stand upon the foundation. — We derive life from Christ, just like the branches derive life from the vine. — We are partakers of Christ, just as the wife is a partaker of her husband. — We are partakers of Christ, just like the members of my body are partakers of my heart and my head.
- **We are so really and truly one with Christ that we are partakers of him in his destiny.** — When he comes again, his holy ones shall come with him. The fact that he is risen from the dead is the earnest and promise of our resurrection. At the day of his appearing, we shall rise and participate in the fruition of his mediatorial work. — We will judge men and angels with Christ. — We will join Christ in the destruction of

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his foes. — We will join Christ in the marriage of the Lamb. — We will stand with Christ before his Father's throne. — And we will inherit the glory he has inherited as our Mediator (John 17:22).

**Spurgeon said**, “All right and all might, all that can extol or delight, all that forever and ever shall contribute to the glory of Christ, shall be shared by all the faithful, for we are partakers not only with him, but of him — of Christ — therefore of all the surroundings of glory and honor that shall belong to him.”

**This is all the work of divine grace.** The text says that “*We are MADE partakers of Christ*” (1 Corinthians 1:30). — “*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*” (1 Corinthians 1:30). — God himself has made us to be partakers of Christ his Son by the work of his almighty grace.

- He put us in Christ in election.
- He infused the life of Christ in us in regeneration.
- He made us partakers of Christ by faith.

“*We are made partakers of Christ.*” Truly this is an astonishingly glorious privilege bestowed upon us by the grace of God.

## **4. PARTAKERS OF THE HOLY GHOST**

Fourth, in Hebrews 6:4 we read that we are, in the sweet experience of his grace, “*made partakers of the Holy Ghost!*”

(Hebrews 6:4) “For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.”

To be honest with you, I have to acknowledge that I cannot begin to grasp the fulness of that blessed statement, “*made partakers of the Holy Ghost.*” — But I can rejoice in it!

- Did the Holy Ghost inspire the writing of this Book? — Then I am a partaker of the Holy Ghost, for I have “*tasted the good Word of God!*”
- Is the Holy Ghost the Revealer of Christ? — Then I am a partaker of the Holy Ghost, for he has revealed Christ in me!
- Is the Holy Ghost the Comforter God's people? — Then I am a partaker of the Holy Ghost, for I he comforts me with the things of Christ.

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- Is the Holy Ghost the One who is the Spirit of adoption, by whom the heaven-born soul cries in confident faith, “*Abba, Father*”? — Then I am a partaker of the Holy Ghost, for I now come boldly to the throne of grace, trusting Christ, in the “*full assurance of faith*.”

### **5. PARTAKERS OF HIS HOLINESS**

Let’s look at one more passage in the Book of Hebrews. In Hebrews 12:10, we are told that we who are God’s are “*partakers of his holiness*.”

(Hebrews 12:7-10) “If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? (8) But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. (9) Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? (10) For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.”

Christ is that “*holiness without which no man shall see the Lord*” (v. 14), that holiness that the Lord loves (Malachi 2:11); and we are partakers of him. He is our “*Holiness*,” our Sanctification.

### **6. PARTKERS OF GOD’S PROMISE**

Sixth, if you will go back to Ephesians 3, you will see that all who believe are made partakers of God’s promise in Christ by the gospel.

(Ephesians 3:1-6) “For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, (2) If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: (3) How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, (4) Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) (5) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; (6) That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”

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What promise is Paul talking about here? — The promise of eternal life in Christ! — The promise of eternal salvation in Christ! — The promise of covenant grace in Christ! — The promise of the Spirit (Galatians 3:13-14).

(Galatians 3:13-14) “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”

## **7. PARTAKERS OF CHRIST’S SUFFERINGS**

Seventh, look at 1 Peter 4:13. Here the Holy Spirit tells us that in the fiery trials we experience in this world God’s dear children are “*partakers of Christ’s sufferings.*”

(1 Peter 4:12-13) “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: (13) But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”

- We were partakers of his sufferings as our Substitute, when he was made sin and suffered all the horrid wrath of God for us.
- We are made partakers of his sufferings in the sense that we have all the benefits and blessings of grace, salvation and eternal life by his sufferings, by the satisfaction of justice by him in his sufferings and death.
- We are made partakers of his sufferings when we are given grace to know him in the fellowship of his sufferings (Philippians 3:10).
- But here Peter is telling us that when we suffer for him, for his gospel, for his glory, because of our union with him, there is such a real union of Christ with his church that our sufferings are his

(Isaiah 63:7-9) “I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, *and* the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. (8) For he said, Surely they *are* my people, children *that* will not lie: so he was their

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Saviour. (9) In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.”

### **8. PARTAKERS OF THE GLORY**

I can only briefly mention the eighth thing named in 1 Peter 5:1. — God’s elect are partakers “*of the glory that shall be revealed.*” That’s the same thing we are told in Colossians 1:12.

(Colossians 1:12-15) “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: (13) Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: (14) In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins: (15) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:”

(Colossians 2:9-10) “For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:”

### **9. PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE**

How can these things be? How is it possible for you and me, who are “*partakers of flesh and blood,*” to be partakers of...

- “*The Heavenly Calling*”
- “*Partakers of Christ*”
- “*Partakers of the Holy Ghost*”
- “*Partakers of His Holiness*”
- “*Partakers of the Promise*”
- “*Partakers of Christ’s Sufferings*”
- And Partakers “*of the Glory that Shall be Revealed*”?

There is only one way that we who are but flesh and blood can be partakers of all these spiritual, heavenly, eternal things. In 2 Peter 1:4 the Spirit of God declares that we for whom Christ took part of flesh and blood, for whom the Word was made flesh, are in the new birth made “*partakers of the Divine nature!*”

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(2 Peter 1:2-4) “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, (3) According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: (4) Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

It is only when redeemed sinners are made “*partakers of the divine nature*” in the new birth that the righteousness of Christ is imparted to them and they are, by the grace and gracious operations of God, made “*meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*” (Colossians 1:12). The imputed righteousness of Christ in redemption makes us worthy of heaven. The imparted righteousness of Christ in regeneration makes us fit for heaven. It is “*Christ in you*” who is the believer’s Hope of Glory!

(2 Corinthians 5:17) “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

**Are you a partaker?** — Partaker of “*the Heavenly Calling*” — “*of Christ*” — “*of the Holy Ghost*” — “*of His Holiness*” — “*of the Promise*” — “*of Christ’s Sufferings*” — “*of the Glory that Shall be Revealed*” — “*of the Divine nature*”? May God be pleased to make you a partaker, for Christ’s sake.

Amen.