

BLESSED WITH A HEAVENLY INHERITANCE

Ephesians 1:11-14

INTRODUCTION:

- A. I read the following story recently: “A tramp jumped off the train as it was pulling into the train yards, hoping to find a means to get something to eat. He had been begging on the streets of one town after another for over a year. He had gotten to the point and was hungry enough that he didn’t mind asking for handouts. He came up behind an old man and touched him on the shoulder and asked him, "Mister, could you spare a buck for something to eat ... I’m really hungry! As soon as the old man turned and the tramp saw his face, he recognized his aging father. "Don't you know me?" he asked. Throwing his arms around the dirty tramp, he cried, "Oh, my son, my son! I have found you at last! I’ve been looking for you for years. You’re my only family left! All I have is yours!" Think of it -- here was a tramp who begged for a buck from a man he didn't know was his father, while for 18 years the old man had been looking for his son – to give him everything he possessed!"
- B. Many Christians wander through the world not knowing **what we have "in Christ."** We often may think we’re penniless, or derelicts, only because we don’t realize the vast spiritual wealth promised to us by our Father!
- C. **Read Text.**

I. WE HAVE AN INHERITANCE FROM GOD. (Vs. 11)

- A. The inheritance is a promise of blessings now, that will be extended on into the future.
1. It is just like a will that has been executed promising future wealth. One mentioned in a will does not presently enjoy all of those blessings that are yet to come, but has the sure promise of them, as long as the will is not changed.
 2. The inheritance of God has been promised through the last will and testament of Jesus Christ. **Heb. 9:15-17** *"And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives."*
- B. Notice the progression that Paul talks about concerning the inheritance.
1. It starts with God planning the scheme of redemption from before the beginning of the world. **Tit.1:3-** *"in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,"* **Matt.25:34** - *"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:'"*
 2. It is in the present in that we are redeemed (bought out of) sin and have our sins forgiven in the body of Christ. **Acts 26:18** - *'to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'*
 3. By remaining faithful in the body of Christ we have a promised inheritance in the future. **Rev.21:7** - *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son."*
- C. The great inheritance that we have promised is a home in the eternal dwelling-place of the faithful. **Matt.19:29-** *"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life."*
- D. This is a **SURE INHERITANCE** – kept for us and promised to us by God; conferred upon His children by a loving Father.

1. John MacArthur points out that the Greeks used a figure of speech to emphasize something that was certain.
2. Something that was so certain that there was no possibility of not coming true was sometimes spoken of in the past tense, such as this passage in **1 Pet.1:3-5**- *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4) to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5) who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."*

II. GOD IS WORKING ALL THINGS FOR OUR INHERITANCE ACCORDING TO HIS DIVINE COUNSEL.

- A. God predestined us to receive his inheritance.
 1. That predestination has to do with God's preordained plan for salvation.
 2. Notice again that the predestination is "In Him."
 3. In foreordaining us to be His heritage, God was working toward the purpose that we would be a people devoted to praising His glory, we, the Jews, who in ages before have been the first to have hoped in the Messiah (or Christ).
 4. God planned for the beginning of mankind that He would give the eternal inheritance of living with Him.
 5. **Rev.13:8** - *"....the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."*
- B. Paul clearly tells us that we have a part in this planned inheritance.
 1. We have heard the word of truth. **Rom.10:17**- *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."*
 2. We have believed the gospel of our salvation.
 - a) The "belief" here is representative for the whole system of obedience to the gospel of Christ.
 - b) This happens throughout the New Testament, with the writers using faith, repentance, confession, and baptism as being the sole part of the plan of salvation.
 - c) It is known as an ellipsis, a **figure of speech** that has the part stand for whole.
 3. We are told of how we respond to Christ. **Acts 18:8** - *Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.*

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT PLAYS A PART IN OUR INHERITANCE.

- A. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.
 1. The seal here seems to signify ownership. The Holy Spirit is the seal that shows that we are God's children.
 - a) **2 Tim.2:19** - *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."*
 - b) **Romans 8:9, 14, 16** - *"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.... For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God....The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,"*
 2. This sealing takes place when we hear the word of truth, believe it, and are baptized into Christ.
 3. The gift of the Holy Spirit is a promise by God to all those who would come into a right relationship with Him! **Acts 2:38**
 4. This sealing serves a dual function.
 - a) God recognizes that His Spirit is dwelling in us.

- b) We recognize that His Spirit is dwelling in us - based on us doing what the Spirit has said is necessary to receiving the sealing of the Spirit.
- B. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance.
1. The guarantee here is a down payment, just like an earnest payment when we decide we want a house but needs time to secure financing or full payment.
 2. How is the Spirit the guarantee, or earnest of our eternal inheritance?
 - a) It is God's promise. If God has given His Spirit His is certain to keep His promise of an eternal inheritance if we remain faithful to Him.
 3. While the witness of the Spirit of God dwelling within us is not manifested by the working of miracles, the influence of the Spirit on our lives is a definitive witness all can behold! See.
 - a) This is accomplished when we yield to the Spirit's prompting in that message from God!
 - b) Fruits are borne that unmistakably bear the marks of the Father! **Gal.5:22-25-** *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23) gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24) Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25) If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."*

CONCLUSION:

- A. Wouldn't we all get excited if someone were to convince us that we were named in someone's and set to inherit millions of dollars? **That would excite nearly everyone, wouldn't it?**
- B. **BUT CHRISTIANS HAVE SOMETHING FAR MORE VALUABLE** as an inheritance!
- C. They have the **WEALTH OF GOD** that has been promised to them as a birthright.
- D. SO, **HAVE YOU BEEN BORN AGAIN?**
 1. B+R+C+B=R.of S.
 2. **WE CAN LAY HOLD ON THE PROMISES OF HIS WILL!**
 3. **THAT is the heritage for EVERY CHILD OF GOD!**