

Joshua Part 15: Divide the Inheritance

1. Review and Q&A

- a. Joe would you please come on up here.
- b. Last week I got one of the largest number of calls concerning a sermon that I have ever gotten in my ministry. That's the good news. The bad news is that I wasn't understood – which means I failed in my efforts to communicate some very important truths to you all.
- c. **First of all:** I in no way wanted to communicate that a cross or that a piece of jewelry of the cross is a bad thing. *My goal last Sunday was to EMPHASIZE the importance of the empty tomb and not to take anything away from the cross, other than to remind you that it is empty! I want you to know that I am sorry if it sounded as if I was criticizing your jewelry choices or giving you some disapproval for wearing a cross. Please, wear the cross! It testifies to your faith in our risen Lord!*
- d. **Second**, many of you had questions about “heaven not being a place but a realm.” I failed to communicate this concept clearly, as some of you *thought* I was saying that “heaven does not exist.”
 - i. I didn't define the word “place” or “realm” and left many of you hanging on what I meant by that statement. In no way would I deny the existence of heaven. I want you to understand clearly that it is a literal place that Jesus went and you and I will go to.
 - ii. As I define “place” I mean a “physical location” that you can point to like “up there” or “over there.” It isn't a place that can be found on a radar screen or gotten closer to by flying in outer space.
 1. Does that make sense?
 - iii. Then as I define “realm,” which was the emphasis for my miscommunicated statement last week, a realm is the royal or legal jurisdiction or domain of a king, literally, his kingdom.
 1. You and I need to understand that heaven is the realm of God, it is His domain, His reign, and “earth” is the realm of satan – but that Jesus, in His cross and resurrection, took back by force and gave to us. The earth is the contested realm for you and I, and we are called to literally bring the realm of God's rule into it by our conduct and prayer and spiritual warfare.
 2. Does this make sense? Do you have any further questions on this?
- e. Someone else felt I was saying that heaven exists here on earth.
 - i. Where is God? Everywhere. Where does God live? In heaven. If God is everywhere and heaven is where God is, then heaven is everywhere, not just “up there”? Would you agree with that? Heaven exists everywhere God is, even in your heart!
 - ii. The kingdom of heaven isn't just future tense. It is present tense. I invite you to look at Matthew and Luke at every reference to the kingdom of heaven. It is in both present and future tense.
 - iii. Do you realize when you accepted the sacrifice of Jesus for your sins and came to God, you ENTERED the kingdom of heaven. Ephesians 2:6 says that “we are seated with Him in the heavenlies in Christ.”
- f. These are concepts that we must translate into our experience of life. **Understanding heaven as an accessible realm for us is vital to fulfilling our purpose here on earth.**
- g. **Third**, I think that I may have taken us out into far too deep of water on Easter Sunday, when we typically have so many visitors. If your friends or relatives were blown away by the sermon or if it was over their heads, I have to apologize. I want you to know that in the 7 years that I have been at Here's Hope, I cannot recall a single sermon that caused so much trouble.
- h. *I do take some joy in the fact that this has caused us some trouble. Because the enemy, the devil, will do everything he can to stop us from understanding the life changing, world changing truth of heaven invading earth in Jesus Christ and in us through the Holy Spirit.*

QUESTIONS? (not comments, and please do them respectfully; if you have an offense, please see me in my office after services and do not vocalize your offense in front of the entire church body)

2. Joshua 13:6b-8 " *Be sure to allocate this land to Israel for an inheritance, as I have instructed you, and divide it as an inheritance among the nine tribes and half of the tribe of Manasseh.*" *The other half of Manasseh, the Reubenites and the Gadites had received the inheritance that Moses had given them east of the Jordan, as he, the servant of the LORD, had assigned it to them.*"
3. Luke 15:11-12 "*Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.'* So he divided his property between them."

 - a. You know the story...it's the story of the prodigal son, but it is so much more than that! While it represents the story of rich mercy and grace for one who has ruined his life – maybe that is you...you have lived a life that has been squandered, wasted, and you feel like God can or will never bless you because you have done so badly. **God doesn't grade on performance or a curve, He grades solely on the Cross.** (explain what the cross did, paid for your sins, all of them)
 - i. So no matter how bad you've blown it, how many marriages you have failed at, no matter how badly your life has gone, God isn't going to give up on you. His grace can handle any failure you have made.

4. This story, however, is as much about the son who never left home as it is about the son who strayed.
 - a. Did you notice in verse 12 what happened? The younger one asked his father to give him his share of the estate...while his father was still alive! This tells me that **our inheritance in Christ is available to us now.** Seems a bit brash and bold, doesn't it? (*if you have a difficulty with one of my points, please raise your hand and I will explain it further!*).
 - b. And did you notice the father's response to the request? "*So he divided his property between them.*"
 - i. You may not recognize the significance of this statement. But I believe it is the dividing line between the children of God who live boldly in His grace and the children who live like slaves and never experience the joy of their inheritance in Christ.
 - ii. What does this look like? God has given us a rich inheritance in Christ that is ours to learn to live in and live out.
 1. Some of us are so afraid of making a mistake they never get out of their house, much less the boat. Did I make a mistake last week in going so deep and broad? Perhaps, yet I won't stop boldly preaching the truth and pressing in on your comfort zones simply because I miscommunicated!
 2. The younger son, although he blew his inheritance, still was a son. He lost nothing but the pain he experienced and gained the first hand knowledge of his father's love.
5. Luke 15:-25-31 "*Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'*" *The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!' "* " *'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours.' "*
 - a. I believe that both sons broke their father's heart.
 - i. The younger one for leaving home and not using his inheritance for the purposes that it was given to him, and the older one for never claiming his inheritance and then holding bitterness toward both his father and his brother.
 - b. Look at verse 29 "*But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.' "*

- i. This poor fellow had been given his share of the estate (which was everything his father had left) and he never claimed it. He continued to work for his father as if for an employer, slaving away and never enjoying any of the fruits of his labors.
 - ii. He complains that the father never gave him even a young goat...but all the goats were his!
- c. I wonder how many of us might like to approach God someday with the complaint...
 - i. I was your faithful servant, I avoided sin and served you faithfully, gave more than my tithe, worked countless hours in the church...and you never _____ .
 - 1. Fixed my car, Saved my marriage, Healed my mom
 - 2. Helped me get out of debt, Saved my son or daughter, Healed my cancer
 - ii. Is it because we have been like the older brother?
 - 1. Did we not have resources available to us that we didn't know or access?
 - 2. How many times have we tried in our own strength to live out a solution to a problem and then in crisis, run to God for help...and then in disappointment, become discouraged because the problem didn't work out in our favor?
 - 3. I am not trying to say that every problem will work out as you want it to...but rather, **Every one of us has God given resources that we are neglecting!**
- d. Last week I spoke about what some of those resources are. In the weeks ahead, I will share with you more on how you and I can access them better.
- e. What I want to close with today, is that our perception of God affects everything we do. The younger son was brash but understood that the inheritance was his. The older one never claimed his.
 - i. Do you hunger for God's presence? Do you hunger for His touch? Do you ache to know and experience more of the Father's love for you?
 - ii. Will you bring your need to Him and His throne today? Will you come to Jesus and let Him touch you. The altar counselors are here to pray with you and to pray over you. They may even have a word for you. I urge you to press in and not lay back. The stakes are too high to let anything stand in your way.
 - iii. **Jennifer shared with me a seminar in Michigan in May she thought I would be blessed by...it was on a subject that I have been praying about for over a year. Yet, when I saw the dates and the cost, I told her, "I gotta pray about it, because it is a stretch for me." A few moments later, God spoke to me, He said, "You asked me for this...now how badly do you want it?" Guess what...I'm going!
 - iv. You have been praying for something, healing, a need, a desire, and the question perhaps you might need to answer is "how bad do you want it?" Enough to risk everything, to risk the opinions of people? Are you ready to let God in ?
 - v. *" 'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. "* That I believe our Father in heaven says to you right now. Will you receive it? Will you take it as your own?
 - vi. Let's Pray.

Joh 1:51 - And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man .