

Joshua Part 16: A Safe Inheritance

1. Review

- a. **An inheritance is something you get for free that someone else worked for.** Explain.
 - i. When is the will read? A will cannot be read before the legal status of the inheritance is established. When Paul tells us that we should embrace our inheritance in the book of Ephesians, he is telling us that we have the legal right to claim our inheritance.
 - i. Last week, I shared how the prodigal son claimed his inheritance (and then promptly blew it) while his more prudent brother ignored his inheritance. I urged you to learn how to live out the inheritance God has given you. Today, I hope to explain a bit more about what that is and how you get a hold of it.
- b. *“In Him also we **have obtained** an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will”* (Eph. 1:11).
 - i. Present Tense: Folks, it is present tense. We assume it is “FUTURE” but the inheritance was secured in the here and now.
 - ii. The bible says that “the kingdom of God is at hand” (Mark 1:15)—it’s a “now” word—and “the kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21).
 - iii. It is ours. It isn’t ours when we die...what good will it do us in heaven?
 - iv. We don’t need resurrection power in heaven; no one is going to be raised from the dead in heaven! No one will need to be healed in heaven, and no one will need to be saved in heaven. We need resurrection power in the here and now to do the humanly impossible!

I have noted during this entire series that the book of Joshua is a parallel for the Christian life. We find another mention of inheritance in our passage for this morning:

2. Joshua 18:2-6 *“There remained among the sons of Israel seven tribes who had not divided their inheritance. 3 So Joshua said to the sons of Israel, “How long will you put off entering to take possession of the land which the LORD, the God of your fathers, has given you? 4 “Provide for yourselves three men from each tribe that I may send them, and that they may arise and walk through the land and write a description of it according to their inheritance; then they shall return to me. 5 “They shall divide it into seven portions; Judah shall stay in its territory on the south, and the house of Joseph shall stay in their territory on the north. 6 “You shall describe the land in seven divisions, and bring the description here to me. I will cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.”*
 - a. Could you imagine it? Only 5 tribes had divided their inheritance. The other 7 hadn’t made up their minds yet – they had “put off entering to take possession of the land.” But they had not Possessed it even though it was legally theirs.
 - i. Part of the problem was that they hadn’t walked through it so that they could describe it.
 - ii. They had no idea of what their inheritance looked like. That is why they were told to pick three men from each tribe to write out a description of it.
 - iii. I believe that these 7 tribes were very much like many of us. They didn’t even know what they owned...so they were in no hurry to possess it!
 - iv. It would be like getting the will and never reading it. We have the will...and we haven’t read it. We treasure the will, the “testament” but we don’t know what it contains. Just like the 7 tribes, we don’t know what our inheritance contains.
3. 1 Peter 1:3-5 (Parallel passage)
 - a. *3 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 (kept) 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.* (NAS)
 - b. *3All honor to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for it is by his boundless mercy that God has given us the privilege of being born again. Now we live with a wonderful expectation*

because Jesus Christ rose again from the dead. 4For God has reserved (kept) a priceless inheritance for his children. It is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. (NLT)

- c. This passage tells us that we have an inheritance that is “kept safe” in heaven for us. Does that mean it is inaccessible as well because it is in heaven? Because it is KEPT safe and incorruptible in heaven for us, does that mean that the only way we can access it is when we die and GO to heaven?
 - i. If the way we look at heaven is that it is a far off place in the future, I would agree.
 - ii. But if heaven is in fact both a present and a future reality and realm, then we have a completely different conclusion to come to.
 - iii. But what the passage says is that our inheritance is being kept SAFE in heaven – where corruption and decay cannot touch it. (because there is no decay or corruption in heaven).
 - iv. It doesn’t say we cannot access the inheritance, only that it is kept safe there.
 - ii. This doesn’t mean it cannot be accessed on this side of heaven.
 - iii. It means it is safely reserved or stored in heaven, awaiting you to claim it as your own. We have got such a future-centered view of the Christian life that we have pretty much written off most of the promises in the here and now.
 - b. **Both realms at the same time:** (let me take a rabbit trail for a second)
 - i. Matthew 19:21 *“Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”* Jesus made it clear that you can make deposits into heaven. Does it not logically follow that you can make withdrawals?
 - ii. John 3:13 says, *“No one has gone up into heaven except the One Who came down from heaven. That One is the Son of Man Who is in heaven.”*
 1. Jesus noted that he was dwelling in two different realms at the same time, heaven and earth. Some would say that is because He was God therefore omnipresent. I think it is simpler than that. If heaven is a realm (where God rules) and not a “different place,” then in His Spirit, He could abide in one realm and operate in the other.
 2. Ephesians says that you and I are “seated in the heavenlies in Christ.”
 3. For you and I: When we pray, and especially when we pray in our spirit, we are in a heavenly realm. You can see, experience and understand God’s will from a heavenly perspective and pray that out in our earthly realm!
 - iii. I say all of this to help you understand the how we access an inheritance, a treasure that is in heaven. We access it through the Holy Spirit in our spirit man.
2. What does this inheritance include?
 - a. Eternal life and forgiveness, and the gift of the Holy Spirit (who is the very power and presence of God!)
 - b. **The Holy Spirit is said to be the “pledge of our inheritance”**
 - i. Ephesians 1:14 *“you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.”*
 - ii. Kleronomos = is used here for the word “our inheritance” and means – “one who has acquired or obtained the portion allotted to him.” It is past tense. In other words, the Holy Spirit is the possession of every born again believer.
 1. The “pledge” is the “down payment,” and it secures the full sum: so is the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - iii. The inheritance containing the Holy Spirit reveals the nature of the inheritance itself.

This brings us to one of the most important questions you need to be able to answer as a follower of Jesus Christ:

3. Why were we saved? Was it to just make the love of God known on earth so everyone could go to heaven when they die? <That is what most of us were taught, because we were taught the “gospel of how to get to heaven”>
- a. **We were saved in order to enforce the victory won at Calvary.** (LIVE IT OUT, CARRY IT FORWARD, TAKE THE LAND, BRING IT INTO PEOPLE’S LIVES).
 - i. **That’s the promised land picture.** This is the picture that the bible paints for us in the book of Joshua. It is a present day, kingdom perspective.
 - ii. We were created to rule...over creation, darkness and to plunder hell itself
 1. (“the gates of hell shall not stand against you” – it never says we must guard the gates of the church).
 - iii. Jesus never taught the gospel of “how to get to heaven.” He taught the “gospel of the Kingdom of heaven.” There is a huge difference! **When you and I begin to understand this, we will change how we live and how we pray!**
 - b. Think about this: Jesus came to earth and did miracles. If you ask a theologian why Jesus did miracles, they will tell you that he did it to show people He was God.
 - i. But if the gospel is the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, then the purpose of his miracles and signs was much greater. It was to demonstrate what He expected every follower of His to do.
 - ii. Because sin has entered the world, darkness, disease, sickness, afflicting spirits, poverty, natural disasters, demonic influences, pain, and death have infected creation.
 1. **Jesus came to “destroy the works of the devil”** and has appointed us to carry on his work. We are continue to expose and undo the works of the devil.
 - iii. You and I are to expand the kingdom of God. We do so by being light (which defeats all darkness). Picture of light destroying darkness is powerful.
 1. **Just as darkness is the absence of light, evil is the absence of God’s Presence.**
 2. God wants to so inhabit you and I that wherever we walk, we bring His light into the circumstances of others.
 3. Many of us think that our lives should consist of avoiding sin and loving others – which is a massive oversimplification of the Christian life. **A Christian’s life purpose is to let the life of God flow through him or her in the same way that Jesus did.**
 4. Jesus demonstrated signs and wonders not so the world would worship Him as Divine...but so that individuals would be drawn to Him and reconciled to God...that people would become rightly related to God and then be able to be carriers of His light through the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.
 5. Jesus was Divine, but that Divinity became clear only after the resurrection, and we worship the Son of God. Sometimes I think that we use the fact that Jesus was divine so that’s how he did all that cool stuff...so we can get off the hook from having to exercise serious faith and intimacy with God!
4. **The Inheritance is Permanently Yours!**
- a. Jesus purchased everything at the cross. It is yours.
 - b. You cannot un-purchase it. It belongs to you. He paid for it. Just as He paid for your salvation (“it is finished”), so also is the payment for your healing and hearing and seeing and operating in the power of the Holy Spirit. You cannot un-buy what He has purchased.
 - c. But you can leave it on the lot and never claim it. You can refuse to possess it. God gives you an inheritance that begins here and now on this earth in the souls of men. What...you going to refuse Him? It is always easier to express unbelief that it is to believe!
 - i. Belief takes faith and trust...it takes risk, it takes a willingness to face ridicule and even failure!

- d. Some folks here feel like God might throw them away if they fail again. Some here might even feel like God is mad at them. Maybe you haven't been walking with God the way you know you ought to, and wonder what you have to DO to be able to get close to Him again.
 - i. I want you to know that because Jesus bought you and all your failings and all of your sins...He has already paid for them...and He's paid for you. There is nothing that you can do to make Him "mad" at you.
 - ii. There is nothing you can do to make Him love you less or love you more than He does right now. The only thing that you can do is to LET Him love you.
 - iii. Will you let God love you today? Maybe God has been a concept and not a reality to you. He wants to be your friend, your Father, and your Savior. He wants you to experience the joy of knowing you are forgiven. Would you like that today? Let's pray!