

Walking on Water, A study on Ephesians Part 8, Christ is Our Inheritance and We are His Inheritance

Ephesians 1:9-12, “⁹ He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹ also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹² to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.”

As we continue our journey through Ephesians we are looking to build our faith in such a way that when trial and temptations come along, we are able to not only withstand them but we are able to shine in the midst of them.

We need all the encouragement from scripture we can because as you know, trials and temptation do occur.

When Jesus was talking about building your life upon sand or rock He said when the storms come, He didn't say if the storms come but the assurance of them coming. I certainly think that each of us can testify to the storms that come into our lives in their many forms.

Well, when Paul was writing to the Christians throughout Asia Minor and to the church in Ephesus during the first century, there was major storms brewing in the Christian community. There was great persecution there a great need for the Christians to have some truths in which they could put their hope in because things were pretty tough for them.

Look at what the writer of Hebrews said about some of the things that were happening to Christians in the first century.”

Hebrews 35-38, "...others (Christians) were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; ³⁶ and others ¹experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated ³⁸ (*men* of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground."

This type of persecution is still happening throughout the world in places North Korea, China, Afghanistan, The Sudan, Pakistan and many other places. I was reading just yesterday of a woman in China who was taken from her home, taken to prison where she was tortured for a year just for being a Christian.

For many of these individuals, hope to live a life of freedom and to have enough food to survive is just not found. Their hope is in Christ and the deliverance they will receive when their life here on earth has ended.

In this passage in Ephesians and others like it, they speak strongly of the inheritance in Christ they have. It builds their faith for today as the focus on their hope for the life to come.

This morning let us focus in on a few of truths of the inheritance we will receive because of our relationship with Christ. Next week we will look at the inheritance we have received already.

Let's look at a couple more scriptures that speak of our inheritance in Christ.

Colossians 3:24, "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance."

Hebrews 9:15, “For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.”

1 Peter 1:3-5 describes this inheritance further.

1 Peter 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 t a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you who are protected by the power of God...”

According to the apostle Peter, our inheritance is distinguished by four important qualities:

1. Our inheritance in Christ is imperishable.

1 Peter 1:4 “⁴to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable”

What we have in Christ is not subject to corruption or decay. In contrast, everything on earth is in the process of decaying, rusting, or falling apart. The law of death and decay affects our houses, our cars, and even our own bodies.

Roof on the parsonage porch...

David and I are working out a couple of times a week and we just started jogging. I can tell you that my body is not what it used to be. It is in the process of decaying, rusting and falling apart. Most of you can testify to this as well.

But our treasure in heaven is unaffected by time and decay.

2. Our inheritance in Christ is undefiled. What we have in Christ is free from anything that would deform, debase, or degrade. Nothing on earth is perfect. Even the most beautiful things of this world are flawed. If we look closely enough, we can always find an imperfection. But Christ is truly perfect. He is "holy, blameless, pure, set apart and exalted above the heavens and because our inheritance is in Him and held by Him it is also holy, blameless, exalted, and pure.

3. Our inheritance in Christ is unfading. My new truck is starting to fade a little bit. Door dings are appearing as well as some marks on the fabric in the interior. It's life. I was talking with my sister the other day about her new car and she said how she used to drive in front of store windows and admire it. But things fade don't they, excitement wanes, most possessions depreciate. But our inheritance is not of this world. Its glorious heavenly intensity will never, ever diminish.

4. Our inheritance in Christ is reserved. What we have in Christ is being "kept" in the most powerful, secure place in the universe. Our inheritance is secured in Christ in heaven.

Look at verse 5. **“reserved in heaven for you who are protected by the power of God...”**

We are secure, being guarded by the Almighty Himself. No one can steal it from us. **1 Peter 5:4, “When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” This will be your crown, reserved for you in the name of Jesus Christ.”**

I think, when we understand and value the glory that awaits us, we are better able to endure whatever comes our way in this life. We can give God praise even during trials because we have His guarantee that we will receive all He has promised.

Look at the follow scripture in **1 Peter 1:6**, **“In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary you have been distressed by various trails.”**

2 Corinthians 4:17, **“For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”**

Revelation 21:4 gives us a brief but beautiful description of what our life in our future inheritance will be like: **“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”**

God and man will dwell together. Everything will be made new. The bejeweled city, New Jerusalem, will be our residence. The river of life will issue from God’s throne. The healing tree of life will grow there. There will be no night there, because the eternal light of the Lamb will fill the new heaven and new earth and shine upon all the heirs of God.

Pause...

We lived in a blessed country where we don’t see much persecution yet although there is some. But certainly not to the degree that is happening in other countries. It is true of us as the writer of Hebrews said, **“In you struggle against sin, you have not resisted to the point of shedding your blood.” Hebrews 12:4**

But isn’t it also true that sometimes, when the music fades and all is stripped away. When your emotions are shot, your body, mind and soul is tired and weak, sometimes looking ahead to what God has for us eternally is where we need to go.

When you tire of the politics, the struggles of our nation, the struggles of our world, the struggles within your family or marriage. When you tire

of the news, fake and real, the tragedies playing out in front of you... Like Abraham, we too need to have our hope built up as we look forward to living in a place whose architect and builder is God.

Paul wrote...

2 Corinthians 4:18, “we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

Dwelling upon our inheritance and our future home is sometimes all we have and all we need. It is called hope.

Great resource on heaven: Heaven, by Randy Alcorn

Let's pray