

Walking on Water, A Study in Ephesians
Part 9, Christ is Our Inheritance and We are Christ's Inheritance

Ephesians 1:9-14, “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 ¹¹also 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. In Him, you also, after listening to the truth, the gospel of your salvation-having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption for God's own possession to the praise of His glory.”

If you were with us last week, you heard teaching on the heavenly, eternal inheritance a believer has in Christ. Eternal life in heaven is reserved for the believer. It is reserved and protected by the most powerful force in the heavens and the earth and that is God Himself.

But there are other uses of the word inheritance in this letter to the Ephesians. Look with me at **Ephesians 1:18, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...”**

Here we see a little different usage of the word inheritance. Last week we studied about the inheritance we have received because of Christ's great work. This week, let's look at the inheritance Christ and God has received in us.

Before we get into this I wanted to tell you that Michal and I had a great time in Missoula, Montana. We made a quick trip up there Friday and came back last night. We went up there so I could perform the wedding for our daughter. Even though she and her fiancé live in Denver, he is from Missoula so they decided to have the wedding there.

This is Ashley, Michal's youngest child and the one who was at home when we got married so I am pretty fond of her. She married a good guy who loves her and her son so we are really happy for her.

In light of this and in light of today's sermon I had the thought, wouldn't it be nice if a person could choose their son or daughter's spouse.

I am sure in our imperfectness we would make a mess out of it but if we could. if we could, I have no doubt that we would be meticulous in our investigation of the person. We would do a background check, have interviews with their parents, siblings, neighbors, bosses and co-workers. Because we love our child so much we would be methodical in every detail, trying as best as we could to make sure they were someone who would love, cherish and honor our child.

Now I know this is not reality but it is reality in God's world for God choose a people who would be His Son's bride and who would be His eternal inheritance.

Think with me again about the meaning of these two phrases from Ephesians.

14b...with a view to the redemption for God's own possession to the praise of His glory." **18b...what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints..."**

That we have an eternal inheritance with Jesus and God in heaven is a great and wonderful truth that we can look forward to.

1. We are an **inheritance** for God and Jesus

But to think that we are also an inheritance for God and Jesus is a pretty incredible truth to contemplate as well.

This is part of the mystery Paul spoke of in verse 9. **“He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purchased in Him.”**

2. It was God’s **desire** and **plan** from the beginning of time to have a people to call His own.

We know in the beginning this was Abraham and the nation of Israel.

In addressing the ancient Israelites, He told them:

Deuteronomy 7:6-8, “For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”

So why did God choose Israel? God’s purpose in choosing Israel was for them to be a model nation to the other nations of the world and so through them “all the families of the earth” would be blessed (Genesis 12:3).

We know the other nations of the world were blessed through Israel because it was through Israel Jesus came and brought salvation to the earth, to the people who would accept Him and His work upon the cross.

God choose Israel to be **“a kingdom of priests and a holy nation”** (Exodus 19:6).

- 3. God didn't choose Israel to the exclusion of all the other people who were living on the earth.** All people had a chance to come and worship God and be included in the blessings of Israel.

God instructed the ancient Israelites to be respect peoples of other nationalities who came to live with them.

God said the following in **Exodus 12:48**, **“And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him (and all the people who wish) come near and keep it; and (they) shall be as a native of the land.”**

The key statement is...and they shall be as a native, as an Israelite in God's eyes. It wasn't just the Israelites that have become part of God's inheritance of all the peoples on earth. It was available to anyone who was willing to enter into a covenant relationship with God. They would get to enter into all the blessings of relationship.

This was God's plan all along. To have for Himself a people who were holy and blameless, who He could bless with all the blessings from heaven that were at His disposal.

This is what Paul has already covered and is heading in teaching in Ephesians. It was God's plan all along to bring every person who wanted to, not just the Israelites, every person who wanted to experience God as their Father, as His Son's bride, as His personal inheritance from all the people of the earth.

In chapter 2 of Ephesians Paul writes about this grafting in of those who are non-Jewish. Look at the summery statement he makes.

Ephesians 2:13-15, “But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the law of the commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man (person) thus establishing peace...”

When you read through the promises of the Old Testament, most, not all, are for you because you have been included as part of God’s inheritance.

There is another way that we are God’s inheritance.

1 Peter 2:9-10, “But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God’s* OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.”

2 Corinthians 5:18-19, “¹⁸ Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has ^lcommitted to us the word of reconciliation.”

Think about some of the titles God has given to us as Christians.

4. **Titles and positions** God has given His children, His inheritance are:
- a. Chosen Race
 - b. Royal Priesthood
 - c. Holy Nation
 - d. God's Own Possession
 - e. Ministers of Reconciliation

Thinking about these title you have been given, if this doesn't make you feel pretty special I don't know what will.

But we are not given the position of being God's inheritance just to set on it. Like any steward of a good inheritance, if it is handled properly, the principal can be set in place where it begins to draw interest, increasing the principal.

The original call of the Israelites has never changed. The call for the New Testament church is as follows.

Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

As we live out our lives, as we love as God loves, forgive as God forgives, encourage as God encourages, His kingdom investment in you is increased, He is glorified which makes God incredibly joyful.

This is what it means when Paul writes in **Ephesians 1:14b...with a view to the redemption for God's own possession to the praise of His glory.** 18b...**what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...**"

That is God's plan for you. To be His inheritance now and for eternity.

He made a way possible for you to become His Son's bride and His inheritance. He didn't do a background check, have interviews with your parents, siblings, neighbors, bosses and co-workers to see if you were qualified and if you would make a good spouse for His Son. Because He loves you and all of humanity so much He was methodical in every detail, doing everything as best as could be done to make sure everyone who wished could come into a relationship with Him. A relationship where He will love, cherish and honor you as His child. A relationship with where you are His inheritance.

If you haven't entered into this place where you are God's inheritance or if you have more questions, give me a call and we'll set down and talk and pray about. I don't want you to miss anything God has for you and God doesn't want you to miss out on anything He has for you either.

Let's pray this morning and then we have an ending song we want to share together.

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Ephesians 1:9-12, “⁹He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰with 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 ¹¹also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.”

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5. You, a Christian, are an _____ for God and Jesus

6. It was God's _____ and _____ from the beginning of time to have a people to call His own.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8, "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the LORD loves you, and *because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers*, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

So why did God choose Israel? God's purpose in choosing Israel was for them to be a model nation to the other nations of the world and so through them "all the families of the earth" would be blessed (Genesis 12:3).

7. God didn't choose Israel to the _____ of all the other people who were living on the earth.

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2 Corinthians 5:18-19, " ¹⁸ Now all *these* things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

8. Titles and positions God has given His children, His inheritance are:

f. Chosen Race, Royal Priesthood, Holy Nation, God's Own Possession, Ministers of Reconciliation

Matthew 5:14-16 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

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