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## Enjoying Our Inheritance

Ephesian 1:11-19; Romans 8:14-17

***Gary Cohen was shocked when he was contacted out of the blue by the West Virginia Treasurer's office and informed he was to receive a check for \$169,000. His father had owned stock in a pharmaceutical company and it was liquidated after his death and the proceeds placed into the Treasurer's unclaimed property program. This program actively seeks to find and inform West Virginia citizens of such unknown resources available to them. Upon learning of this money, Gary determined to use it to help his daughters pay off the mortgages on their homes. We see the joy in the faces of Cohens in a photo as Treasurer Purdue performs what must be his most enjoyable duty – presenting the check to Gary and his daughter. They had no idea of this wonderful inheritance that was available to them. One statement in the interview with the Treasurer stands out: "A lot of people are unaware of their relative's assets".***

***This account reminds us that as followers of Christ we may be unaware or have forgotten about the "assets" God has provided for us through Christ. Through the Bible God seeks to inform us and have us claim the resources that are rightfully ours as God's children. These resources are often described as our "inheritance". Let us consider this inheritance God has provided and make sure we claim what rightfully belongs to us through Christ.***

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he lists many of the wonderful blessings the believer has in Christ. He says God has "blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" (3:1). In chapter one he describes these blessings as the "inheritance" we have because of our relationship with Him. As we read Ephesians 1, these verses stand out:

*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will... (1:11)*

*In Him, you also, after listening to the message of 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 of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. (1:13-14)*

*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, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. (1:18-19)*

Paul also gives us a wonderful description of this inheritance in Romans:

*<sup>14</sup> For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. <sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. (Romans 1:14-17)*

Paul is writing to inform us as believers of our "unclaimed property" – of the assets and resources we have because of what Christ has done for us. He then goes on to urge God's children to live as if they were indeed "children of the King". So let us consider what it means for believers to have this inheritance, to be "heirs of God", and how we should live if this is true.

### The Christian's Inheritance

J.C. Ryle aptly describes the Christian's inheritance.

God's children are the richest people on earth, "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ". Our heavenly inheritance is the only inheritance **really worth having**. All others are unsatisfying and disappointing.

This is the only inheritance which can be **kept forever**. All others will be forfeited upon our death. The believer's inheritance is eternal.

This inheritance is **within everybody's reach**. Most of us will never gain great earthly riches and greatness. But glory and eternal life are offered freely to all who come to Christ in repentance and faith.<sup>1</sup>

### **"Inheritance" Describes the Christian's Relationship with God – CHILDREN OF GOD!**

We would consider being the child of some rich, great, and famous person to be quite a privilege. But what does it mean for the believer to be the child of the King of kings and Lord of lords? This is something far better. This is the relationship every true believer has with God.

How can we enter into this relationship with God? How can we gain this inheritance of which Paul writes? We are not born children of God. The Bible tells us we are separated and alienated from God because of our sin. We are actually, by nature "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3), facing God's just eternal judgment. Yet God in His grace and mercy has provided a way for us to become His children.

*See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God...  
(1 John 3:1)*

Paul described in Romans 8 how God **adopted** those who trust Christ into His family. We become children of God when we repent of our sin and believe in Jesus' death and resurrection as our only way of salvation. We are all "children of God through faith in Jesus Christ" (Galatians 3:26).

### **"Inheritance" Describes the Evidence of the Christian's Relationship with God**

We consider an inheritance something which is to take place in the future. Indeed, the believer's heavenly inheritance will only be completely realized when we die or when Christ returns to set up His eternal kingdom. However, Christians have been given access to many of the benefits of our spiritual inheritance today. Remember Ephesians 1:14 says God has given us the Holy Spirit "**as a pledge of our inheritance**". This is an assurance that our inheritance will surely be provided. But it is also an "allowance" or a "trust" by which we draw upon those resources in our daily lives. God dwells in the hearts of each of His Children in the Person of the Holy Spirit. This presence of God in our lives will be evidenced by how we live.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to point us to the holiness, glory, and majesty of God. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict us and make us aware of both our sinfulness and our sins. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to open our hearts and minds to understand God's Word so that we might

apply it to our lives. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to develop godly character qualities – to make us more like Christ. These things will be evident in the life of a child of God. This doesn't mean we will be perfect in this life. That will take place when the child of God gains their full inheritance in eternity. However there will be evidence of the Spirit's work in the lives of those who have truly trusted Christ. This is the pledge of the eternal inheritance we have in Him. So we should ask ourselves:

Do we love Christ?

Do we hate sin?

Do we long and labor to be holy – to be like Christ?

This is the evidence today of the inheritance which believers have in eternity.

### **"Inheritance" Should Determine How the Christian Lives as a Child of God**

In Ephesians Paul writes of the wonderful blessings the child of God possesses because of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. As with his other letters, he goes on to challenge us how we should live because of these blessings. In Ephesians 4:1 he implores us "**to walk worthy of the calling with which we have been called...**" He is challenging us to believe and claim the inheritance which rightfully belongs to us. If this is all true – if the Christian has an eternal inheritance from which they can draw for their daily lives, how should we then live?

In Assurance

In Hope

In Peace

In Victory Over Sin

We can see that all these, as well as many other blessings will ultimately be our eternal inheritance when we are with the Lord. However, if we are not experiencing these in our lives today, it is if they are "unclaimed property" – blessings which are rightfully ours but of which we are unaware or have forgotten.

Let's not be unaware of our Father's assets. Let us remember all that God has provided for us in Christ and live as if we genuinely believe these things are true. That is how we can enjoy our eternal inheritance today.

<sup>1</sup> Ryle, J.C. *Heirs of God*. 1878. [www.gracegems.org/ryle/heirs-of-God.htm](http://www.gracegems.org/ryle/heirs-of-God.htm)

**SPECIAL SESSION BIBLE STUDY**  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 – 12:00 NOON  
TREASURER'S CONFERENCE ROOM  
MB 54 (Located in basement of East Wing)