

THE SAINTS' INHERITANCE

Colossians 1:13-14

By Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1) If you are feeling discouraged, this text will make brighten your day. What if I told you that we just discovered that you have a distant relative – a great uncle in Texas – who just passed away; he was a billionaire, and he has given the entire inheritance to you? Would change your mood? Would that get you excited? Today I'm going to show you from the Bible that if you are a Christian, then you are set to inherit much more than a billion dollars.
- 2) In Colossians 1:9-12, Paul prays for the church in Colossae to walk worthy of the Lord. He explains what you need to walk worthy – the knowledge of God's will. And then He explains what it means to walk worthy of the Lord. 1) Be fully pleasing to Him. 2) Bearing fruit in every good work. 3) Growing in the knowledge of God. 4) Being strengthened with all power. 5) Endurance. 6) Patience. 7) Thankfulness.
- 3) In verses 12-14, Paul explains why can and should be thankful, joyful, cheerful.

II. TEXT

- 1) **Colossians 1:12-14** "12 giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light. 13 He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. 14 In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."
- 2) Why can and should we give thanks? Because God has enabled us to share in the saints' inheritance in the light.
- 3) What is our inheritance? Salvation. **Hebrews 1:14** "Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve those who are going to inherit salvation?"
- 4) Our salvation inheritance includes gifts that are past, present, and future.
 - i. Past (Justification) – we have been justified through Christ and made right with God. Our sins are forgiven. We have been adopted into God's family. Romans 5:1
 - ii. Present (Sanctification) – God has given us a new heart and the indwelling Holy Spirit, and He is transforming us into His image. Phil 2:13
 - iii. Future (Glorification) – when we die we will go to heaven for eternity, and receive a new, glorified body, and receive rewards for all of our good deeds. Phil 3:20-21
- 5) Colossians 1:12-14 gives us six facts our inheritance.

III. SEVEN FACTS ABOUT OUR INHERITANCE

- 1) **It should produce joyfulness and thankfulness.**
 - i. **Colossians 1:12** "giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light."
 - ii. Many Christians walk in depression, discouragement, worry, fear, despondency. But that only shows that they do not know or have taken their eyes off of their inheritance. When you truly understand your inheritance as a Christian, it should give you a joyful and a thankful attitude.

- iii. The Bible commands us to rejoice in the Lord always (Phil 4:4). How can we rejoice always? By keeping our eyes on our inheritance. We have something wonderful to look forward to!
- iv. **1 Corinthians 2:9 (ERV)** “But as the Scriptures say, “No one has ever seen, no one has ever heard, no one has ever imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.”
- v. The Bible commands us to give thanks in everything (1 Thess 5:18). How is that possible? We must live with a heavenly perspective. We must be heavenly minded. We must constantly meditate on and look forward to our eternal inheritance.
- vi. Let me give you more good news about our inheritance.
 - 1. **1 Peter 1:3-5** “3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead 4 and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. 5 You are being guarded by God’s power through faith for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”
 - a. It is imperishable. It cannot be lost. Once you are saved, you cannot lose your salvation. Verse 5 says that you are being “guarded by God’s power”. Even though we still sin, we will never reach perfection, we cannot lose our inheritance.
 - b. It is undefiled. It is unpolluted. Our inheritance is perfect. There is nothing bad about it. It is everything we could hope for and more. Can I remind you of what heaven will be like?
 - i. Revelation 21:3 says that we will be with God.
 - ii. Revelation 22:4 says that we will see God’s face.
 - iii. Jude 24 says that we will forever dwell in the presence of God’s glory with great joy.
 - iv. Isaiah 65:19 says there will be no weeping or crying.
 - v. Revelation 21:4 says there will be no tears, no death, and no pain.
 - vi. Revelation 21:25 says there is no night in heaven.
 - vii. Revelation 21:27 says there will be no sin.
 - viii. Revelation 7:16 says there will be no hunger or thirst.
 - c. It is unfading. It will last forever. The good thing about trials is “this too shall pass.” The bad thing about vacation is that it always comes to end. But our inheritance is unfading. It is eternal. Everlasting. It is perfect bliss forever and ever. Knowing and meditating on our inheritance should make us both joyful and thankful at all times.

2) God has enabled us to share in it.

- i. **Colossians 1:12** “giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints’ inheritance in the light.”

- ii. The word “enabled” means that God has made us fit for our inheritance; He has qualified us for our inheritance; He has made us worthy of our inheritance; He has enabled us to share in the saints’ inheritance.
- iii. It is essential to remember that the only reason we have inherited eternal life is because of God’s grace. We have not earned it. We do not deserve it. It is entirely by God’s grace.
- iv. We are sinners. Romans 3:23
- v. The punishment for sin is spiritual death – eternal separation from God. Romans 6:23
- vi. But God is so good, and kind, and loving, and gracious, and merciful, that He sent His only Son to die for our sins so that we might have eternal life. Jn 3:16
- vii. **Titus 3:5** “He saved us – not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy.”
- viii. There is nothing we can do to earn eternal life. All we can do is receive it. And we do that by putting our faith in Jesus Christ.
- ix. **John 1:12** “But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name,”

3) It is for all the saints.

- i. **Colossians 1:12** “giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints’ inheritance in the light.”
- ii. This inheritance is not for a select few; it is for all those who are saints.
- iii. Who are the saints?
 - 1. According to Roman Catholics the saints are an elite group of super spiritual, super pious, super good Christians like Mother Theresa.
 - 2. But according to the Bible, all Christians are saints.
 - a. Romans 1:7 “To all who are in Rome, loved by God, called as saints.”
 - b. 1 Corinthians 1:2 “To the church of God at Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called as saints....”
- iv. So if you are a Christian, then you are a saint. And if you are a saint, then you get the inheritance of salvation and eternal life.
- v. The inheritance is for every all the saints – baby saints, mature saints, holy saints, sinful saints, wise saints, confused saints, Baptist saints, saints of other denominations, old saints, young saints – all the saints.

4) It is only for those who are in the light.

- i. **Colossians 1:12** “giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the saints’ inheritance in the light.”
- ii. The inheritance of salvation is inclusive and exclusive. It is inclusive of all the saints, not just some. But it exclusive in that it is only given to those who are “in the light.”
- iii. What does that mean?

- iv. Jesus is the light of the world. **John 8:12** Jesus spoke to them again: "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."
- v. Jesus is the light, and only those who have faith in Christ receive the inheritance of the saints.
- vi. **1 John 5:11-12** "11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 The one who has the Son has life. The one who does not have the Son of God does not have life."
- vii. **Acts 4:12** "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved."
- viii. Let me make this abundantly clear, because this is one of the most hated doctrines of Christian – the exclusivity of Christ. Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven. There are not many roads. There are not many paths. There are not many ways. There is only one way.
- ix. There are many ways to skin a cat. There are many ways get to Dallas. There are many ways to cook chili. There are many ways to decorate a Christmas tree. But there is only one way to salvation and eternal life.
- x. **John 14:6** Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." But for those who have Christ; they have the light; they have the inheritance.

5) God has rescued us from the domain of darkness.

- i. **Colossians 1:13** "He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."
- ii. The dictionary defines "domain" as an area of territory owned or controlled by a ruler or government (Google).
- iii. The "domain of darkness" refers to our condition before salvation. We were controlled by sin and by Satan. Listen to how the Bible describes man's condition before salvation:
 - 1. He is corrupt. Gen 6:3, 11, 12
 - 2. Every inclination of his mind is nothing but evil all the time. Gen 6:5
 - 3. The inclination of his heart is evil from youth onward. Gen 8:21
 - 4. He is sinful before birth; sinful at conception. Ps 51:5
 - 5. His heart is full of evil; madness is in his hearts. Eccl 9:3
 - 6. He is under the authority of Satan. Acts 26:18; Eph 2:2; 1 Jn 3:8-10; 1 Jn 5:19
 - 7. He does not understand God. Rm 3:11
 - 8. He does not seek God. Rm 3:11
 - 9. He is a slave to sin. Rm 6:17, 20. Not only is he unable to keep God's law, but he willfully breaks God's law.
 - 10. He is alienated (separated) from God. Col 1:21
 - 11. He is hostile to God (against God). Col 1:21
 - 12. He is dead in his sins. Col 2:13
- iv. Before Christ, man is a slave to Satan and sin. He does not love God. He does not want God. He cannot please God.

- v. But when we put our faith in Christ, God rescues us from the domain of darkness.
- vi. The Bible says we are transformed into a new creation. **2 Corinthians 5:17** “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!”
- vii. The prophet Ezekiel describes salvation like this. **Ezekiel 36:26-27** “26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will place my Spirit within you and cause you to follow my statutes and carefully observe my ordinances.”
- viii. In Christ, Satan no longer has control over us. And we now have the desire and the power to live in victory over sin. Phil 2:13

6) God has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

- i. **Colossians 1:13** “He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.”
- ii. Not only have we been rescued from the domain of darkness, but we have been transferred in the kingdom of God. In other words, we are now citizens of God’s kingdom. Ephesians 2:19 “Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household”
- iii. In the days of the Old Testament, when one empire would defeat another, the king would transfer all of citizens from the defeated empire to his own country. When the Assyrians defeated Israel, they transferred all of the Israelites to another country. When the Babylonians conquered Judah, they transferred all the Jews to Babylon. When we put our faith in Christ, God transfers us from the kingdom of Satan, to the kingdom of God.
- iv. What does it mean to be transferred into the kingdom of God? This means two things.
 - 1. We are under Christ’s authority. God’s kingdom is not a physical kingdom, but a spiritual kingdom. It includes everyone who submits to His authority. Now that you are in the kingdom of God, you must submit to Christ’s authority. You must let Him be in complete control of your life.
 - a. This may sound like a burden, but it is a blessing. Christ loves you, so His will is best. His commands are for your prosperity, not your pain. And Christ is infinitely wise; He is all-knowing. He knows what is best for you better than you do. 1 John 5:3 “In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,”
 - 2. We are under Christ’s protection. When you become a citizen of the United States, you are placed under their protection. No matter where you go in the world, the United States will look out for you. When you become a citizen of God’s kingdom, you are placed under God’s protection. He promises to be with you at all times, to comfort

you, help you, strengthen you, hear your prayers, and to lead you.
Psalm 46:1 (NIV) "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."

7) In Christ we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- i. **Colossians 1:13** "In him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."
- ii. Redemption is the purchase of a slave's freedom.
- iii. Because of our sin, we are slaves to the power and penalty of sin. We are God's enemies rather than His children. And when we die, we will be punished forever in hell.
- iv. But Christ redeemed us. He purchased our freedom from the power and penalty of sin. Through Him we are forgiven.
- v. What does it mean that in Christ we have the forgiveness of sins? 2 Things.
 1. It means when you die, you will not be punished for your sins. You will be rewarded and spent eternity in heaven.
 2. It means that you are no longer God's enemy, but God's child. God will discipline you in this life for your sins -- to help you grow -- but He will not punish you in the next life.
- vi. How is this redemption accomplished? Some manuscripts add, "In him we have redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of sins." Christ paid for our redemption with His death on the cross, in our place, for our sins. He paid the penalty we owed, so that we could be redeemed from the power and penalty of sin, and be forgiven, and inherit eternal life.
- vii. Ephesians 1:7 "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace."

IV. CONCLUSION

- 1) For the past several years my family has had the privilege of spending the week of Labor Day at the beach in Dauphin Island, AL. And what I've come to learn is that the anticipation of vacation is almost as fun as the vacation. The anticipation fills me with joy and excitement. As Christians we have an inheritance that is far greater, far more exciting than a beach vacation. It is heavenly bliss; eternity with God. And the anticipation of heaven should cause us to walk through this life with joy and excitement and gratitude. Christians should not be sad, and gloomy, and depressed. Christians should be the happiest people on earth.
- 2) I've also found that the anticipation of vacation helps me to get through the tough days, and the tough weeks. When life gets really busy, and I'm tired, or when life gets tough, and I'm discouraged, knowing that vacation is coming helps me to get through it. Knowing that you are headed for a heavenly inheritance will help you get through whatever you have to face in life. But trials are short, but eternity is long. Your pain may be great, but compared to the infinite joy of heaven it is nothing.
- 3) As Christians we can look forward to our share in the saints' inheritance in the light. Are you a saint? Are you in the light?