

Heirs Ephesians 1:11-14

Introduction

NJFK—Notary seal; book ownership seal

Our text this evening starts with the two words “in him.” So what follows is more of what we have when we are in Christ through faith in Him. All of it tightly connected: our identity (1-2), our Spirit-given blessings in the heavenlies (3-6), our redemption and that of the entire universe (7-10), now our inheritance (11-14).

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

1. God has given us an inheritance in Christ (11-12).

¹¹ In him we have **obtained** an **inheritance**, having been **predestined** according to the **purpose** of him who works all things

according to the **counsel** of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to **hope** in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

In him (also v. 13)—only in Christ do we gain this inheritance

Obtained—to obtain by lot; reminds us of the distribution of the promised land as an inheritance to each tribe. The use of lots looked to God to decide, not man, for it was God who not only promised Israel this land of their inheritance, but gave it to them (conquest under Joshua).

The verb is written in passive form, so some translate this as “we have been obtained,” noting the truth that God has made us His own special possession—His inheritance. That would make verses 11-12 about our being God’s inheritance, and then verses 13-14 about the inheritance we receive from God.

Personally, I lean toward the choice our translators have made—that we have been made partakers of the inheritance, so that verses 11-14 all stress the same thing.

Either way, the overarching reality is that God is the one making this happen. We belong to God eternally because of His action. We have an eternal inheritance because of His action.

Inheritance—something you acquire through relationship with the one who owns what you are inheriting; not something you earn like a wage; and not impersonal—very much about relationship

We have access to this inheritance “in Christ.” As God the Son it belongs to Him by right. Psalm 2—Ask of me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance.

Christ—Peter’s question—we have left all, what shall we have? Those who have left family and houses and lands—100fold; and in the end, shall inherit eternal life.

What are people willing to pay and to endure just for five or ten or twenty more years of quality life?

People tire of this life because of all the troubles that come with it.

What would never-ending life of perfect quality—no sorrow, sickness, crying, or pain, new heaven, new earth, righteousness—be worth?

Predestined—we’ve seen this before (5)—to mark out the boundary beforehand

Purpose—Note all the words piled up pointing to God’s will, God’s purpose, God’s good pleasure, the counsel of God’s will. No

question who is in charge of all this goodness happening to us.

Works—energizes, makes operational

Philippians 2:13

It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

All things! God is universally at work, bringing about what is according to the counsel of his will

First to hope in Christ—previously hoped in the Messiah; refers to Jewish believers who looked forward in hope to the coming Messiah (Contrast in v. 13 “you also”—the Gentiles—nations, ethnicities—who now believe also)

To the praise of his glory (also 6, 14)—universal recognition, crediting, testimony, adoration of God for his shining splendor—spectacular perfections of his character, wisdom, deeds

Flip

2. God seals us with the Holy Spirit to guarantee our inheritance in Christ (13-14).

¹³ In him you also, when you **heard** the word of truth, the **gospel of your salvation**, and **believed** in him, were **sealed** with

the **promised** Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the **guarantee** of our **inheritance** until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Starts off again with “in him.”

Word (logos) of truth = the gospel of your salvation

Sequence of saving events

Heard→Believed→Sealed→Acquire

Sealed—marked of ownership and authenticity

Holy Spirit of promise

When promised?

Ezekiel 37:14 (Preach to Valley of Dry Bones; New Covenant)

And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live.

Jeremiah 31—I will write my law on your hearts.

Nicodemus (John 3) You must be born again of the Spirit or you cannot see the kingdom of God. You are the teacher in Israel and you don't know these things?

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

John 14:16-17

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,

¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

Guarantee—downpayment; first part that guarantees the full payment of our inheritance

Romans 8:11

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

Walk in the Spirit; fruit of the Spirit

Transformation from the inside out—at the level of who you are, your spirit—"the life of God in the soul of man"

Until we acquire possession of it—literally, until the redemption of the possession

To the praise of His glory—cf. v. 6

What do you think of God? What do you express about God? Are you giving Him the credit He deserves for His shining character, wisdom, and deeds?

Conclusion

1. God has given us an inheritance in Christ (11-12).
2. God seals us with the Holy Spirit to guarantee our inheritance in Christ (13-14).