

“Our Inheritance – Part 1”
Romans 8:14-17
(Preached at Trinity, March 8, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Paul has been expressing the great difference between those who are in the flesh and those who are in the Spirit. The great distinction is the indwelling Spirit.
Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.
2. The Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration; the agent of sanctification. Those led by the Holy Spirit are enabled to mortify the deeds of the flesh, to live according to holiness.
3. In **Verse 14** Paul adds another distinction. Those who manifest such holiness are the sons of God. He isn’t saying that our outward actions are the source of adoption but the fruit.
Romans 8:14 – “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”
4. God gave up His beloved Son Jesus that we might be made sons. This sonship is only available through Jesus Christ
John 1:12 – “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:”
5. Are you a son? Have you received the Spirit of adoption? I am talking about being a child of God. How can you know if you are a child of God? There is evidence.
 - A. Our life testifies to what we are.
Romans 8:13 – “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”
 - B. Paul tells us something else.
The Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God
Romans 8:16 – “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”
 1. His clearest testimony comes through the Word of God – our lives are conformed to the Biblical model of sonship
Holiness and love and a life conformed to the image of Christ
 2. Along with this objective witness of the Spirit by the Word there is also the subjective witness of the Holy Spirit within us affirming that we are God’s children. There is the stirring within us to prayer, to seeking Christ. All of this affirms that we are the children of God. The Holy Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance.
6. Those who have received the Spirit of adoption have received an infinite blessing. We have been changed from God’s enemies to God’s own children. We are able to cry out to Him as our Father.
Paul adds here a benefit from this adoption.
Romans 8:17 – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ”

7. Paul is talking about our inheritance. An inheritance is something a father passes to his children. An inheritance is a child's legal right. The children of God have an infinite inheritance.
 8. This inheritance is spoken of over and over in God's Word.

1 Peter 3:7 – "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

James 2:5 – "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

Titus 3:4-7 – "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, ⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; ⁶ Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; ⁷ That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Galatians 3:29 – "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 9. This morning I want to set before you several wonderful truths about our inheritance. Equal, Endowed, Excellent, Eternal
- I. It's an Equal Inheritance
- A. All of those who embrace Christ share in this inheritance
 1. Paul is writing to the Church of Rome. He was a Roman citizen and understood the Roman laws and customs
 2. First, the Jews didn't know the concept of adoption but the Romans had an elaborate system of adoption.
 3. In the Jewish culture the firstborn child received the largest inheritance – a double portion of everything.
 4. The Roman custom was to give all the children in the family an equal portion of the inheritance – even adopted children.
 5. Paul is saying that all of Abraham's seed are heirs. And all who are in Christ are Abraham's seed.

Galatians 3:29 – "And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 6. As Christians we are all called heirs
 - B. This is an equal inheritance – all are equal in Christ. There are no divisions in the Body of Christ. This doesn't mean uniformity of function or giftedness.

Galatians 3:28-29 – "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

 1. You may have been born into poverty. You may not have a lot of friends. You may not have keen mental abilities. You may not feel yourself worthy compared with many others – In Christ you are heir to all things.

2. Paul claimed to share his inheritance with all believers
2 Timothy 4:7-8 – “I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”
 3. We all possess that which belongs to Christ
Romans 8:17 – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. . .”
- C. While there is equality in possession there may not be equality in appreciation
1. While every Christian shares in the same possession today not every Christian has a fullness of appreciation
 2. Do you fully appreciate your possession? Do you see Christ as your all in all? Do you sometimes look to earthly things to bring you happiness?
 3. Will there be equality of appreciation in eternity?
- II. It’s an Endowed Inheritance
- A. Christ has purchased our inheritance
1. Upon the cross Christ purchased the right to all things.
Philippians 2:9 – “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:”
Matthew 28:18 – “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”
 2. Jesus is heir of all things
Hebrews 1:1-2 says, "God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things."
 3. Jesus purchased our salvation taking our place and delivering us from the wrath of God and upon faith and repentance we are joined to Him.
 4. Since Christ is heir of all things and we are joint heirs with Him, we too are heirs of all things. That is strictly an act of grace because Christ has a right to His inheritance but we do not. We receive it only through Him.
- B. This inheritance is all of grace
1. Christ has a right to His inheritance – we do not.
 2. We have received it by grace as we have been united to Him. This has happened through justification by faith.
 3. All that we have is in Christ Jesus – all by grace
2 Corinthians 8:9 – “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”
- C. Christ is the source of every blessing of grace
1. Jesus prayed, "Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).
 2. We will receive that same glory. We won't be equal to Christ in terms of deity, but we will be equal to Him in the sense that we will inherit all that He possesses.
 - a. Jesus also prayed, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them [his disciples]" (John 17:22).

- b. It is easy to be distracted by earthly things. Instead we should dwell on heavenly things (2 Cor. 4:18; Col. 3:2).

III. It's an Excellent Inheritance

A. It is immeasurable

- 1. We share all that pertains to Christ
Romans 8:16-17 – “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”
- 2. If Christ is the heir of all things then we are also have become heirs of all things

B. What does it mean that we are “joint-heirs”

- 1. In Christ we shall share all that pertains to Him
- 2. Heaven and earth are ours
 - a. The Psalmist wrote of our Lord’s inheritance
Psalm 2:8 – “Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”
 - b. Peter quoting from Isaiah spoke of a New Heavens and a New Earth
2 Peter 3:13 – “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”
 - c. Creation lies in corruption now but this will not be forever
 God is about to make all things new – and it is ours!
 - d. This is the essence of the Beatitudes
Matthew 5:5 – “Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”
- 3. Does Christ possess a Kingdom – it too is ours
James 2:5 – “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?”
 - a. Is Christ not a Priest and a King? Does He not also state that we are priests and kings?
Revelation 1:6 – “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
 - b. Does He sit on a throne – We will sit on His throne with Him.
Revelation 3:21 – “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”
1 Corinthians 6:2 – “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?”
Revelation 2:26 – “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:”
- 4. Does Christ not dwell in a glorious body pure and undefiled?
 - 1. We too have the hope of the resurrection

2. We too will be raised uncorruptible
1 Corinthians 15:20 – “But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.
1 Corinthians 15:53 – “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.”
5. We share all that pertains to Christ. Our mind immediately turns to all things glorious. But there is another aspect.
 We shall share in His sufferings – Jesus was heir to the cross, to mocking and scourging.
Romans 8:16-17 – “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”
 - a. To come after Christ is to receive all that pertains to Him
Luke 9:23 – “And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
 - b. To be an heir with Christ is to suffer with Him
Romans 8:17 – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”
 - c. Paul spoke of sharing in Christ’s suffering
Philippians 3:10-11 – “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; ¹¹ If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”
 - d. The persecution Christians receive goes to many extremes. Some Christians receive light affliction while others are martyred. But we have all been ostracized or looked down upon for our faith in Jesus Christ. Those who suffer for Christ are the heirs of God

We’ll see more of this next time.

- C. There is still another aspect of our inheritance
 1. Look at the phrase “heirs of God”
 It could be read with God being the object or the subject
 For example if we read the phrase, “love of God” God can be either the object or the subject.
 If God is the subject then it is speaking of God’s love for us.
 “The love of God surpasses all other loves”
 If God is the object then it is speaking of our love for God.
 “Our love of God must surpass all other loves”
 2. Looking at this phrase it could be either subjective or objective
 It could be read that we are God’s heirs.
 It could also be read that we have God as our inheritance.
 3. Our greatest inheritance is God Himself, or more particularly Christ.
Psalms 73:25-26 – “Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.* ²⁶ My flesh and my heart faileth: *but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*”

Not only is it an Equal, Endowed, and Excellent inheritance

IV. It's an Eternal Inheritance

1 Peter 1:3-4 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,”

A. Paul's great thrust in this passage is our future hope

Romans 8:17-18 – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. ¹⁸ For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

B. Everything on earth is growing old and will soon pass into nothingness

1. Paul says creation is groaning looking for the future deliverance

Romans 8:22-23 – “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. ²³ And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.”

2. Our focus should be on that which is eternal – that which is permanent – our eternal inheritance

Matthew 6:19-20 – “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:”

3. People sadly spend their whole lives seeking an earthly treasure that they cannot keep. How much more glorious it is to labor for that which will never pass away.

Jim Elliot who was killed as he sought to bring the Gospel to the Aucas: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose”

B. Our treasure cannot be lost because it is being kept in Christ

1. He is preserving us

Philippians 1:6 – “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:”

2 Timothy 1:12 – “for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

2. Nothing shall rob us of our inheritance

First Peter 1:4-5 says we have been promised "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God."

Everything on earth grows old, becomes defiled, or fades away. But the believer's inheritance is incorruptible and eternal. We who are saved don't need to work at staying saved; we are kept by God's power. We will receive the inheritance promised us them before the world began (Eph. 1:3-4). That is truly cause for rejoicing (Rom. 5:2)!

Conclusion:

1. In James 2:5 we are spoken of as being *heirs of the kingdom*.
James 2:5 – “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?”
2. Christ has a kingdom that shall never be moved. We share in His ownership of that Kingdom
 - A. Is Christ a King? He rules over all. He has made us kings. Does he sit upon a throne? We shall overcome and sit down with him upon his throne. Will he judge the nations? Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world!
Revelation 3:21 – “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”
 - B. Is Christ a priest? We are priests unto our God.
 - C. Is Christ glorious? So shall we be for we shall be made like him.
 - D. Is he everlasting? So shall we be.
1. We have not yet received the fullness of our inheritance. Right now at this present time all things belong to God. We still await our full reward. But God has pledged it to us and given His Spirit as a down payment.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22 – “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; ²² Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”
Ephesians 1:13-14 – “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”
2. This means that right now you are a steward, a trustee – one who is managing someone else’s possessions. Your time belongs to Him, your possessions belong to Him, your loved ones belong to Him. And God has entrusted the Gospel to us.
1 Corinthians 4:1-2 – “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”
3. Jesus said if you have not been faithful with that which belongs to another how shall you be given something of your own?
Luke 16:12 – “And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?”
4. In heaven we will be given all things.
Matthew 25:21 – “His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”
5. What are you looking for? What has captivated your affections upon this earth? What is your inheritance? A knowledge of our present duty and our future glory should cause us to live with a proper prospective. We are serving the living God who shall richly reward us. William Carey - “Expect great things from God, Attempt great things for God.” May God grant you to live with the fullness of expectation of your inheritance as you labor for the glory of His Kingdom today.