

1 Peter 1:4-5
Our Invincible Inheritance

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Sermon outline

- I. R'n of Christ not only provided us new birth but an inheritance that is:
 - Invincible
 - Kept (reserved)
 - Personal
 - Revealed in the Last time.

- II. The Heirs
 - Are Guarded by God's Power
 - Through faith

Intro:

When the founder of Walmart, Sam Walton, died in 1992, he was 74 years old. He was one of the richest men in the country and he had 4 children, 3 sons and one daughter, who inherited his fortune. They were the heirs of Sam Walton's fortune.

Today I'd like to talk to you about inheritances and heirs. It is actually an important theme in holy scripture. For example, we read in Lev. 20:23 as Moses speaks to the people of Israel:

²³ And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them. ²⁴ But I have said to you, 'You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.'

What is an inheritance? It is usually something of monetary value that is left to a person's family when he dies. It may consist of property, such as a house, or a car, money, or stocks. The person who gets all these things is called an "heir."

Our text in 1 Peter talks about the inheritance that believers in Jesus will receive. Let's ask the Lord's blessing on our study today.

Prayer:

Gracious Father, we come before your throne today thanking you for your Word. We thank you for that fisherman, the apostle Peter, who you called to yourself, not only to

believe in Christ but to be an apostle in the early church, one of the primary leaders in that church.

We thank you for his life and his ministry. We thank you for all his service to the cause of Jesus Christ in the earth. We thank you that in this letter he is always pointing us to Jesus, the Lamb slain for the salvation of his people. We ask you to guide us today and open up your Word that we may learn more of this great salvation that Jesus has provided us, that we might learn and grow and rejoice and be strengthened in our inner man. Bless the teaching ministry of your Word, we pray in our Savior Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Link to last Sunday's sermon on verse 3:

Last Sunday we focused on verse 3 where we learned that it was Jesus' resurrection from the dead that is the reason, the foundation, the historical act that makes possible the new birth, the spiritual birth of new believers. The New Birth is that invisible transaction that happens in our hearts and minds when the Holy Spirit enters our lives and enlightens us to the gospel of Christ, of his death and resurrection that is the basis of our salvation. The Holy Spirit reveals us that we are a sinner and lost and without hope in the world unless we come in repentance and faith to Christ. And so the Spirit enters and convinces and convicts us of our lost condition and woos us and draws us so we come to Jesus Christ, asking forgiveness of our sins, and we embrace him as our Lord and Savior.

This is the New Birth, the spiritual birth, that is necessary for us to enter the Kingdom of God. A person who receives this New Birth is a recipient, a benefactor, of the mercy of God. And we learned last week that this new birth – which, by the way – can come to a person at any age – is anchored in the fact that Jesus rose from the dead.

If he hadn't been raised from the dead, we would still be in our sins. But because he was raised from the dead we know that God the Father accepted the offering up of his Son's body on Calvary's cross, the pouring out of his blood, the Father accepted this as an acceptable substitutionary sacrifice for our sins.

So God the Father raised his Son from the dead and brought him back to heaven and from there the Holy Spirit has been poured out ever since upon the people of God. He has come into our lives and give us new hearts, changed hearts, so that it becomes our delight more and more to serve our Savior, to exercise ourselves in his service in gratitude for what he has done for us in rescuing us from the coming judgment that will fall on all humanity.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading...

So we see that the text is telling us here that we have an inheritance. Jesus' resurrection not only is the ground of our new birth, but his resurrection from the dead secured for us an inheritance. Now if we were one of Sam Walton's children we would have a massive inheritance but as a child of God we have something better than that, we have an inheritance from God himself. The money and property and houses of this earth will one day fade away and be gone. But the inheritance of God's people will last forever.

Peter calls it here in verse 4 as "imperishable" – it cannot perish, it cannot rot – but it remains forever. He also says in verse 4 that this inheritance is "undefiled," it cannot be sullied or made unclean by sin or evil, but it remains forever has holy and pure and undefiled. It comes from God and partakes of the nature of God in that it is pure and righteous and acceptable in God's holy sight. Peter uses one more word to describe this inheritance – notice he is telling us what it is not, in order to focus in one what it is – he says it is unfading. That is it can never fade away - it will never lose its color, its vitality, its life. This inheritance that Christ provides his people will be as great and glorious a million years from now as it is today. Everything in his life and universe eventually either fades or rots or disintegrates – and vanishes. But this inheritance God gives his people remains powerful and active and dynamic forever - because it comes from God and is the gift of God.

I had a brown corduroy bathrobe that my grandmother had made and given me as a young man. I loved that thing and wore it for many years until it eventually it just began to fall apart and the last couple of years it was just a set of rags and I had to throw it away. But the robe of righteousness that Christ gives will never fall apart or rot or fade, but it will always clothe us and make us acceptable to the Father, from the day we get it, on into all eternity future.

Here in the ESV translation the Apostle Peter uses three adjectives to describe this inheritance that God provides for his people: imperishable, undefiled and unfading.

I call it our "invincible inheritance." What does invincible mean? It means, according to Webster's dictionary,

incapable of being conquered, overcome, or subdued.

This inheritance that our God gives us through Christ is incapable of being conquered, overcome, or subdued.

This is how Heb. 9;15 describes this inheritance: - ¹⁵ Therefore he is ^(A)the mediator of a new covenant, so that ^(B)those who are called may ^(C)receive the promised eternal inheritance. ^(D)since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

How long will this inheritance from God last?– it will last eternally. The inheritance that the Walton children got is only good for this life. When they die, they can't take a single penny with them.

Let's look at a few more descriptions that the bible gives us of this inheritance that is ours in Christ:

1 Pet. 5:4 - ⁴ And when ^(A)the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the ^(B)unfading ^(C)crown of glory.

James 1:12 - ¹² ^(A)Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive ^(B)the crown of life, ^(C)which God has promised to those who love him.

2 Tim. 4:8 - ⁸ Henceforth there is ^(A)laid up for me ^(B)the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, ^(C)the righteous judge, will award to me on ^(D)that day, and not only to me but also to all ^(E)who have loved his appearing.

Alan Stibbs says this about this inheritance?

“In OT times this word described the appointed portion or lot to be possessed in Canaan by every one of God' people. Here it [translates kleronomia which] includes the idea of full realized possession of the inheritance rather than just the title to it.”
This Inheritance, unlike Israelites' which was on earth, this is in heaven.
This inheritance, has already been set aside, or reserved.
The highest blessing of this inheritance is the Lord himself.

The inheritance is the Lord himself:

Cf Psa. 16:5 - *The Lord is ^(A)my chosen portion and my ^(B)cup;
you hold my ^(C)lot.*

A New Test. Com'y, p. 587

Inheritance is “untouched by death, unstained by evil, unimpaired by time (F.W. Beare)

Westminster Shorter Catechism, “A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, [a] and to enjoy him forever.

Col. 3:1-3 “See those things above...

that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading,

“Unlike worldly possessions which can decay or disappear in a moment’s notice, this inheritance is “lost proof” – you cannot lose it because it’s anchored in God himself and guaranteed to us by Christ’s R’n from the dead.

Notice the last phrase in verse 4:

kept in heaven for you,

Kept = Gk. Perfect tense (past act with abiding consequences)

Our inheritance is kept not on earth, but in heaven. Therefore it is safe. If I have \$10,000 and I keep it under my mattress, then one day a thief could come in and steal it. But if I put it in the bank it is safe. Even if the bank burns down, my money is insured by the Federal Government in the bank.

So no matter what happens to us on earth, our inheritance in the heavenlies is safe, our salvation is safe. No one and nothing can rob it from us.

Paul said it like this: ³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39.

Calvin: Our salvation is kept in heaven so it is safe “beyond the reach of danger,” from problems and evils in the world.

***This inheritance is not only kept for us by God himself but it is personal.
“kept in heaven for you”***

This is a plural “you” in Greek – kept for you all.

John 14:3 - And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.

In this verse the pronouns “you” are also plural. Jesus is saying, I am going to prepare a place for “you all,” for my church, for my people.

Jesus has gone on ahead and he is preparing a place for us to be with him and meanwhile he is keeping us safe in his love and purpose.

Col. 1:5 - ⁵ because of (A)the hope (B)laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in (C)the word of the truth, the gospel,

⁵ who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Four: this inheritance is not only unassailable and kept and personal but it waits to be revealed in the last time.

Christ came and died and was raised and ascended and he has taken his place in heaven as our great High Priest who is interceding for us and preparing a place for us and he will come again when the Father gives him the signal and when he returns he will be revealed in all his glory to all creation:

Rev. 1:7 - ⁷ Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail[Ⓜ] on account of him. Even so. Amen.

II. The Heirs of Salvation

...who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

A. The Heirs

Notice the word "who" here. The scripture is talking about people. They are the object of this inheritance. An inheritance is no good if it doesn't have a recipient! You and I who believe in Christ at the heirs, the recipients of this inheritance.

Listen to Rom. 8:15-17:

¹⁵ For [Ⓜ]you did not receive [Ⓜ]the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of [Ⓜ]adoption as sons, by whom we cry, [Ⓜ]"Abba! Father!"¹⁶ [Ⓜ]The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,¹⁷ and if children, then [Ⓜ]heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, [Ⓜ]provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."

It is the Holy Spirit who comes to us, we "receive the Spirit of adoption as sons..." The HS let us know we are heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

From NBD by R.E. Nixon

"The inheritance is narrowed down to the true Israel, Christ himself, who is "the heir:"p. 563

Mark 12:7 - ⁷ But those tenants said to one another, [Ⓜ]'This is the heir. Come, [Ⓜ]let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'

"Christ is heir of everything." Heb. 1:2 - ² but ⁱⁿ these last days ^{he} has spoken to us by ^{his} Son, whom he appointed ^{the heir of all things,} ^{through whom also he created} ^{the world.}"

"Believers in a sense share the divine sonship by adoption and therefore also the divine heirship:" Rom. 8:15-17

"They follow in the footsteps of faithful Abraham as heirs of the promise:"Rom. 4:13

¹³ For ^{the} promise to Abraham and his offspring ^{that he would be heir of the world} did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith.

"Their inheritance is something which is given by God's grace because of their status in his sight, and it is in no sense earned."

B. The heirs are guarded by God's power

who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

How safe are you as an heir of Christ and all his benefits?
How safe is your inheritance in heaven?

As an heir of the inheritance reserved for you in heaven you are guarded not by your own power, or by angelic power, or by ecclesiastical power, but by the very power of God himself.

How powerful is God?

Look around you at the creation of the earth.

Look up and see the creation of the universe – spoken into existence in one day by the Word, the voice of God.

The planets hold their courses, the atomic particles exercise their rotation, the air we breathe, the function of the cells in our bodies which take O₂ out of the blood, all these functions in the universe that we take for granted are upheld, sustained, and governed by the very power of God.

So every child of God, every saint, that is a holy one, every one set aside for God's purposes, every Christian who is united to Jesus Christ by faith in him, every believer who has an anchor in heaven in the Lord Jesus who has gone before us, every one of us are guarded by God's power. This is a military term. Heaven's armies; Christ himself

guards every believer by his almighty, divine power. No power can snatch a believer from Christ's hands.

He guards us; he keeps watch over us, he protects us from Satan and his demons and all their evil. When we finally arrive in the presence of Christ we'll be no more secure in his love and power than we are now.

C. Guarded through faith

This statement brings a balance.

Christ's R;n = basis of new birth and securing of our inheritance

Guarded by God's power - yes.

Salvation reserved in heaven – yes

Ready to be revealed – yet

But to benefit from all these, we must have faith.

We must be a part of the whole process with all of our human powers.

Salvation does not come to us apart from faith, from our faith.

Faith is a gift of God but it must be given to us. We must exercise it.

We must believe the Gospel; taken it into our hearts and minds and commit ourselves to it.

Calvin: All who are endued with faith may be distinguished from the rest, and may have no doubt that they are the true and legitimate heirs of the kingdom of God. As faith penetrates right to the heavens, so also it appropriates to us the blessings which are in heaven." P. 233

"We see indeed that under the Papacy a diabolical opinion prevails that our final perseverance is doubtful because we are uncertain whether tomorrow we shall be in the same state of grace. But Peter does not leave us in suspense like this. He maintains that we stand by the power of God, in case any doubt arising from a consciousness of our own infirmity should disquiet us. However weak we may be, our salvation is not uncertain, because it is sustained by God's power.

**Let us believe...rest...serve...worship...rejoice
Our inheritance is invincible for our Savior is such.**

-by Pastor Jeff Gregory
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