

The Inheritance of the Saints
(Ephesians 1:11-14)

Introduction: Subjective and Objective genitive. Discuss the previous blessings.

Theme: Tonight what I want you to see is that in Christ you have both been made and also obtained a glorious inheritance.

I. In Christ You Have Obtained/Become an Inheritance (vv. 11-12)

A. To the Jew First (v. 12).

(To the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory)

1. Paul distinguishes between the first to hope in Christ and those who did so later (cf. 3:1).
2. The Jews were the OT possession of God
 - a. Deu. 4:20 "But the Lord has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession as today."
 - b. cf. 9:29; 32:9; Zech. 2:12.
3. The Gospel went to them first.
 - a. Christ came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
 - b. The pattern of Acts: Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, the remotest part of the earth [Acts 1:8].
 - c. Paul says his Gospel is to the Jew first (Rom. 1:16).
 - d. "Salvation is from the Jews" [John 4:22]. It was in Israel that God brought about salvation.
4. Furthermore, they were the first to hope in Christ.
 - a. This refers to the Jewish hope through the ages.
 - (i) The use of the definite article "the Messiah."
 - (ii) The divinely inspired religion of Israel pointed to the Messiah.
 - b. They rejected the Messiah when He came [Exam: "Fiddler on the Roof"].
 - c. But God has not rejected his people.
 - d. There was a remnant in Paul's day (Rom. 9:6), and at the present (Jews for Jesus).

B. But Also You Gentiles (v. 13).

(In whom also you have become an inheritance, having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.)

1. The message was secondly carried to the Gentiles.
 - a. Because Jews rejected, salvation came to Gentiles.
 - b. In order to make them jealous (Rom. 11:11).
2. They also are made heirs of eternal life.

- a. Peter was amazed at Gentiles inclusion [Acts 10].
 - b. Jews at Jerusalem were also [Acts 11].
- 3. In Christ you are admitted into the ranks of God's people.
- 4. So you have also become the possession of God.
- C. In Christ You Also Receive an Inheritance.
 - 1. You are heirs with Christ <Rom. 8:17f>.
 - 2. You have received the inheritance in principle.
 - 3. You will enter fully into it at the resurrection <Mt. 25:34>.
- D. This is in Accord with God's Sovereign Plan.

(Having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will)

 - 1. Last week we saw how God decrees in eternity, and then works that decree out in time.
 - 2. To the praise of His glory ["The people whom I formed for Myself, will declare My praise" (Isa. 43:21)].
 - 3. "The word **glory**, by way of eminence, denotes, in a peculiar manner, that which shines in the goodness of God; for there is nothing that is more peculiarly His own, or in which He desires more to be glorified, than goodness" [Calvin 21:206].
- 11. The Holy Spirit is the Guarantee [vv. 13-14]
 - A. He is the Spirit of Promise (v. 13).
 - 1. He is the fulfillment of the Father's promise.
 - a. He was promised in the OT <Joel 2:28>.
 - b. The promise is reiterated in the NT [Acts 1:4]
 - 2. He was poured out at Pentecost in fulfillment of that promise (Acts 2:16f).
 - B. He Seals You In Christ
 - 1. How the seal was used.
 - a. To authenticate or confirm as genuine and true (Hodge 34).
 - (i) You are authenticated as true children of God.
 - (ii) You have the witness within yourselves <1 John 5:10>.
 - (iii) You are thus assured of their reconciliation and acceptance.
 - (iv) Thus, the Spirit gives you assurance of your interest in Christ.
 - b. To mark as one's property.
 - (i) A man would seal his property with his signet

- to identify it as his own.
 - (ii) If, when he comes later to claim it, his ownership is questioned, the seal offers sufficient evidence.
 - (ii) You are marked as belonging to God <Rev. 7:3>.
 - c. To render secure (Hodge 34).
 - (i) You are rendered certain of being saved.
 - (ii) You are sealed unto the day of salvation <Eph. 4:30>.
 - d. In these senses all God's children are sealed.
 - e. The Spirit is His seal of ownership.
 - f. You are sealed into Christ by the Spirit who is the seal.
2. The outward means is the preaching of the Gospel.
- a. The Gospel is the word of truth.
 - (i) The message of love and mercy of God (Rom. 1:16).
 - (ii) In this environment of unbelief, you may be tempted to doubt the truth of God.
 - (iii) But the truth of God's word is based upon His own veracity, His own truthfulness.
 - (iv) For this reason, not one thing He has spoken will ever fall to the ground.
 - b. It is the means by which God works faith in you.
 - (i) Paul says, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17).
 - (ii) How can one believe unless he first hear?
 - (iii) The only exceptions are infants and those who are outwardly incapable of being called.
3. The internal means is the Spirit's working faith in you.
- a. It is made effectual by the Holy Spirit.
 - (i) The word has no inherent power. It does not work *ex opera operato*.
 - (a) Classic Roman Catholic Orthodoxy taught this
 - (b) This led some to baptize people against their will to receive grace to believe.
 - (ii) It is the instrument through which the Spirit works.
 - (a) He makes the word effectual unto salvation.
 - (b) He does *so* sovereignly.
 - b. Faith is the Spirit's gift.
 - (i) Faith is not a work.
 - (ii) It is a looking away from one's self to Christ.
- C. He also is the Guarantee of the Inheritance (v. 14).
1. He is the pledge ($\alpha\rho\rho\alpha\beta\omega\nu$; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5).
- a. Definition.
 - (i) Used of a pledge until the full price is paid (cf

Gen. 38:17-20 Judah's pledge to Tamar).

- (ii) The difference is that He is not taken back as a pledge is often returned [Calvin 21:209 fnt 1]).
- (ii) In Modern Greek used of an engagement ring.

b. He is the down payment.

- (i) When we believe, we are sealed in Christ.
- (ii) The believing, and sealing are concomitant.
- (iii) The Spirit unites us to Christ, from which union flow all the blessings of Christ's work.
- (iv) The Spirit also dwells in us through faith.

c. He guarantees that we will receive the balance.

- (i) What Christ earned for you will be received.
- (ii) The Spirit Himself dwelling in us is the guarantee.
- (iii) He is the foretaste of heaven we enjoy on earth.
- (iv) The part of which we are to receive the whole.

Romans 8:23:

"And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies").

2. Until God takes full possession of His people.

- a. God has redeemed you for Himself (cf. 1:7).
- b. He has bought you out of the marketplace of sin.
- c. Because of that, you are not your own, but belong to Him (1 Cor. 6:20; Acts 20:28).
- d. He will take full possession of you, His people, at the resurrection <Eph. 4:30>.
- e. You will be in glory, in your resurrected bodies, with no sin to ruin the full enjoying of God to all eternity.

D. Again, the End of His Work is God's Glory

- 1. You have been made an inheritance.
- 2. You have received an inheritance.
- 3. You were sealed in Christ until the day of redemption.
- 4. You have received the promised pledge of the Spirit
- 5. And all to the praise of God's glory.
 - a. Paul never tires of speaking of the glory of God.
 - b. When you realize to the full extent the mercy of God in Christ, you cannot, indeed no creature can, give full expression to the praise due to the Creator (Calvin 21:210).

Conclusion: How should you respond to these things? With Paul you should say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ" (1:3).

May you, the Lord's people, lift up everlasting praise to the

King of glory for His indescribable grace. Amen! Let us pray.