***Qualified for Heaven, and to Serve God

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-096***

2 Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching; for reproof; for correction; for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

In Mark 7:6-7, Jesus said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites. As it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far away from Me. But in vain, they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men. Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.’"

Matthew 13:16-17: "But blessed are your eyes because they see; and, your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desire to see what you see, and did not see it; and, to hear what you hear and did not hear it."

2 Timothy 2:15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of Truth."

Acts 20:32: "And now I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

Revelations 2:17 "He who has an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches, let him hear."

Shall we bow in prayer? Father, we ask You to bless this Your Word to our understanding now in Christ's name. Amen.

Our subject is "Prayer for the Colossians," number 30 in Colossians 1:9-14.

**Thanksgiving**

In this passage, Colossians 1:9-14, the apostle Paul has been pointing out that he prays regularly for the Colossian Christians with a great level of intensity. He prays for their continued spiritual progress through their functioning on the full knowledge of doctrine which has been taught them. His prayer also expresses his thanksgiving to the Father for his daily grace to him, and to the Colossian Christians in a variety of ways.

The propriety of being thankful to God is strongly emphasized, as we have seen, throughout the Bible for a variety of reasons. For one thing, it reminds the believer where his blessing comes from; that is, Who butters his bread. Thanksgiving also develops an esteem for what we have received from God, which enables us to keep the blessings of His divine grace.

It is a fact of Scripture, and a fact of life, that when people do not esteem and thank God for something, Romans 1 says that you're in great danger of losing it. How often have we seen that in our own congregation? People, who did not esteem and honor the blessings of the distinctive ministry of the Word that we have enjoyed here, exchanged everything of quality for everything which is shallow. And I am awed and humbled by the fact that God judges us in this way. You do not give God the back of your hand, and fail to esteem your access to the deep things of the Word of God.

We believers are on a journey to heaven through the devil's unfriendly world. Each day, therefore, is a time for gratitude to the Father, and for carrying us through it safely. Each day we are graced out to be able to bear the burdens of the angelic warfare. Each day we receive His logistical grace to survive, and like the widow, to use our mite to sustain the need of the moment in His service. And remember that the mite was her everything.

I will never cease, personally, being grateful and in awe of the people of the Berean congregation, and the services of love that they constantly perform for the Lord's glory. They should be at the top of our expressions of thanksgiving. And all you have to do is stop and think how often we see about us, people going about the business of serving God. These are people who are standing in line to help. These are people who are ready to carry the burdens, and to carry them regularly, and with quality. These are people who know that they have a life that can be wasted, or a life that can be made to count for eternity and for heaven.

Just think of these men who are now out in the field on the camp out. Think of the club leaders who will follow after that. Think of the people who conduct our club ministry. Think of the people who come Sunday mornings to teach in the Word of God, while the children stay at home and ignore, while their parents thumb their noses. That's bad, and they will lose that in one way or another. They may find themselves jerked out of their place of enrichment because they did not esteem and recognize where God has put them, so that some triviality will become the greatest thing in their life, and they will exchange a gold mine for a shallow fake fool's gold that they think is more valuable.

I constantly think about the people of this congregation one-by-one, and this without exception. Some are better; and, some are worse. Some are higher; and, some are lower. But they're all growing, and they're all moving in the same direction, toward the glory of Christ. And it is a proper and right thing that we think through and recognize, at least in our own heart, what people do in this ministry for the ongoing testimony of this church. That's why God blesses us beyond anything that we can account for in our numbers.

The sadness is out there. Your heart would be broken, as mine is saddened, as we get reports from people who once sat here, and did not esteem it. God said, "Audios muchacho," and they thought that they were improving their situation. It is the Word, and the Word, and the Word. And nothing is more important in the life of a believer, and you leave the problems with Almighty God. You do not butt in there with your arrogance such that you must solve something that you think must be changed, when the problem is within your own life that must be changed.

So, each day we can understand when Paul says, "Giving thanks to the Father." But there's a lot of hypocritical thanksgiving to the Father, because the only people who can express thanksgiving to the Father in an unhypocritical, genuine way are the believers who are filled with the Holy Spirit. Gratitude from the soul is a product of full knowledge doctrine which is influencing the mind. This is the real thing. The gratitude which comes from the sin nature is a pretense of the carnal Christian, and it is a fake thing. There is so much disgusting fakery among Christians that it is hard for believers who have any sensitivity to even keep associating with them. The smiley face, and the sweetness-and-light is all shallow and fakery, because these people have lost their way in the walk with God. They no longer have the mind of Christ.

So, when you have people to associate with in the Lord's work who have the mind of Christ, you better appreciate them. You better name them to God, and thank God for them. And pray that they would remain faithful, and that that they would remain staunch, and that the devil would not be able to knock them out of the operation. Nothing is sadder in the Christian life than a spiritual casualty. And nothing is worse than the spiritual casualty in the Christian life who is lying on a bed of distress, and doesn't realize that he is a casualty.

The only people who are not hypocritical in expressing thanksgiving are those who know the Word, and in whom the Spirit of God is in full control of that life. Genuine gratitude to the Father gives us the capacity for a quality lifestyle. It gives us the capacity for moral integrity. It gives us the capacity for godly love. It gives us the capacity for inner happiness. It gives us the capacity for fulfilling our divine mission of service to God. It all comes from the simple act of "Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul, and everything else that flows from that."

So, in Colossians 1:12, after expressing thanks to the Father, the apostle Paul says that there is a reason why he expresses this thanks. First of all, he does it because He has qualified us to share in something – giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. The word "qualified" is this Greek word "hikanoo" (hik-an-o'-o), H I K A N O O. This word means "to make sufficient." It means "to make fit." Here it is referring to the fact of salvation.

**Qualified for Heaven**

This word is only used one other time in the New Testament. Therefore, it is a specialized word in the hands of God the Holy Spirit. And it is interesting in what two ways it's used. The second place is in 2 Corinthians 3:6. Here in Colossians 1:12, it is used in terms of God making us fit to go to heaven. It is in terms of being fit for salvation. In 2 Corinthians 3:6, we read, "Who made us "hikanoo" ('adequate') – "Who made us adequate as servants of a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life." The other time that this particular word is used then has to do with God making us adequate for Christian service.

**Qualified to Serve God**

So, in the New Testament, this word is interestingly enough used for two things. First of all, it is used in terms of making a sinner adequate for salvation. Secondly, it is used in terms of taking that born-again person, and making him adequate for Christian service. Now both of these uses require special specific qualities in a person which no one possesses by nature, and which no one can develop on his own. That is that salvation requires absolute righteousness. You can't produce that. It has to be given by God. Then it must require the guidance of the Holy Spirit. No one can guide himself. This is a provision of God for the indwelling Holy Spirit through the Word of God to guide the believer.

So, here you have, in this word, in Scripture, what Paul means by making us qualified: qualified in terms of salvation; and, then qualified to serve God. Both factors must come from God. This is a divine, supernatural work of qualification. God gives us what we sinners need to have to make us members of His royal family. We need to have absolute righteousness. We need spiritual regeneration to be part of His royal family. Then He gives us the capacity to serve in His royal kingdom.

So, when I tell you to observe how many people surround you in this ministry, and have for decades, who are super servants of the Most High God (they are born-again people), and they humble us with a kind of quality: unassuming; not self-complimentary; and, not seeking glory, but just serving the Lord, because that's what He's asked them to do, and that's what He's made them equipped to do. And all you have to do is walk around this campus, and you see people on their own carrying out some piece of ministry. And you see their constant loyalty and their support of the various things that we do, because they know that what we do all has a divine purpose and a divine reason.

God gives us what we need to be saved. He gives us what we need to serve in His kingdom.

This particular Greek verb is in the Greek aorist tense, which means that this is a current status of all Christians. They have been qualified by God in these two ways. And this is a qualification which is ours forever. It is a qualification that God has provided, and which continues on. It's a single act of God.

Now, what does that mean? It means that it's a qualification to preserve the potential of your life. Nothing is going to be sadder in eternity than for Christians who realize how they have squandered the potential of their lives.

**Deny Yourself and Follow Christ**

For example, Mark 8:34-38: "And He (Jesus) summoned the multitude with His disciples, and He said to them (a large crowd has been following Jesus along with His 12 disciples, His apostolic band, and he calls them together, and he calls the crowd together, and he says,) 'I want to teach you something.' Jesus says, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'" If anybody wants to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, doing this service bit that we've been talking about, it is necessary for him to take up his cross and to follow Jesus Christ.

Now, the cross here refers to the person's divine mission. It refers to the service – that which God has equipped you to do, and that which He wants you to do. So, each of us has a cross. Don't think that this cross means to live a miserable life. There are Roman Catholic priests and nuns who still wear underwear that has a hairy inside. These are hair shirts, and they wear it because it feels terrible, and it's punishes the body. It's miserable, because they believe that their cross must equal the cross of Christ if they're hoping for salvation.

"If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself;" that is, look to the purpose for which you were saved. Get off the kick of your life, and what you're going to do with it, and your contempt of the person of God your Father: "Take up your cross and follow Me. For, whoever wishes to save his life (preserve its potential) shall lose it;" that is, to save it for his own personal old sin nature ambitions. But whoever loses his life for My sake, and the gospel's, shall save it." Whoever uses up his life in the service of God for which He has qualified you, first through salvation, and then through the Word of God, you will save the potential of your life.

**Do not Gain the Whole World and Forsake your Life**

What does that mean? "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forsake his . . .?" Now the translation here is "soul," but that's unfortunate, because, as I pointed out to you before, the Greek word here is "psuche" (psoo-khay'), P S U C H E. And "psuche" is what is translated up here in Mark 8:35 as "life." It is your potential of existence of living – your being. Now, that is your soul. That's true. You are your soul. That is your life. But what it does here is that it kicks in a little idea here as though He's talking only about salvation. But as you'll see here in a moment, He is not talking just about salvation. He is talking that as a starting point, but He is talking about the consequences of living your life with the purpose of God in mind.

Therefore, it should read better: "What does it profit a Christian to gain the whole world (because you ran your own life by the sin nature direction), and you forfeit your life?" You forfeit what your life can now do, and you might even forfeit it physically. That's true. You will get to the point where you are so useless to God that suddenly you get bad news – news that tells you that something has been interjected by a divine hand into your physical structure, and you're on your way out.

Mark 8:37: "For what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" And there it is again. It should be life. It's the same word. What will you give in exchange for your life? What is it that is worthwhile for you to do with your life, and never give a thought to: "Father, what is your business this day for me? I want to go about it."

Mark 8:38: "For whoever is ashamed of me." Now you see he's talking about service: "Oh, I don't want to talk about Christ. I don't want to talk about salvation. I don't want to hand out evangelistic brochures. That makes me feel a little creepy. It's kind of embarrassing, out in the people I move with. These are all sophisticated people of the world, and they're very snooty people. I don't think I should talk to them about salvation, or to serve God."

**The Judgment Seat of Christ**

Somebody may come to you and say, "What do you do?" You could say, "Well, what do I do? I'm a servant of the Most High God. I go about trying to inform people on what God thinks as recorded in the Bible. That's what I do. That's my job. That's my main thing I do." And then people will be somewhat taken aback: "What kind of a life is that?" For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation (spiritual adultery – unfaithfulness to the moral code of God), the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." He talking about the day of Christ. The day of Christ in the Bible refers to the rapture of the church. You are so ashamed of Christ that you don't want to invest your life publicly in His behalf, standing up for the righteousness of the Word of God, because you're too squeamish. People will think that there is something weird about you. Jesus says, "Fine, when we stand together, I on the throne, and you before me at the Judgment Seat of Christ, I'm going to be ashamed of you. You're My child. I'm going to be ashamed of what you did with your life. I'm going to be ashamed of the fact that you did not have thanksgiving gratitude for people all around you, and for a ministry that should have had your finest and your best devotion, and your loyalty, and your consistency, and instead you went out to nothing. And now you stand before Me, and I must tell you that what could have been done over here, that I could have given you in eternal rewards, you get nothing but a few scraps.

This gets back to 1 Corinthians 3. And I'm amazed how often I get people who come up after the service, when I read this passage, and they give me some objectionable remarks, such that I'm making an implication that everything's not going to be hunky dory and equal for everybody once they stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ in heaven, as if I'm the one who's saying these things. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15: "For no man can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." There's our first qualification – qualified for heaven. He's done that for us. Now you have a life to live: "Now if any man builds upon the foundation of his salvation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and straw, each man's work will become evident for the day." This is the Judgment Seat of Christ day – "The day of Christ will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire, the judgment of God." This is the evaluation of God. Fire is a symbol: "And the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

**Rewards**

What's he going to test? He's going to test whether your works were human good; whether the works were your sin nature orientation; and, whether the works were living your life by your objectives, and ignoring the call of God, and the purpose for which He qualified you to serve Him: "If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward." If all of your works are human good, that's wood, and that's hay, and that's stubble. That's straw, and that's going to burn up. There will be nothing. Whereas gold, silver, and precious stones will not be affected by the heat of God's judgment. They will be preserved. And they will form the basis of treasures in heaven for you: "If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss, but He himself shall be saved – yes, so as through fire." Yes you'll be saved. God has qualified you for salvation. You're not going to lose that. And when you walked out of the sound of the Word of God, and the association of godly people, whose lives were on the line for Christ, you did yourself a great disservice, and you will suffer loss. You will go to heaven, and, unfortunately, your mind goes with you, with all of its memory.

Someday, as you may be walking across Lake Murray, or Galilee, or someplace, since you'll be able to do that, you might be reminiscing of how sweet it was when you were associated with a group of people where Christ was everything. There were no primadonnas. There was no exaltation of anybody – just everybody deeply appreciative of Christians who are working for the Lord; Christians who are using their spiritual gifts; and, Christians who are imperfect, but who tolerate each other's imperfections, because their eyes are on the Lord. Instead of getting your nose out of joint, and thinking that God cannot deal with people who need to be straightened out. You will go to heaven, but what a loss.

People should not become indignant when this passage is called to their attention, because these are the words of the Spirit of God. You will suffer loss. What might have been will not be. And this is an inevitable event as 2 Corinthians 5:10 declares, "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

This is why we tell you, whether you're a young person or older person in here this morning, that you should not squander this opportunity to concentrate upon the Word of God, or distract others from it. You have an eternal consequence riding upon it.

**Satan's World**

You and I have already been positionally removed from Satan's kingdom. That's what Colossians 1:13, our next verse, is going to tell us: "For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His Beloved Son." Now, we're still living in the devil's world. But we have been delivered positionally from it. And now there is for us the great opportunity to walk as servants in that kingdom. He has qualified us for that.

In fact, because we are in that kingdom positionally, we are also heirs of Jesus Christ. Romans 8:16-17: "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our human spirit that we are the children of God." This is the verse that we use to point out, in one place, that your human spirit is where the Word of God resides. The human spirit is your point of contact with God: "And if children, heirs also. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. If indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him." And the Bible makes it very clear that if we're going to live a godly life, we'll suffer for it. We are in Satan's territory. We are not welcome. The world does not like us. And it does not like the light of the Word of God that we shine upon its evil ways.

However, if we are children of God, He is our Father, and then we are His heirs. And we are joint heirs with everything that Jesus Christ has coming to Him. We will suffer with Him if we are going to take seriously our qualification – qualified for heaven and qualified to serve.

**Absolute Righteousness**

To be heirs with God requires the gift of absolute righteousness. This was made clear in the Old Testament in the Law of Moses. Leviticus 11:44: "For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves, therefore, and be holy, for I am Holy. And you shall not make yourselves unclean with any of the swarming things that swarm in the earth:" "Make yourself holy as I am Holy." How do we do that? It's a holiness that must be imputed to us from God on the basis of the acceptance of His moral cleansing for our moral guilt.

In the New Testament, 1 Peter 1:15-16 refers to this: the gift of absolute of absolute righteousness: "But like the Holy One Who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior, because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am Holy.’" This is by the imputation of absolute righteousness. It's that qualification that we already possess positionally.

Now the aorist tense refers to that point in time of our salvation when this qualification took place. This qualification is not a process. It is an instantaneous act of God. This is justification. This is the instantaneous act where God imputes to us absolute righteousness. It's done on the basis of the death of Christ Who paid the penalty for our sins. No human works are involved that can undo the saving work of God. Man by nature is not qualified for heaven. Man by nature is not qualified to serve God. And yet, what do people do? The world is full of religions that are claiming to serve God, but you cannot do that. If you do not possess absolute righteousness by an imputed gift from God, you cannot serve Him.

Man by nature is qualified only to receive, in fact, the wrath of God. Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins in which you formerly walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit, which is now working in the sons of disobedience, among whom we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh (the sin nature), indulging the desires of the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." That is our natural condition – to be children of wrath.

Notice Ephesians 2:12, "Remember that you were, at that time, separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise (the promise of salvation), having no hope, and without God in the world."

Then Ephesians 4:17-19: "But I say, therefore, and affirm together with the Lord that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart. And they, having become callous, having given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness." That is what man in his own nature is qualified for. It's a sorry looking picture. And yet, all these human beings who know not Christ, who have no absolute righteousness, they're in the highest positions of authority and of influence in our nation, and they're talking about God, and they're setting the pattern to be the role models for us in our lives.

**Share in the Inheritance**

God the Father saved us to serve Him, and thus, to qualify us for an eternal inheritance, which is the next thing that the apostle then makes reference to: "Giving thanks to the Father, Who has qualified us on two accounts: to go to heaven, with absolute righteousness; and, spiritually gifted, and with the guidance of the indwelling Holy Spirit, to enable us to serve Him, so that we may share in the inheritance."

**A Share of the Saints**

What this is actually saying ("share in") is "sharing in something which is a portion." And we may translate it: "Unto the portion of," or "constantly being thankful to the Father who has qualified us for a share in something." And what that share is, is described as a "kleros" (klay'-ros), K L E R O S. This word "kleros" means "a lot" or "an assigned portion." He has qualified us for a share of the lot. Each Christian is assigned a portion in the heavenly inheritance from God our Father in eternity. And that share of a part in the lot is "of the saints."

**Saints**

This word looks like this: it's the Greek word "hagios" (hag'-ee-os), H A G I O S. And it means "the holy ones." The word "holy" means "the set apart ones." It refers a born-again Christian of the church age – believers who have been set aside in Jesus Christ to eternal life in Christ. That's why we also translate this word as the word "saints." Every Christian is a saint, because every Christian is a holy one. Every Christian is "a set apart one." In Roman Catholicism, only certain people are saints – those who presumably have superior qualities of godliness. But positionally, we are all saints. Someday, in our experience, we will all actually be totally sin free.

In Acts 20:32, the apostle Paul is speaking to the pastor-teachers who have gathered from the various house churches at the seashore to see him off to Jerusalem in Ephesus: "And now I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace." What a precious statement that is: "To the Word of His grace." And how ignorant Christians are of the Word of His grace. Christians are constantly going to church, and they hear everything else but the Word of His grace. They hear the word of psychology; they hear the word of psychiatry; they hear the word of public opinions; they hear the word of what people believe; and, they hear the word of what the preacher believes, but they do not hear the Word of the grace of God. And here we have born-again, Christian believers set aside to eternal life by God to sainthood. What Paul is thankful for is that the Father has qualified him and the Colossians to share in salvation, and to share in all the power for happy, godly living made possible by that regeneration. God the Father did the qualifying of the believers through the payment of their sin by Jesus Christ on the cross, so that no one can again unqualify them. The issue of sin has been settled, and settled once for all, by a sacrifice that, unlike the animal sacrifices, need not be repeated.

Hebrews 9:15 says, "For this reason, He (Christ) is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called away received the promise of the eternal inheritance." We have an eternal inheritance because we have been qualified for that heavenly inheritance.

1 Peter 1:4 says, "To obtain an inheritance which is imperishable, and undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you."

**Salvation is of the Triune God Alone**

So, what Paul is thanking God for in Colossians is for the marvelous loving grace of God in saving us from the lake of fire, and in saving us for destiny in heaven. The Father is the author of the grace plan of salvation, resulting in our inheritance in heaven. The Son executed the Father's salvation plan on the cross. He thereby satisfied God's justice demands against our sin. It is the Holy Spirit who then applies the Father's salvation plan to the elect to form a new creature in Christ, fit for heaven.

So, there's the powerful union of the Godhead. The Father is the author of the plan. The Son makes the plan possible and gives a basis for it in His death. And the Holy Spirit carries it into effect. And man has nothing to do with it. He has qualified us for eternal life for the purpose of sharing in an eternal inheritance in heaven. Concerning the words "share in the inheritance," you may recall what the ancient Israelites went through. They shared in their inheritance of the Promised Land. And how did they share? They each were given a part of the lot. They each were giving a segment of the land. And that's the same picture that you and I have here – that God is giving us a part of heaven. And in the Millennial Kingdom, you'll have part of an area of authority. And in the new Jerusalem, you'll have a definite place that will be your apartment; your dwelling place; and, your share in what God has prepared.

In the Old Testament for example, here's how it worked. Numbers 26:52: "Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Among these the land shall be divided for an inheritance according to the number of names. To the larger group, you shall increase their inheritance (give them a bigger territory). To the smaller group, you shall diminish their inheritance (give them a smaller lot). Each shall be given their inheritance according to those who were numbered of them." So, in heaven, we have been qualified for a share. How big? That depends on what you do with your life. If you squander your life in the triviality of ignoring the plan and purpose of God, that's fine. Be arrogant; be smart-Alec; be indifferent; listen to the stupid people around you in this world; and, imitate what they pursue (what they esteem of value), and you'll get a little piece of inheritance.

Numbers 26:55. "But the land shall be divided by lot. They shall receive their inheritance according to the names of the tribes of their fathers. According to the selection by lot, their inheritance shall be divided between the larger and the smaller groups."

When they got into the land, we come to the book of Joshua 14:1-2: "Now these are the territories which the sons of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, which Eliezer the priest, and Joshua, the son of Nun, and the heads of the households of the tribes of the sons of Israel, apportioned to them for an inheritance by the lot of their inheritance as the Lord commanded through Moses for the nine tribes and the half tribe." So, here Israel went through exactly what is analogous to what we have before us in heaven. They came to share in an inheritance which was the ancient land of Israel, the Promised Land. The Israelites received a portion of this land – a portion of the territory given them by lot by that choice. So, in like manner, God the Father has provided the Christian within an allotted chair in the Millennial Kingdom and in the new Jerusalem.

This is certainly pointed out to us in Ephesians 2:12-13, "Remember that you were at one time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus, you, who formerly were far off, having been brought near by the blood of Christ." You are now in the family and in the inheritance.

In Revelation 20:6, we also read: "Blessed and holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection (that's the resurrection of believers only). Over these the second death has no power (that's the second death: the eternal separation from God – it has no power), but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him for 1,000 years." That's what's ahead for you. You are going to run this world. What a change! You're not even going to have to stand for election. Christ, the ruler, is going to make all the appointments.

Our nation now is in great fear. Some people understand where history is moving and what the potential problems. In the next four years, two, or maybe three Supreme Court justices will be appointed. They can be grossly evil, or they can be grossly biblical. And the effects will be dramatic.

So, here's the inheritance that someday God is going to run His world the way it's supposed to be. And you'll be part of that. That's part of your inheritance. Inheritance of heaven is yours, with all that pertains to it. This is a gift from God to those who will accept it by an act of faith in Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:5, "Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God." That is exactly what Paul is saying in Colossians, and he's saying it here in Corinthians. God has qualified us. He has made us adequate: adequate for salvation; and, adequate for serving.

The inheritance includes all the promises of God in Scripture that are ours (to the saints). It so happens that there are about 7,000 promises in the Scripture which are given to those who are believers (to those who are born-again).

Hebrews 6:12 says, "That you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." Part of our inheritance are all the promises of God. And you need to remember that these 7,000 promises are only good now. You cannot use them in heaven. These promises are for your use now. They're for your learning, and for your implementing them – putting them into effect in your life. That's what every service is all about – learning a little more of the promises of God, such as the great one we've heard this morning: that God has prepared for us (has qualified us) for salvation, and consequently for a service that is going to result in enormous eternal blessing, and for an inheritance of heaven with all that that pertains, beyond anything that we can imagine. This is the inheritance which is part of what the saints possess.

However, then there's one other thing: the enormous sphere in which that inheritance exists both now and in eternity. And it is a sphere which is described by the word "light." What is the inheritance of the believer in the sphere of light? And if we've heard some very thrilling things of the promises of God in our future now, just wait till you discover what is involved in being in the light.

Our Father, thank You so much for this, Your Word.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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