***The Christian Inheritance

Colossians 1:1-2

COL-097***

Hebrews 4:12: "For the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

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

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

Romans 15:4: "For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hoped for you."

1 Peter 1:23: "For you have been born-again, not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable; that is; through the living and abiding Word of God."

2 Timothy 4:2: "Preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove; rebuke; and, exhort with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires. And they will turn their ears away from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. But grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

Our subject is "Prayer for the Colossians," number 31 in Colossians 1:9-14.

One of our Bereans was discussing the doctrine of salvation with a Mormon woman recently. Her belief was based upon the Book of Mormon, which is viewed in Mormonism as equivalent to the Bible. In fact, it is the third segment to them of Scripture. Her belief based upon the Book of Mormon teaches that, after we in our own capacities have done all that we can to prove ourselves worthy to God for salvation, then we turn to Jesus Christ to complete our salvation. Our Berean showed her the contradiction of her belief with the teaching to be found in Ephesians 2:8-9 which says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that (salvation) is not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not as a result of works, that no one should boast." So, she pointed out here was a clear contradiction.

Her Bible, the Book of Mormon, says you have to work as hard as you can. Then when you've done everything you can, you turn to God. But the Bible says, "No, you don't do anything, because everything you have is contaminated by your sin nature. You can bring nothing to God. It has to be a grace gift from God. That's all." And it has to be received on the basis of the fact that you believe that God is not lying to you when he says that Christ has covered your sins: that moral guilt which require the penalty of death – He paid that for you on the cross. Now it is yours to receive, and that's the only way you'll get to heaven – by taking it as a gift. If you add works, you neutralize the deal.

Her response to this point was that she and our Berean just had a different viewpoint. However, she corrected her by pointing out that it was more than that. It was actually a difference between the inerrant Word of God, the Bible, and the over 4,000 times-errant word of Joseph Smith. The book of Mormon, since it was published for the first time, has had to be corrected 4,000 times with mistakes and errors that were discovered in it. The Bible has not had to be corrected once ever, because it is a supernatural product of God guiding men as they wrote to preserve them from incorporating anything that was not true. The lady's response to this was silence.

**God Qualified us for Salvation and for Christian Service**

Here in the book of Colossians, the apostle Paul has pointed out to the Colossian Christians that God the Father, and He alone, has qualified them for two great things in life. First of all for salvation and then for Christian service. We are saved to serve. Every person is born, from the moment of conception, into the human race with a mission from God. And if they're fortunate enough to be born into a family where parents are going to rear the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that child is going to come to know very early on the purpose for which God gave him life. And his whole life will be directed, then, to the fulfillment of that mission. So, when he stands before God, not for the judgment of salvation, but for the evaluation of his life, he will enjoy great personal rewards.

Salvation is not a reward. It is a gift. But what you earned by your life investment in the service of God: that you earn; and, that is a reward. The apostle Paul said that God has qualified us for salvation, and He has qualified us for Christian service. This is, of course, based on the payment of the penalty of death for sin by Jesus Christ for us all on the cross, so that God the Father has justified those who have accepted Christ as Savior. The qualification of salvation entitles a believer to share in the inheritance that Paul talks of, that the believer has in heaven – eternal life, with all pertaining to it. The divine inheritance includes a place in heaven with all of its transforming effects, and in the administration of the Millennial Kingdom here on the earth.

The church age is winding down now very rapidly. We're coming down to 6000 years since Adam was created. We will begin the seventh millennium. And in the Bible, seven is always a completion. Sevens are a completion number. And it seems that we have clear evidence, because world government is on the scene; the turning away from the Word of God is prominent; and, the focus is upon the socialist economic systems of the world. All of these, the Bible has predicted, are going to be the nature of the world just before Christ returns. So, we are now in the stage where we Christians are in our final preparation for what we will be doing when Jesus returns, and He sets up 1,000-year kingdom on this earth, of which He will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And guess who's going to run the show? You believers of the church age will be His administrators.

**The Basis of the Christian Inheritance**

So this is part of that inheritance that the apostle speaks of here in the book of Colossians 1:12: "Giving thanks to the Father Who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light." The inheritance of the saints – here are some thoughts about the basis of the Christians' inheritance.

1. **Jesus Christ is the Heir**

Jesus Christ is the heir of the Father in all things. Hebrews 1:2 points this out: "In these last days (God, that is) has spoken to us in His Son, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the ages." When we speak about the Christians' inheritance, we have to begin with the fact that our inheritance is related to the person of Christ who is the heir of the Father in all things.

1. **Position in a Family**

Heirship is based on position in a family; that is, those who are believers in Jesus Christ are the children of God. And no one else in the world is a child of God. You're not a child of God just because you happen to be a human being. You're a child of God because (like you're the child of your parents) you were born to them. So, in the Bible, to be a child of God requires a spiritual birth, and that's described as being born-again spiritually.

But heirship is based upon being in a family. If you're not in a family, you're not going to become an heir. John 1:12: "But as many as received Him (Jesus Christ), to them He gave the right (the authority) to become children of God, even to those who believe in His Name." So, before you can be an heir of anything from God (any kind of inheritance), you have to be a child of God. And the only way you become a child of God is through trusting in Jesus Christ to save you on the basis of his death for you, and adding no human works to the deal.

We may also add Romans 8:16-17: "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of 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." So, the statement of the Bible is very clear. Once you trust in Jesus Christ, you have an inner conviction. It's what the Spirit of God gives you that you are a child of God. You know that not because you feel it, but because you have believed the gospel. Christ died for you. You accepted the deal that God gives. Trust in Christ brings eternal life. Having become a child of God, you now become an heir of God. And you become, thereby, a fellow-heir with Jesus Christ, which means that whatever He has from the Father is what you share.

Now that's beyond human comprehension. Only the people who've gone out from this congregation, and who are now in heaven, fully grasp what this verse is telling us: what we have secured because of our position as heirs in the family of God. Galatians 3:26 also says, "For you are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." And if you are the sons of God, then you are the heirs of God.

1. **Coming into Heirship is Based upon the Death of Another**

The realization, or the coming into one's heirship, is based upon the death of another. The only way you'll become the heir of your parents' possessions is when they die. It is based upon the death of another. Here it is that Christ died for sinners, and because of that death, we are qualified to become heirs of God. Romans 5:8 says, "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, i that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Then 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, near the end of the book summarizes it very succinctly: "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received – that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." That's the gospel right there. How do I go to heaven? I believe the gospel (the good news). What's the good news? I can't do one thing to get myself into heaven. I can't take one step. I can't resolve one thing that I do. But God, through Christ, has done it all. It's not how good you are that determines whether you go to heaven. It's how good Jesus Christ is. And He is absolute perfection.

So, the only way we can cover our moral guilt, is for someone who is qualified to do it, who has no moral guilt of his own, and that's what Jesus did.

Hebrews 9:15 says that you can only realize your heirship when there is a death of another whose heir you become: "And for this reason, He is the mediator (Jesus Christ is the mediator) of a New Covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that are committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." It is the fact that, under the Old Testament, people brought animal sacrifices as a symbol of what Christ was going to do in the future. The animal sacrifice did nothing, any more than any religious ritual today does anything. It's just a symbol. But finally, when the New Covenant of the New Testament came along, Christ made the payment. Now, under this second covenant, everything that God ever wanted to do for us, and has promised to do for us, in the way of an eternal inheritance, He is free to do. On the death of Christ, we receive our inheritance.

1. **Eternal Life**

Heirship depends upon possessing the eternal life of God through Jesus Christ. You have to have more than good human life. You have to have a special kind of life: eternal life, which only God has. Titus 3:7 says, "That being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." The word "justified" in the Bible, most of you understand, means that God has declared you as good as Jesus Christ. He has imputed to you absolute righteousness. Now, you don't act like that. That will be fully your experience once you are in heaven. But now you have the capability of doing right. A person who is not a Christian just can't do what is right: "That being justified by His grace," not by your works, but by a gift from God. We have been declared absolutely righteous. And we've been made heirs accordingly because we have hope of eternal life. We have eternal life in Christ. If you don't have eternal life, you will not be an heir of God in terms of what heaven has to offer.

Also, 1 John 5:11-12: "And the witness is this: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life. He who does not have the Son of God does not have the life." How do you get the Son of God? You accept Him. He offers to save you. You say, "I believe it." And you accept the salvation gift.

1. **God the Father Qualifies Us**

God the Father Himself qualifies the believing center for divine heirship. And that's our verse that we've been looking for in Colossians 1:12: "Giving thanks to the Father Who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light."

1. **Predestination**

Heirship is based upon divine predestination of salvation by God's sovereign choice. Ah, here's a very sobering thought. Ephesians 1:11: "Also, we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose, Who works all things after the council of His will." Why are you a Christian? Why are you even interested in becoming a Christian? Why have you maybe suddenly found yourself interested in spiritual things? I'll tell you why. It is because up there in heaven resides a sovereign God, Who looks upon the mass of lost humanity. Nobody deserves to go to heaven. Nobody has any claims upon God. But in the Bible, we find the divine doctrine of election, where God looks down, and He puts His finger on you, and He says, "I want you in My heaven." And suddenly, things begin happening in your mind. There's an interest being created. And suddenly, your eyes begin to see spiritual things such that you wondered why you didn't understand this before. It was probably because nobody taught you, and nobody brought them to your attention. But now you have a capability that you never had before. And your heirship is obviously dependent upon God taking you into the family. And how do you get there? By His Own sovereign choice.

Ephesians 1:11: "We have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose, Who works all things after the counsel of His will." Now, that should come as a great relief. He's not picking us because we're some kind of really nice people. He's not choosing us because we deserve it in some way. He does it after the counsel of His will according to His purpose. So, when God reaches out and starts alerting you, you'd be very wise to pay attention and follow through.

1. **Protected by God**

The believer's divine inheritance in heaven is eternally secure to him being protected by the power of God. Sooner or later people say, "Okay, I'm a Christian. I have accepted Christ. But what if I do something terrible? If I do something bad, will I lose my salvation? No, you can never lose it. Therefore, you can never lose your inheritance. Once you're born into the family on the human level, you can never be unborn. You can be a low, dirty, rotten skunk, but you'll never cease being a member of that family. So, in the family of God, you might step out of line in your conduct as befitting a Christian, and God will, like a wise Father, discipline you (and you'll be very much aware of that), to get you back on track, but He will never disown you as a child in His family.

1 Peter 1:4-5, "To obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled, and will not fade away; reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Your inheritance in heaven is a sure thing because the power of God preserves it for you. It was all done by God. You didn't have any part in saving yourself. Therefore, it's imperishable. Because you had no part in it, you can't defile it. And you can't undo the work of God. It is only some very arrogant type of person that says, "Oh, but I've been such a terrible sinner. I've done things that you wouldn't believe. And that kind of talk is an insult to God, because it says that you are stronger than God, and that you have greater capacity for keeping God from saving you than He has to save you.

1. **Believers Believe the Promise of God**

The Christians heirship in heaven is based upon the promise of God to those who believe Him. We're back to the fundamental principle that the Christian life is a life of relationship. Christianity is not a religion. There are all kinds of religions in the world, but those are the devil's creations. Ours, in Scripture, is a relationship to Jesus Christ. And it is created by the simple fact of believing God. Galatians 3:29, "And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise." We are heirs according to the promise of God. And when God says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved (Acts 16:31), He is not lying. You can count on that. The promises of God are always true.

1. **The Holy Spirit**

The permanently indwelling Holy Spirit is the believers' down payment on his eternal inheritance in heaven. We told you this morning that God the Holy Spirit is there to guide your life. This is the power system which Jesus Christ (who is both God and Man), in His humanity, needed to be victor in the devil's world. He had to live in the devil's world just as you and I do. He had one advantage that we don't. He did not have a sin nature. We have that, as well as the temptations from the world and from the devil himself. But God gave Him the twofold system that includes the presence of the Holy Spirit within Him, and the knowledge of the teachings of Scripture (doctrine). The word "doctrine" means "teaching." Those who know Bible doctrine (that the Spirit of God will use to guide them) will never be victims in the devil's world. You'll always be a winner. It will not always be with good times, but whatever comes, you'll be victorious at that moment.

The permanently indwelling Holy Spirit is our down payment that our inheritance in heaven is a sure thing. Ephesians 1:13-14: "To him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation; having also believed you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise." The Holy Spirit is the stamp on you that you're going to heaven, and no place else: "Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of His glory."

Now that comes as a great relief to most of us, and to all thinking people – that the salvation that God offers: He handles the whole deal. He gives it to us. He provides it. Our part is to believe it and accept it. Once we're in, we're in forever. And our inheritance is always sure because it's dependent upon God and not upon us.

1. **The Angels Minister to Us**

Finally, the angels of God minister to the heirs of God while they're alive on this earth. Everybody has heard about the talk about guardian angels. Well, it's true. Everybody who is in the family of God is assigned one of the multiple billions of angels that God created. You are assigned an angel who becomes your personal caretaker. Hebrews 1:14: "Are they not all ministering spirits (the angels of God) sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?" You people who are in line for the great inheritance of heaven and all of that connotes, are also being cared for while you're walking on this earth, by the angels of God, and particularly by your guardian angel. That's why so many things happen in life, and you wonder how you squeak through a moment of great hazard. It's because, unseen to you, was an angel of God with all the power that angels have, taking care of you on behalf of the Father.

**In the Light**

So, Colossians 1:12 speaks about "the inheritance of the saints." It is a very grand and marvelous inheritance, and it includes everything that takes us from a lost condition in the lake of fire to a magnificent home in the new Jerusalem in eternity. He has taken the inheritance of the saints; that is, of those who are born-again believers, and this is: "in the light." This word "in the light," of course, refers to spiritual illumination of doctrine. Only the Bible gives us spiritual light. There's all kinds of nonsense about religious matters that goes on in the world. That's why Jesus, on one occasion, said a very sobering thing in Matthew 7:14: "That the way into eternal life: the gate is small, and the way is narrow." And then He said, "Few there be that find it."

**Election**

In another place, in John 14:6, Jesus said, "No man comes unto the Father but by Me." You don't go to heaven if you reject Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. So, where does that leave most of the religions of the world, all of whom reject Jesus Christ as the gate and the narrow road, and the only way into eternal life? It leaves them in that vast pool of humanity that doesn't deserve to go to heaven. It is condemned on its own, because of its own moral guilt, and God is leaving them there. He is not responsible for that. But it is by His grace, and according to His own purposes. Who knows what? Just take a look at the person next to you, as a believer, and ask yourself: "Why on earth would God have chosen this guy." But on His own purpose, He reaches in and says, "I want you." Now that is a great honor. And you should never forget that. And you should act, therefore, accordingly. You have been called by Almighty God for a special life mission. Now find it, and do it.

Now all of this inheritance of the saints is in spiritual light. It is not spiritual darkness that causes most people to even miss the fact that Jesus says, "I am the way into the sheepfold." He is the gate, and He says that He is the way to the Father. All of this is the light, and yet most people move in darkness. Nothing can be true of spiritual things, and nothing can be known about God, except what is revealed in the Bible by God the Holy Spirit. That's why we call ourselves Berean Memorial Church, in honor of the famous Bereans that Paul dealt with in the church in the city of Berea, who listened to his discussion. These were Jews. They were waiting for the Messiah. Paul said, "I'm happy to stand up before you in this synagogue today and tell you that the Messiah has come, and His name is the Lord Jesus Christ. And I will now tell you something about Jesus Christ, and I will show you from the Scriptures that He fulfilled the evidences that God gave us ahead of time that would identify who the Messiah was."

Then he proceeded to speak to them from the Old Testament Scriptures. And we are told in the Bible that the Bereans were willing to listen. They were willing to give a hearing. That was the first step. That was the first indication that the hand of God was upon them, because most people won't even give a hearing to spiritual instruction. Secondly, it said that they looked in their Bibles, and they checked what Paul said, and they said, "Sure enough, that's exactly right. What he says is the truth. And then they just flocked to Jesus Christ. They had the confirmation. From what? From the fact that Paul spoke to them? No. We have some reason to think that Paul suffered from one of the common ailments of the ancient world – an eye disease, for which the people of Laodicea, incidentally, had a very famous ointment, because they had a medical center there that dealt with just that. And it caused peoples' eyes to run. And it wasn't very pleasant to look at. Also, Paul was not a good-looking guy, unlike some congregations like yours, who are fortunate in that matter.

Paul said to the Corinthians, "You make fun of me, and I don't look very impressive." Paul said, "I'm not very impressive looking." So, here's a guy who probably had watery dribbly eyes, and who didn't look very handsome, and yet the words he spoke electrified them. And he said, "I didn't speak to you as an order. Yeah, I'm a university guy. Yeah, I I'm a university graduate. I've got all the degrees." Paul had them, but he said, "I spoke to you in words of the Spirit of God. Therefore, they were words of power. They bore their impact upon you. You could not resist them. And you accepted the Word of truth." Nothing can be known about God except what is revealed in this book. And the local church ministry has the setup by divine appointment with a pastor-teacher gift to explain the Bible to you. You should not be conned with in psychological and psychiatric gobbledygook as substituting for the power of the Word of God.

The location of the Christian's inheritance is in the light. Where's the light? Psalm 119:130 puts it very nicely. Here's the longest psalm in the Bible: "The unfolding of Your words gives light. It gives understanding to the simple."

So, when the apostle says that our inheritance is something that we receive because we are in the light, he's talking about doctrinal understanding. He's talking about the doctrines of Scripture. It is because you have been instructed in real truth – not man's opinions, but the Word of God. Therefore, the Christian's inheritance is in the light. It is from doctrine that we receive the mind of God to enlighten us on spiritual matters. And those of you who are Christians here this morning, and those of you who are in temporal fellowships, so that the Spirit of God is teaching you, you'll walk out of this place, and your mind will be a little more of the mind of God than it was when you walked in. Now that's very exhilarating. You're going to walk through your days, and you're going to be thinking, and it'll be God thinking. That mind is going to control your will, and it'll be God's control. Your that mind will control your emotions, and it will be God's control. And it all begins with the light of the Word of God. That's why it's important to be in a church service, providing that they are teaching the Word of God. Otherwise you're wasting your time.

This enlightenment floods the soul, and it triggers dramatic life-changing experiences. Paul points this out in Ephesians 5:1-10. Please listen. Paul says, "Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children. And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us – an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints." If you want to ask about what's wrong with the country – that integrity does not count on such a critical time in the history of the nation as a political election, here's what the Word of God says: it should count. It should be the supreme element. It should count above everything else. Without integrity, you are nothing except a deceiver; except a potential tyrant; and, except a threat to personal liberty and freedom.

So the apostle says, "Our inheritance is in the light," and that triggers dramatic lifestyles in our experience: "Do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints. And there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know with certainty: that no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

Now, to whom is he speaking here? He is speaking to those who have the inheritance in the light. He is speaking to Christians. Can a Christian be an immoral or impure person? Oh, you betcha? Can a Christian be a covetous man? You betcha. Can he be an idolater – having something that's more important to him than God himself? You betcha. This person will not enjoy the potential inheritance which is His in the kingdom of Christ and God. And that phrase "kingdom of Christ and God" is talking about the Millennial Kingdom. Yes, you're going to be out there as a Christian. But because you lived on the plain of the unsaved, and you lived on the plain of those who are not in the light, and you acted just like the worldling, you are not going to be entrusted with a realm of authority in the kingdom over which Jesus Christ will reign from Jerusalem as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. So, we're talking to Christians who are not going to enjoy their royal status.

Edward VII of England was a member of the royal family of England. But Edward fell in love with an American divorcée, Wallis Simpson, and he said, "I cannot live without the woman I love, and perform my duties as king." So, to the shock of the nation and the world, he abdicated the throne of England, and turned the country over to his brother. Did he cease being a member of the royal family of England? No. Had he done a terrible thing? Yes. He had violated the laws of God, and the laws of marriage of the realm of England. And the whole, sorry picture demonstrated the sin nature in its finest expressions. But Edward VII ceased being a member of royalty. But what he did was that he never secured the position and the prerogatives of royalty after that. He still was a royal person, but he never enjoyed his inheritance.

Well, that's what happens to Christians. You can go ahead and live like this. You're going to go into heaven because salvation was the work of God, but if you are going to be a prodigal son and daughter, you'll pay a very serious price, now and an eternity.

Ephesians 5:6-10: "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them." He's talking to Christians. This is what God condemns in unbelievers. This is unfit for those of you who have heaven as your inheritance, and all pertaining thereto. Don't be partakers with them: "For you were formerly darkness, but now you are a light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord." That is a very great summary of what is the purpose of God for the believer – a quality person, not living like a commoner, but living like the royal person that you are. The enlightenment of the Word of God causes dramatic life-changing experiences.

Then God's kingdom of light is in contrast, of course, to Satan's kingdom of darkness. And we're going to get to a little more of that shortly. As a matter of fact, here in Ephesians 5:11-12, where we just stopped reading: "And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them, for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret." We Christians tolerate so much evil instead of standing up and saying, "No, that's wrong. That is against the law of God."

I don't like that term "traditional morality." It is not traditional morality. It's biblical morality that is the issue for which we are standing. "Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but expose them. It is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret." And the only people who don't consider it disgraceful are Oprah, and Geraldo, and all the rest of the low-life on television, that do exactly what the Bible says: "Do not learn evil. Do not study it. Do not be in the presence of one who is teaching evil. But instead, learn what is good and righteous.

That's why you have to be so careful about your television, which is such a cesspool of corruption now in what they think is entertaining for your children. We're talking about God's kingdom, in contrast to the kingdom of Satan's darkness.

The carnal Christian will lose his inherited royal authority in heaven. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 make this clear: "Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the kingdom of God." And horror of horrors, he's talking again to Christians.

Now, it is the power of God and the light of the Word of God that enable you to live up to the quality of your inheritance in the light. And nothing else is going to enable you to do that – to be as those who are walking in the light. Ephesians 5:5 says, "For this you know with certainty: that no immoral or impure person, or covetous man who is an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom."

Galatians 5:19-21 stresses the same concept: "Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery (and remember that the word 'sorcery' is related to drug use), enmity, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." They're not going to go to heaven. No, they're going to heaven, because they're Christians, but they will not inherit a place in the kingdom authority. And for all eternity, you give up that?

Finally, God the Holy Spirit indwelling us is the seal, as we've already pointed out – the guarantee of our inheritance in the light. Stick with your inheritance. That's where it's all at.

Ephesians 1:13-14, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."

So, what we have said is that Christians are made fit for living in the light of heaven in the future, and also for life here on the earth, through the Word of God. That is the full knowledge of doctrine that comes through that grace system of perception, that you have learned so well. It's the opposite of the darkness realm of Satan's world that Colossians 1:13 speaks of, that we'll look at next. The Father has rescued the believer from the darkness of Satan's mind to the light of the mind of Christ Jesus. This spiritual enlightenment enables the Christian to produce service which is acceptable to the Father. We have been especially equipped for it.

It is no wonder, therefore, that we have caused, as Paul calls upon us, to be thankful to the Father. The Colossians are to be grateful for the divine viewpoint light of Scripture. And you should be grateful for the pastor-teacher who does his job of communicating the light of doctrine to you. That for which you are thankful you will protect and keep. Stay in the light. That's where it's at for all of us.

Thank You, our Father, for this, Your Word. And we pray Your application of this to our experience. In Christ's name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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