**The Book of Ephesians Series**

**Our Inheritance in Christ**

**Ephesians 1.11-14**

**Introduction**

Today we continue our series of the book of Ephesians as we have been looking closely at the doxology of praise found in Ephesians chapter one verses three through fourteen. In the original Greek these twelve verses comprise one continual sentence. It seems that the Apostle starts describing God’s sovereign grace and he just can’t stop. While these verses contain some of the weightiest doctrine found in the New Testament, I believe one of the best ways to look at the portion of Scripture is as a doxology of praise to the sovereign God. I believe these verses tell us the way God sees us in Christ. God sees us as His children. God sees us as the redeemed. God sees us as a people for His own possession.

This doxology of praise has three stanzas. In the first stanza we give praise for the adoption we have received from the Father. (1.3-6) *In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace.* (1.5-6) In the second stanza we give praise for the redemption we have received through the Son. (1.7-10)*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace which He lavished on us.* (1.7-8)

And this morning we come to the third stanza where we give praise for the inheritance we have received as fellow heirs in Christ. (1.11-14) Hear now the Word of God.

*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. 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.* (1.11-14)

**Fellow Heirs**

The first thing I want you to see in this third stanza is that Jewish and Gentile Christians are fellow heirs of the inheritance in Christ. The structure of our text makes this plain.

Notice verse eleven, *In Him . . . we* (Jews)*who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.*

And then verse thirteen, *In Him, you* (Gentiles) *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.*

Truly, *there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* (Gal.3.28)

The fact is the Scripture clearly identify Jews and Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. (3.6) Both Jews and Gentiles are fellow citizens of Christ’s Kingdom and fellow members of God’s household. (2.19) Both Jews and Gentiles are fellow heirs to the inheritance obtained in Christ.

Look again at verse eleven*, In Him . . . we*(Jews) *have obtained an inheritance.* (1.11a)

And then verses thirteen and fourteen, *In Him, you* (Gentiles) *. . . were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our* (both Jew and Gentile) *inheritance.* (13-14a)

How can two separate ethnic groups become fellow heirs of the same inheritance? An inheritance is usually passed down through family members and Jews and Gentiles come from separate lineages. Well, verse five has already told us that in love the Father predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself according to the kind intentions of His will. (1.5) The eternal love of the Father has adopted both Jews and Gentiles into His family and therefore both Jews and Gentile believers have all the rights and privileges as children of God. *The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.* (Rom.8.16-17a)

**Our Inheritance Obtained in Christ**

The text clearly tells us that both Jewish and Gentile Christians (all believers) are fellow heirs of the inheritance obtained in Christ. Heirs are those who, apart from any merit of their own, are given the right to the family inheritance. And so, it is with God’s family. Those who hope in Christ, those who believe in Christ are heirs apart of any merit of their own and are given the right to the family inheritance. This is our “heirship.”

Let me explain our “heirship” from a human perspective.



Prince Charles, the Prince of Wale, is the [heir apparent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heir_apparent) to the British throne as the eldest son of [Queen Elizabeth II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Elizabeth_II). Regardless of how brilliant, talented, or wise Prince Charles might be he did not become the heir to the throne because of any personal merit or qualities. Prince Charles’ “heirship” to the throne is because of his sonship and his sonship alone. And so, it is for those in Christ. God the Father *predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself*. Our adoption had nothing to do with any quality, skill, or foreseen ability in ourselves. It had nothing to do with us, it was a gift of God. By God’s grace *we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.* (Rom.8.16-17a) Our “heirship” is based on our “sonship” to the praise of the glory of His grace.

**Our Inheritance Obtained in Christ – Here and Now**

But we need to answer the question, “What is the inheritance we have obtained in Christ?” What is our inheritance? To apprehend our inheritance, we must first understand that our inheritance in Christ is given to us in two stages. There are certain blessings of our inheritance we receive here and now and there are certain blessings of our inheritance we will receive in the hereafter.

Some of the blessings of our inheritance in Christ for the here and now are mentioned in the doxology of praise in the first chapter of Ephesians. Understanding the inheritance we have obtained begins by knowing that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places Christ. The blessing of our inheritance includes the fact that before time existed, before the foundation of the world, the Father chose us in Christ. The blessing of our inheritance is to know that here and now the Father sees us holy and blameless before Him. Our inheritance includes the reality that in love the Father predestined us as His adopted sons and daughters. Our inheritance consists of God’s grace being freely bestowed upon us, being redeemed by the blood of Christ, and our trespasses being forgiven. Our inheritance consists of the riches of God’s grace being lavished on us, that wisdom and insights have been given to us to know the mystery of God’s will and to comprehend that all things are summed up in Christ, things in the heavens and the things on earth. This is just one list of the blessings of our inheritance in Christ.

Another place where we see blessings of our inheritance in Christ for the here and now is Psalms 103. Psalms 103 tells us that all our iniquities have been pardoned. All our diseases have been healed. Our lives have been redeemed from the pit. The Lord has crowned us with lovingkindness and compassion. The Lord satisfies our years with good things. Our God performs righteous deeds and judgments for all who are oppressed. The Lord has been compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness towards us. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. He has removed our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west. He has had compassion on us as a father has compassion on his children. He is mindful that we are but dust. This is just a few of the blessings of our inheritance in Christ for here and now. Brothers and sisters, take time to give praise to God for the blessings of our inheritance in Christ. Many people live in this world without any of these blessings.

**Our Inheritance Obtained in Christ – In the Hereafter**

But *if we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.* (ICor.15.19) Our inheritance obtained in Christ is not just for the here and now but also includes blessings for the hereafter. Blessings such as our victory over the last enemy, death. (ICor.15.56-57) *Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The blessing of our future resurrection to inherit a glorified body when this perishable puts on the imperishable, and this mortal will put on immortality. (ICor.15.54) The blessings to know that there will be a time when we will always be with the Lord. (IThes.4.18) The blessings to know that one day the Lord will wipe every tear from our eyes and there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. (Rev.22.4) The blessing to know that our future inheritance includes a new residence in the New Heavens and the New Earth to enjoy the unencumbered presence of the Lord forever and ever, Amen.

“*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.* Yes, *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits.”* As heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ we are told to not forget any of the benefits of our inheritance in Christ. The world wants to drag you down, but the Lord wants to build you up by reminding you of the inheritance you have in Christ. Blessings for the here and now and blessing for the hereafter. Brothers and sisters, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.* (ICor.2.9-10) These blessings are for those who hope in Christ, who have listened to the message of truth, the gospel of salvation, and have believed. The Lord by His grace has revealed to us just a little taste of the things He has prepared for us. Let us give Him praise!

**Our Inheritance in Christ is Secure because of God’s Sovereign Will**

As we consider our inheritance in Christ this morning, I want you to know that our inheritance is secure because of God’s sovereign will. Notice again verse eleven, “*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.”* (1.11) The Apostle Paul couldn’t have insisted more forcefully that our becoming heirs of the inheritance in Christ is due to God’s own sovereign will and good pleasure. Our inheritance is secure because our God *works all things after the counsel of His will.* I believe this phrase is written to cause us to go beyond the academic doctrine of predestination and to drive us to embrace the truth that our inheritance in Christ is eternally secure because of God’s sovereign will. *Remember this, and be assured,* says the Lord. *I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,**declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, “My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure” . . . Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.* (Is.46.9-13) I believe that this phrase, *who works all things after the counsel of His will,* to give us confidence to know that no matter how messed up the world might seem the purposes of God in Christ will not be stopped. (Job 42.2) We need to be the people who know that *from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.* (Rom.11.36)

**Our Inheritance in Christ is Secure because We are Sealed with the Holy Spirit**

The Lord personalizes that our inheritance in Christ is secure by placing the seal of the Holy Spirit on our lives. Notice verse thirteen, *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.* (1.13b-14)

A seal was a mark of ownership. For example, cattle are branded with a seal by their masters to indicate to whom they belong. Seals of this world are external, while God’s seal of the Holy Spirit is on the heart. When Christ comes into our live the Lord puts His Spirit in us to mark us as His own possession. Once we were not a people, but now we are the people of God. A people for God’s own possession.

The Lord places the Holy Spirit in us as a pledge or guarantee that He will bring us safely into their final inheritance. The Lord places the Holy Spirit in our lives so we would enjoy the blessings of our inheritance here and now and to look forward to blessings of our inheritance that we will enjoy in the hereafter. Brothers and sisters, let us have Holy Spirit confidence that *He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.* (Phil.1.6)

**Transition to the Table**

Brothers and sisters, as we partake of this meal let us have confidence to know that because of Christ we enjoy all the blessings of God. Let us eat this bread and drink this cup in celebration that through Christ we have obtained *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 a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* (IPt.1.4-5)