

From Imprisonment to an Inheritance

Read Ephesians 3:1-6

Verse 1:

- Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ, not of Nero or the Jews. He accepted his circumstances as from the hand of the Lord.
- Enemies could not imprison Paul from being “in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” They could imprison his body, but not his soul and spirit.

The sons of God are Joint-heirs with Christ

Read from main text: **Romans 8:15-17**

- This is a truth that is almost beyond comprehension at present, but God wants us to begin understanding it now, and He has revealed much to us. “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. BUT GOD HATH REVEALED THEM UNTO US BY HIS SPIRIT: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Cor 2:9)
- To understand the glory of being a joint-heir, we must consider who has been made joint-heirs. It is lowly sinners, unclean, condemned and cursed, rebels, outcasts, having no hope and without God in this world, living in a fallen world, headed toward an eternity of judgment. Yet these are the ones who have been made joint-heirs. To be a joint-heir with Christ is something like a dirty, poverty-stricken child being adopted by the world’s richest man, but in truth, that is as nothing compared to a sinner becoming a joint-heir with Christ.
- To understand the glory of being a joint-heir, we can think of with whom we are joint-heirs. It is to be joint-heir with the One who is the image of the invisible God, whose name is Immanuel, the mighty God, by whom all things were created, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist, who sits at the right hand of God, who has a name above every name, who in all things has the preeminence, who has all authority in heaven and in earth, under whose feet are all things. We are joint-heirs with

Him who is heir of all things. **Read Hebrews 1:1-3** There is nothing that Christ has not inherited, nothing He does not own, nothing He is not Head of, nothing He is not Lord of, nothing He is not judge of, nothing He cannot dispense of as He pleases. Nothing exists now or ever will exist that is not part of Christ's inheritance from the eternal Father. We are joint-heirs with Him who made the worlds. We are joint-heirs with Him for whom nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37).

- To understand the glory of being a joint-heir, we can think of what being a joint-heir consists. It is to know Him as Bridegroom, to live in His glorious kingdom, to rule and reign with Him, to be the eternal trophy of His grace. It is to be like Christ (1 John 3:2), to have an immortal, incorruptible body like Christ's (1 Co. 15:53-54; Php. 3:21). It is paradise (Re. 2:7), ivory palaces (Ps. 45:8; Joh. 14:2), garments that smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia (Ps. 45:8), clothing of wrought gold and raiment of needlework (Ps. 45:13-14), flying white horses (Re. 19:14), thrones of glory (Mt. 19:28), and crowns of glory (1 Pe. 5:4). It is eternal life in the New Jerusalem, a holy city 1,600 miles cube, a city of pure gold, like unto clear glass, with light like unto a stone most precious, even a jasper stone, clear as crystal, with walls of jasper, whose foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones, and gates of pearl (Re. 21:9-27). It is streets of pure gold, as it were transparent glass (Re. 21:21), the tree of life growing alongside of the river of life (Re. 22:1-2). It is everlasting joy (Isa. 35:10), and eternal singing (Ps. 33:3; 96:1; 100:1-5; 149:1; Isa. 42:10; Re. 5:9; 14:2-3), and no more death, or sorrow, or crying or pain (Re. 21:4), and eternal holiness untainted by sin (Re. 21:27). It is seeing the face of the Lamb and serving Him (Re. 22:3-4).
- To be a joint-heir with Christ is described in many passages, such as the following: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Mt. 13:43); "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them" (Joh. 17:22); "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me" (Joh. 17:24); "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Co. 15:53); "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Co. 4:17); "the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:18); "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Php. 3:21); "then shall ye

also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4); "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints" (2 Th. 1:10); "ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pe. 5:4); "when he shall appear, we shall be like him" (1 Jo. 3:2); "to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24), "he that overcometh shall inherit all things" (Re. 21:17). Who are these overcomers?

- For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5)

MEMORY VERSE:

Ephesians 3:12

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1) How is the Lord leading you this week to transform your current prison into a prison of Jesus Christ?
- 2) Which aspect of being a joint-heir with Christ means the most to you, and why?

