CLAIM YOUR INHERITANCE

Through Christ, all believers have become heirs of the inheritance of God's promises, both here on earth and throughout eternity in heaven.

KEY POINTS

- An *inheritance* is anything received from a predecessor through the process of succession; e.g. qualities or characteristics, material wealth and intellectual property (patents, trademarks, etc.).
- The inheritance of wealth and property is normally dispersed when the original owner dies.
- A *will,* if created, designates the *heir(s);* i.e. the person(s) the property owner designates to receive the inheritance – usually a direct descendant or a close relative of the owner of the possessions.
- An inheritance can establish generational wealth, success and/or advancement.
- In Genesis 17, God established the Abrahamic covenant. According to this covenant, Abraham would be: -Father of many nations
  -Predecessor of a lineage of kings
  -Possessor of great land and wealth.
- In turn, Abraham and his descendants (the nation of Israel) would circumcise every male in their households as an everlasting sign of the covenant God made with Abraham. If a man was not circumcised he was to be "cut off" from His people.
- The covenant of circumcision was a mark of division between Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews), who did not always practice circumcision.
- Gentiles were therefore not recipients of the covenanted and inherited promises of God.
- But Jesus Christ, by the sacrifice of Himself, came to establish another covenant and to make peace between Jews and Gentiles (see Ephesians 2:11-19).
- He *reconciled* these two groups – who had maligned, hated, and reproached each other – and "broke down the middle wall of partition" between them (v. 14): figuratively, the ceremonial laws of the Covenant and literally, the partition wall that separated the court of the Gentiles from that into which only Jews had liberty to enter.
- By His sufferings in the flesh, He removed causes of enmity and distance between them.
- And by taking these out of the way, He formed one Body of believers, including both Jews and Gentiles, uniting them to Himself as their common head.
- Sin had caused division between God and men. Christ came to also bring that division to an end.
- He, being slain or sacrificed, slew the enmity that there was between God and sinners.
- Through Christ, both Jews and Gentiles have access, or admission, into the presence of God, who has become the common reconciled Father of both.

KEY SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 2:11-19

- Our access is by the Holy Spirit. Christ purchased our authorization to come to God; His Holy Spirit gives us a heart and strength to come, and even the grace to serve God acceptably.
- We draw nigh to God, through Jesus Christ, by the help of the Spirit.
- We are fellow-citizens with all *saints* (all of God's holy people) and of the household of God; that is, members of the church of Christ, having a right to all the privileges of it.
- In this depiction of the Church as a household, every converted sinner is both a domestic helper and one of the family; both a servant and a child in God's house.
- And as members of the family of God, we are now heirs to every blessing that is outlined in the Word of God.
- Christ died for us and it is *His will* that determines what we are entitled to.
- It is our job as believers to read the Word of God, uncover the blessings that belong to us and claim them: Healing. Wealth. Peace of mind. Boldness. And so much more.
- Above all, through salvation and a relationship with Jesus Christ, we are all heirs to eternal life and heaven.

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. What were some of the differences between Jews and Gentiles in the early Church? (How) Were they resolved?
2. Discuss how Christ's sacrifice brings peace and unity – in both human and spiritual spheres.
3. How can/should we deal with differences we experience with each other in our present day and age?
4. Identify 7-10 things we inherit as children of God ("heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" -Romans 8:17)?
5. When do we receive our inheritance and how do we access it?

Prayer Time

Thank you, Lord, for making us one. Help us to live as one in You, in Jesus' name. Amen.

L.G. ice-Breaker: What is the most treasured thing you inherited (or would like to inherit) from your parents or a mentor or benefactor?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS