

The Christian -- An Heir of God and a Joint Heir with Jesus Christ

Introduction

A. The Christian is a blessed person indeed* He has been fully forgiven, has been given perfect righteousness, he is the temple of the Holy Spirit, God has promised to providentially watch over him, if he will seek to love God all facets of his life will work for his good, all his needs will be met, he has been assured that he will go to Heaven at death, and that he is an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.

B. In this lesson we wish to investigate this last description. What does it mean to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ?

I. The Basis of This Relationship, Romans 8:16,17; Galatians 4:4-7.

The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And, because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Observation: These verses not only state the truth of our heirship but the basis of this relationship. It can be simply worded – Jesus Christ has redeemed us by offering Himself to be our sacrifice in His death. He came into the world to be our Representative. This He fully accomplished in His life, death, Resurrection, Ascension, in sending the Holy Spirit, and in His present ministry of intercession. When one becomes a Christian today – all the value of that work of representation becomes his. By virtue of this he becomes an heir of God and a joint heir with his Representative.

II. The Means Whereby One May Receive This Relationship, Romans 4:14; Galatians 3:29.

For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.

And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

Observation: First of all we see that these verses teach we are not made heirs of God by the "law" or good works. This fits many other verses of the Bible, for example: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us. . . . (Titus 3:5). We become Christians and an heir of God by faith, i.e., by receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord by a decision of faith. When we do this the Bible describes us as being "in Christ". There is no substitute for this decision of faith. Church membership, baptism, partaking of the Lord's Supper, living a good life, may be evidences of faith – but cannot be substituted for that essential item.

III. The Spiritual Benefit of This Relationship.

A. The benefit of adoption into God's family, Galatians 4:5,6,7.

. . . That we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Observation: Who can measure the benefit of adoption with the added dimension of being indwelt with the Holy Spirit? The believer can therefore call God "Father" and rejoice in the security of God's love.

B. The benefit of spiritual equality with all other believers, Eph. 3:6.

That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

Observation: All believers share equally the benefits of the gospel. This reminds us that no one is a second-rate citizen in God's kingdom. We may not believe that we are inferior to others.

C. The benefit of justification and eternal life, Titus 3:7.

That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Observation: An heir of God is justified (declared perfectly righteous) and has the hope (certainty) of eternal life. These benefits are the products of the life and death of Jesus Christ.

D. The benefit of God's promise of eternal life, Hebrews 6:17,18.

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

Observation: God's promise is so important to Him and He wants us to be assured of its validity He not only pronounced the promise but confirmed it by His oath that the promise would come true. This is described as a "strong consolation" and in V19 as an "anchor of the soul".

E. The benefit of the Kingdom of God, James 2:5.

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?

Observation: It is a great comfort to be enrolled in God's kingdom. While this is a reality now in the spiritual sense, the day will come when the kingdom of God will have all the dimensions of an earthly kingdom without any of its defects.

F. The benefit of the grace of life, I Peter 3:7.

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered.

Observation: The grace of God brings eternal life.

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