

“Heirs”
Romans 4:12-16
(Preached at Trinity, January 6, 2008)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Paul has been arguing since **Chapter 1** of our need for God’s justifying grace. He began with **Verse 16** of **Chapter 1**.
Romans 1:16 – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”
 - A. But how do we acquire this salvation?
Romans 1:17 – “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
In other words, those who are justified shall find life through faith alone.
 - B. Why do we need this salvation?
Romans 1:18 – “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;”
2. For two and a half chapters Paul has been systematically making his case:
 - A. That every single human being without exception has sinned against God. We are all under His condemnation and all of us are in need of salvation.
 - B. That this salvation, however, cannot be obtained through anything we do but only through God’s justification through faith in the righteousness of Christ.
Romans 3:20-22 – “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. ²¹ But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; ²² Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:”
3. The question is what exactly does this justification by faith in Christ obtain?
Justification means we have become just in God’s eyes. He no longer looks upon our sin.
4. But there’s much more. This morning I want to look particularly at **Verses 13-14**.
Paul states the nature of God’s promise.
 - a. God promised Abraham a land and a people
Genesis 15:5 – “And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”
 - b. Abraham knew the spiritual implications of God’s promise
Hebrews 11:9-10 – “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: ¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.”

5. In **Verses 13-14** Paul states the promise in terms of inheritance. Abraham would become the heir of the world – but not only Abraham. This promise is given to all who embrace the promise through the righteousness of faith. We all have become the heirs of all things.
6. This morning I want to preach on this inheritance.

I. It's equal

- A. All of those who embrace Christ share in this inheritance
 1. Paul is writing to the Church of Rome. He was a Roman citizen and understood the Roman laws and customs
 2. In the Jewish culture the firstborn child received the largest inheritance – a double portion of everything.
 3. The Roman custom was to give all the children in the family an equal portion of the inheritance – even adopted children.
 4. Paul is saying that all of Abraham's seed are heirs. And all who are in Christ are Abraham's seed.
Galatians 3:29 – “And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
- B. As Christians we are all called heirs
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?”
Titus 3:4-7 – “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, ⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; ⁶ Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; ⁷ That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”
- C. This is an equal inheritance – all are equal in Christ
Galatians 3:28-29 – “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
1 Peter 3:7 – “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”

II. It is immeasurable

- A. We share all that pertains to Christ
Romans 8:16-17 – “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”
 1. If Christ is the heir of all things then we are also have become heirs of all things
 2. This is the meaning of Paul's description of Abraham in **Verse 13**
Romans 4:13 – “For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world . . .”

3. It is also the meaning of our Lord in the Beatitudes
Matthew 5:5 – “Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”
- B. This is the glory of justification
1. Christ has a right to His inheritance – we do not.
 2. We have received it by grace as we have been united to Him. This has happened through justification by faith.
 3. All that we have is in Christ Jesus – all by grace
2 Corinthians 8:9 – “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”
- C. What exactly is this inheritance of all things?
 If we are in Christ we shall share all that pertains to Him
1. We shall share in His sufferings – Jesus was heir to the cross, to mocking and scourging.
 - a. To come after Christ is to receive all that pertains to Him
Luke 9:23 – “And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
 - b. To be an heir with Christ is to suffer with Him
Romans 8:17 – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”
 - c. Paul spoke of sharing in Christ’s suffering
Philippians 3:10-11 – “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; ¹¹ If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”
 - d. Do you count it a joy to share in the sufferings of Christ?
Matthew 5:11-12 – “Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. ¹² Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”
 - e. The persecution Christians receive goes to many extremes. Some Christians receive light affliction while others are martyred. But we have all been ostracized or looked down upon for our faith in Jesus Christ. Those who suffer for Christ are the heirs of God
 2. The second inheritance is temptation
 - a. We will be tempted of Satan and of the world
 - b. This was our Lord’s lot
Hebrews 4:15 – “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.”
 - c. We must press on looking unto Christ
Hebrews 12:3-4 – “For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. ⁴ Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.”

3. Heaven and earth are ours
 - a. The Psalmist wrote of our Lord's inheritance
Psalm 2:8 – "Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession."
 - b. Peter quoting from Isaiah spoke of a New Heavens and a New Earth
2 Peter 3:13 – "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."
 - c. Creation lies in corruption now but this will not be forever
God is about to make all things new – and it is ours!
4. Our Lord possesses a Kingdom – it too is ours
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?"
 - a. Is Christ not a Priest and a King? Does He not also state that we are priests and kings?
Revelation 1:6 – "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
 - b. Does He sit on a throne – We will sit on His throne with Him.
Revelation 3:21 – "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."
1 Corinthians 6:2 – "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"
Revelation 2:26 – "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:"
5. Does Christ not dwell in a glorious body pure and undefiled?
 1. We too have the hope of the resurrection
 2. We too will be raised uncorruptible
1 Corinthians 15:20 – "But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.
1 Corinthians 15:53 – "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality."

III. It is eternal

1 Peter 1:3-4 – "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,"

- A. Everything on earth is growing old and will soon pass into nothingness
1. Our Lord described it:
Matthew 6:19-20 – “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:”
 2. People sadly spend their whole lives seeking an earthly treasure that they cannot keep. How much more glorious it is to labor for that which will never pass away.
 Jim Elliot who was killed as he sought to bring the Gospel to the Aucas: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose”
- B. Our treasure cannot be lost because it is being kept in Christ
1. He is preserving us
Philippians 1:6 – “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:”
2 Timothy 1:12 – “for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”
 2. Nothing shall rob us of our inheritance

Conclusion:

1. We have not yet received the fullness of our inheritance. Right now at this present time all things belong to God. We still await our full reward.
 But God has pledged it to us and given His Spirit as a down payment.
2 Corinthians 1:21-22 – “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; ²² Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”
Ephesians 1:13-14 – “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”
2. This means that right now you are a steward, a trustee – one who is managing someone else’s possessions. Your time belongs to Him, your possessions belong to Him, your loved ones belong to Him.
 And God has entrusted the Gospel to us.
1 Corinthians 4:1-2 – “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”
3. Jesus said if you have not been faithful with that which belongs to another how shall you be given something of your own?
Luke 16:12 – “And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?”
4. In heaven we will be given all things.
Matthew 25:21 – “His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”
5. What are you looking for? What has captivated your affections upon this earth? What is your inheritance?