

Those Qualified to Share In the Inheritance

Col. 1:9-12

Introduction:

1. I have never told anyone this, mainly because I did not know it until just last week when I received a telephone call from an attorney in Arkansas.
2. My grandparents, on my father's side, had a brief stay in the Ozark Mountains before moving back to Kentucky.
3. It seems that my dad had a brother he did not know about. According to the attorney he was fairly wealthy and has included me in his will. I will be leaving this week to fly to Searcy, Arkansas to learn more about it and to establish that I am the grandson of Daniel Marion Galloway.
4. Very little of what I have told you is the truth, but it is enough to excite you about the possibility of my receiving a significant inheritance.
5. Perhaps you have dreamed of coming into an unexpected inheritance. But always, there are qualifications. Is there a family relationship? Is the will clear? Am I truly qualified to share in the inheritance?
6. There is a passage of Scripture in Col. 1:9ff that speaks of sharing in an inheritance. The question I want to ask you is "Are you qualified to share in that inheritance?"
7. Reading of text.
8. What features characterize those who are qualified to share in this inheritance? How do I know if I am qualified?

Discussion:

- I. Paul prays that they be "filled with the knowledge of God's will" (v. 9). Those qualified to share in the inheritance are those who are being filled with the knowledge of God's will.
 - A. Isn't that why you are here this morning?
 1. Your presence on such occasions as this is testimony to your desire to be filled with the knowledge of God's will.
 2. Our purpose here today is not social in nature, nor is it recreational.
 - a. We are not assembled to stimulate our friendships with one another.
 - b. We are not here to entertain ourselves.
 3. God has granted us the revelation of His will in the Scriptures. Paul reflects on this in Eph. 5:6-10. In Eph. 4:11ff he speaks of the gifts that Christ has given us and of the growth that we are to experience. He contrasts it with the darkness and ignorance characteristic of the Gentiles (note 17-20).
 - B. When one becomes a Christian there is a learning process that is begun.
 1. Even the word "disciple" is reflective of this learning process.
 2. Our minds are in the process of being transformed (Rom. 12:2).
 - C. But we must engage the process and the way that we engage the process determines how we will be filled.
 1. In secular education one student engages in the learning process enthusiastically,

another not so much.

2. But then the effectiveness of teachers is a consideration also. Why do we bring the outside teachers to the congregation that we do? Why do we have teacher training, like the Tomlinson's? Why do we work on a curriculum?
3. We need the best teachers. We need the best curriculum. We need to engage in the process in the best way.
4. We need to pray that we be "filled with the knowledge of His will."
5. Being filled with the knowledge of His will is a quality of those who share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. Note that they are not in the darkness of ignorance!

II. But there is more to being qualified to share in the inheritance than just knowledge. I fear that too often we think only of learning and not of doing. Paul prays that the Colossians be filled with knowledge "so that they walk in a manner worthy of the Lord" (v. 10).

- A. "Let's have a Bible study," someone says. "Let's memorize passages," another suggests. Learning without doing is merely academic.
- B. There is a walk to be walked. There is fruit to be born. There is good work to be done.
 1. What good is knowledge if it doesn't engage?
 2. If you know how to swim, but do not jump in the water when a man is drowning what good is it?
 3. If you see a man drowning and say, "Let's have a study about how to save people who are drowning," what good is that?
 4. If you see a man drowning and say, "I am not a very proficient swimmer," what good is that?
 5. The man is drowning! Do what you can!
- C. I often hear people say, "If I had more money I would do some great thing for the Lord."
- D. Or "I will obey the gospel when I get some things straightened out in my life."
- E. 2 Tim. 3:7 refers to those who are "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." There are those who are ever learning and come to the knowledge of the truth but just do not do it!
- F. Isn't this the very epitome of sin? "To one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).
- G. We need to be bearing fruit **and** increasing in the knowledge of God (v. 10).

III. Who is qualified? Those who are being filled; those who are walking; and those who are being strengthened with God's power (v. 11).

- A. No you are not qualified by your own sheer will power.
 1. "I am going to beat this sin thing."
 2. "I know it is difficult but I can do it."
 3. Such statements reflect a lack of understanding and a lack of appreciation for the power that we are up against.
- B. Paul is praying that these might be strengthened with God's power.
 1. If you were saved initially by God's power (Col. 2:12) how then do you think now you are going to do it on your own?

2. "The gospel is the power of God to salvation" (Rom. 1:16). The way we sometimes interpret that: "If I can just study enough, know the Scriptures well enough, pray enough, I can do this!" Nothing wrong with determination, but I don't think that is the point of Rom. 1:16. The good news is that God's power was brought to bear on you and that is why you are saved. Faith is dependence in His power to save us. It is NOT depending on ourselves to be good enough.
3. "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might" (Eph. 2:10).
4. It is not passive! Are you praying to be strengthened and passively hoping for some infusion of power?
5. With the power of God there is steadfastness and patience. Without the on-going power of God you will not make it to the inheritance.

IV. Because of the power of God we ought to joyously give thanks to the Father who has qualified us. This identifies another quality of those who receive the inheritance—they joyously give thanks to the Father (v. 12-13).

- A. Heb. 12:28, after reflecting on the grandeur of the great kingdom that God has granted us, says, "Since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer an acceptable service with reverence and awe."
- B. Giving thanks is one of the most fundamental concepts of Scripture.
 1. Rom. 1:21 speaks of those who, "though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks."
 2. It goes on to say that "their foolish heart was darkened."
 3. But those qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light" (Col. 1:12) are not in darkness (13-14). Overflowing gratitude identifies them (2:6-7).

Conclusion:

1. Are you qualified for the inheritance?
2. Have you been rescued from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of His Son?
3. Are you being filled with the knowledge of His will? Are you walking in a manner worthy of the Lord? Are you being strengthened with His power?
4. Are you giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance?