



Heirs of Eternal Life



A New Beginning (Part 13) by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again, as I continue to share with you our theme for this week: A New Beginning.

We've been systematically analyzing the series of logical steps which Paul unfolds in Titus chapter 3 verses 3 through 7. Remember, I've been urging you to imprint those words on your mind. In those words Paul unfolds the following.

First, our natural condition of need, the words he uses are "foolish, disobedient, deceived, enslaved, living in malice and envy, hated and hating one another". Then he speaks about God's historical intervention. The kindness and love of God appeared. God came on the stage of human history in the person of Jesus. And God's intervention resulted in salvation three short but infinitely powerful words He saved us. And Paul points out not because of our righteousness, but because of God's mercy. We could not earn it. We did not deserve it, but it came out of God's mercy. And then the outworking of salvation. First of all the inner outworking

within washing, rebirth, renewal by the power of the Holy Spirit the inner change. And then following after that, the supernatural clothing with power to be a witness to live a life of power for Jesus the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And then being justified by grace.

Today we're going to look at the culminating step the seventh step becoming heirs of eternal life.

We'll go back and read Titus 3 verses 5 through 7 beginning in the middle of verse 5:

"He saved us [God saved us] through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, [Notice those three inward words washing, rebirth, renewal, and then the supernatural clothing with power] whom [the Holy Spirit] he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, [and then the outcome] so that, having been justified by His grace, [and I explained yesterday that 'to be justified' is 'to be acquitted' to be reckoned righteous with a righteousness which is not your own. I explained the change that took place at the cross when Jesus was made sin with our sinfulness that we in turn might become righteous with His

righteousness. And then we move on today to the final stage in this glorious process by which we're made new.] so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”

(NIV)

Heirs having a hope of eternal life. In our becoming heirs, there are as it were two phases two aspects. First of all the negative we're delivered from an evil inheritance, from sin and all its consequences the inheritance that was brought upon us by the Adam compounded by the sin of every subsequent generation, and then by our own personal sin. We're delivered from that evil inheritance and we're brought into a new inheritance an inheritance not of death, but of life, eternal life. This corresponds with what Paul says in another epistle, in second Timothy chapter 1 verses 9 and 10. And again, he's talking about God's salvation. He says:

“God has saved us and called us to a holy life not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. [Always the emphasize is on the fact we couldn't earn it. We didn't deserve it. And then Paul comes out with one of those amazing statements...] This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, [before the ages was set in motion, God had it all planned. In God's eternal council, it was already given to us. But he goes on in the next verse...] but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus.” (NIV)

So, God's eternal plan that was there before the ages was set in motion before the world was created has now been revealed. It's been brought to life through the appearing in human history of our Savior Christ Jesus.

And in previous talks on this theme, I've pointed out how important it is that the Christian faith centers around historical fact things that actually happened in history. There actually was a man named Jesus of Nazareth, who lived, who died, who was resurrected, who appeared to His disciples. It's not just a philosophy. It's not just a morality. It's not even just theology. But it's history. That's what separates Christianity from all other world religions. It says of Jesus, “through His appearing, He has destroyed death.” What a beautiful phrase “He has destroyed death.”

As a minister, I've had to face death in many different situations, and in many different lives, also, as a hospital attendant in World War II, and I'm so glad that Jesus destroyed death. That He robbed death of its sting, that he

stripped it of its power, that He took away that which is so dark and gloomy and fearful about death. Jesus destroyed death and He brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.

I hope you know what the word “immortality” means. It's one of those beautiful English words derived from a Latin root. It's a combination of those two words “life” so short, “immortality” a long word. “Immortality” means being “deathless” being incapable of dying. Jesus doesn't just give us life. He gives us immortal life a life which is never going to be subject to death. And it's through the Gospel.

I'd like to read also some beautiful words of the Apostle Peter in his first epistle chapter 1 verses 3 and 4:

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy [notice how all the apostles always emphasize the mercy of God]. In His great mercy He has given us new birth [that corresponds to what Paul says in Titus there about rebirth]. He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, [You see, as I said, it all centers around the fact that Jesus died and that He rose from the dead. And through our faith we are associated with Him first of all in His death to sin, and then His resurrection into an endless immortal, eternal life. And Peter goes on in the fourth verse...] and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”

(NIV)

That's our inheritance. We become heirs of that inheritance through faith in Jesus Christ.

Let me go back once more to the words Paul uses to describe this inheritance of ours. He says, “that we might become heirs, having the hope of eternal life.” Let me emphasize to you that phrase, “having hope.” We are living today in a world where there is so little hope. I've seen so many multitudes of young people healthy and strong, maybe intellectually gifted, educated, often from quite wealthy homes but without any real hope whatsoever. If there's one thing that's gripping the young people of our world today, it's a spirit of hopelessness. They just don't have anything to look forward to. Their music that appeals to them is music of absolute utter despair and hopeless. I'm moved when I think how terrible it is to be in that condition of hopelessness.

You and I who know the Lord, we have good news. We can have hope. It's possible to have a hope of eternal life. Let's look at two passages that contrast the one condition and the

other. The first is in Ephesians chapter 2 verse 12. Paul is reminding the Christians at Ephesus what they were before they put their faith in Jesus Christ. He says:

“Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.” (NIV)

That's a series of very severe dark words, “separated,” “excluded,” “foreigners,” and then he sums it up in three phrases “without Christ,” “without hope,” “without God.” What a terrible condition, and then in Colossians 1 he speaks about the alternative the glorious possibilities. He speaks about the coming servant of the church:

“By the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is not disclosed to the saints. [Doesn't it excite you that you and I have the possibility of knowing God's secret which was hidden from all previous ages and generations, wasn't revealed to angels, wasn't even revealed to the great old men of the previous ages, but is now disclosed to the saints. What is this glorious mystery?] To whom God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (NIV)

That's the alternative “without Christ,” “without God,” “without hope,” or “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

Our time is up for today, I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll be sharing with you a vivid illustration of our theme from the Old Testament: Noah's ark.

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