

Deliverance Through Redemption



Claiming Our Inheritance (Part 1)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again at the beginning of a new week, sharing with you out of truths that life has taught me, truths that have made the difference between success and failure in my life and can do the same for you. This week I am going to deal with the theme of "Claiming Our Inheritance."

First, let me say "thank you" to those of you who have been writing to me. Before I finish this talk we'll be giving you a mailing address to which you may write. Feel free to share with us your personal needs, your problems, your prayer requests.

The charter of the Christian faith is the New Testament. When we use the word "Testament," we're using it in the same sense in which we have the phrase "the last will and testament of so and so." In other words, by using that word we imply that something has been bequeathed to us through the death of another. The New Testament tells us all that has been made available to us through the death of Jesus on our behalf. It reveals our inheritance. It reveals that we are heirs of a Kingdom. But unfortunately, many Christians have never yet discovered what their real inheritance is or how to gain it. They are like a man who is an heir to a tremendous fortune, but has never taken the steps to find out what his inheritance is, or to claim it. So that will be my theme this week, discovering and claiming our inheritance as Christians.

The first Scripture that we'll look at on this theme is Colossians 1:12-14, where Paul says this:

> "Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us [or made us capable] to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. [You'll see there that Paul speaks of an inheritance which is laid up for God's people, an inheritance in light. Then he goes on to explain what has to happen if we are to gain our inheritance in light.] For He [that is God the Father] delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (NAS)

So Paul pictures here two kingdoms: the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of light. The kingdom of light is God's kingdom and the kingdom of Jesus Christ; the kingdom of darkness is Satan's kingdom. These two are in opposition, one to the other. Our inheritance is in the kingdom of light, the kingdom of God and of Jesus Christ. But in order that we may be able to gain our inheritance, something has to happen first. We have to be delivered from the domain of darkness; that is, from Satan's power over us and over our lives. And this comes about through redemption, the redemption that God has provided for us through the death of Jesus on the cross. Through His redemption we can receive forgiveness of sins. Once we receive forgiveness of sins, Satan has no more legal claim over us, we are set free from his domain, and we are made capable to enter into our inheritance in the kingdom of light, the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

However, we first of all need to understand something about our condition in the kingdom of darkness. Remember, when people are in the dark they can't see their real condition. And that's true of the people who are under Satan's domain; they're in the dark and they cannot see their true condition. We need a light to come into the darkness and reveal to us our true condition. That light is provided by the gospel, by the Word of God. This is what the Word of God tells us about our condition before Christ came to us and forgave us and redeemed us while we were still in Satan's domain in the kingdom of darkness. Paul uses these words in Ephesians 2:1-3:

> "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, [Paul of course, does not mean that we were physically dead, but that we were spiritually dead, alienated and cut off from the life that is in God] in which [that's in trespasses and sin] you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. [So in the kingdom of darkness, in our trespasses and sin, we were under the dominion of a spiritual power called the prince of the power of the air, and he's defined as the spirit who works in the sons of disobedience. In other words, our disobedience to God automatically exposes us to the influence and domination of Satan. And then Paul goes on to say that this was the universal condition of all of us.] among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." (NAS)

So this is true of all of us. In our natural condition we are at enmity with God; we're alienated from God; we're in the dark and we're captivated by the desires of our flesh and our mind. And through those evil, ungodly desires we are held in bondage by Satan, the prince of darkness. Now God's purpose through the gospel is to deliver us from that bondage of darkness and of Satan and to bring us into our inheritance in the kingdom of light. This is very clearly stated in Acts 26:18, where Paul repeats the call that he received from Jesus Christ to carry the gospel to the Gentile world. And this is what Christ commissioned Paul to do through the gospel:

> "...to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." (NIV)

Again, you see God's end purpose is that we may receive forgiveness of sins and thus be qualified for our inheritance in the kingdom of light. But in order that this may happen, first of all, God has to open our eyes as to our true condition and turn us from darkness to light, and from the dominion of Satan to God. We realize therefore, from these Scriptures and from our own experience, that darkness has power. The power of Satan is real. It's not an imagination, it's not a theological fantasy, but Satan is a real being with real power who really dominates those who are alienated from God. And in order to enter God's kingdom, we have first of all to be delivered from the power of Satan. And this deliverance has been made possible only through the death of Jesus on our behalf. We need to understand more precisely the meaning of the word "redemption." It comes from a verb, "to redeem." To redeem means to buy back or to ransom. An example would be if a son of a wealthy man were taken by kidnappers and they held him for ransom and the wealthy man was willing to pay the ransom asked by the kidnappers, and thus his son was restored to him. We could say that the wealthy man, by paying the price, had redeemed his son from the kidnappers.

Now what Jesus has done is to pay the price to redeem us from the kingdom of Satan. In Romans 7:14, Paul says this:

> "We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, [other translations say I am carnal] sold as a slave to sin." (NIV)

Literally the Greek there says, “sold under sin.” This is a figure taken from the Roman world. When a person was sold in the slave market in the Roman world, he was said to be sold under the spear because he was placed on a stand, against a post, and out of the post above his head there stuck forth a spear fastened to the post. And so the evidence that he was being sold as a slave was that he was being sold under this outstretched spear. What Paul is saying is that we, through our sin, were exposed as slaves in Satan’s slave market. And the spear stretched out over our heads that indicated that we were for sale was the sin that we had committed.

Now when a person is sold as a slave or was in ancient times they had no choice as to what occupation they would have to do. Some people might be compelled to take quite respectable occupations, like housekeepers or teachers or nurses, but others might be sold to very menial or immoral occupations, like the cleaner of a latrine or even a prostitute. The person who was a slave had no choice. It was simply the choice of the one who owned him.

And so it is with us as sinners. We are all slaves of Satan by nature, but some of us are respectable sinners, and some of us are less respectable sinners. There is really no ultimate difference between the respectable and the non-respectable sinners. Well, what happened when Jesus came to earth was that He walked into Satan’s slave market, saw us there for sale, and paid the price to buy us out of Satan’s dominion and out of Satan’s slave market. The price that He paid was His precious blood. In Ephesians 1:7, Paul says:

> “In Him [Christ] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of God’s grace.” (NAS)

Our redemption was paid for by the blood of Jesus which obtained the forgiveness of our sins. He bore the penalty of our sins in our place that we might be forgiven and thus qualified to inherit the kingdom of the saints in light. This is stated again in 1 Peter 1:17-19, a very beautiful Scripture.

> “And if you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each man’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay upon earth; knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.” (NAS)

So it was the precious blood that Jesus shed on our behalf that paid the price of our redemption, delivered us from Satan’s slave market and from the kingdom of darkness; obtained for us the forgiveness of sin and qualified us to enter the inheritance of the saints in light.

Well, our time is up for today but I’ll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I’ll explain more fully the outworking of redemption from two aspects: what we have been redeemed from and what we have been redeemed to.

Radio Program

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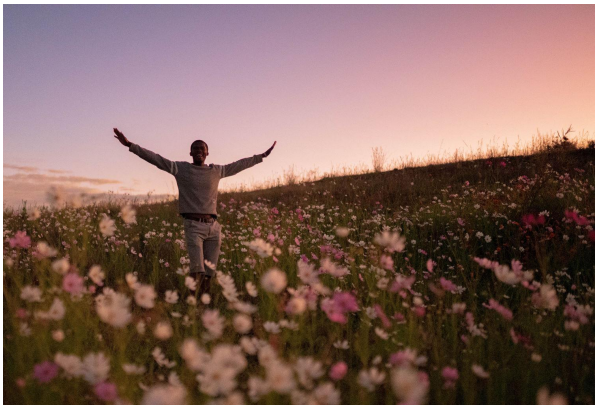

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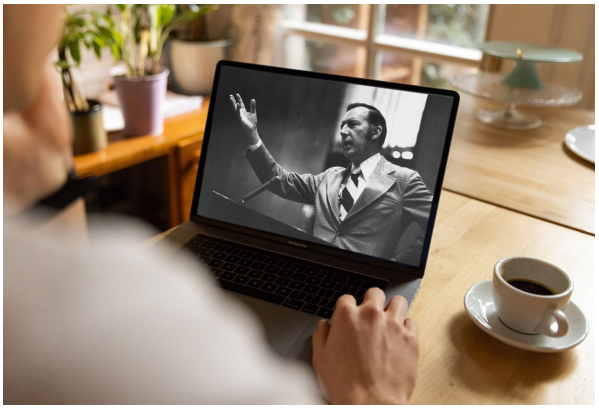

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