

Our Inheritance in Christ

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[0:00] But it was coming from the Anglicans, the Church of England, and their Scottish allies and sympathizers. That's who was persecuting these Christians.

! These Scottish Christians were called covenanters because in 1638 they had come together and signed a covenant.

The solemn oath and covenant. And it was this document that they got together, they signed, they agreed to. And in it they held to their independence. Independence from the Anglican Church, the Church of England.

In it they held firmly to their non-Roman Catholic beliefs. And in it they said they were not going to have bishops. They were not going to have liturgies.

They were going to worship according to the Bible, according to their own conscience, what they thought was right. And that's why they were called covenanters.

[1:06] And for that they were labeled as traitors, as lawless, as people who were trying to throw off the king and his church and everything else.

And for their faith they were rounded up. And after a while they just began to be executed without trial.

And so from the year 1660 to 1688 in Scotland, it's been called the killing time. Ministers were forced to hold outdoor meetings out in the countryside, out in the hills, out in the heather.

They were not allowed to be in town in the churches. And meanwhile, agents and soldiers hunted for ministers and hunted people down.

And when they found them, they tortured and executed them. And so if you were to go to Scotland, I've never been there, but so I've heard if you go to Scotland, scattered throughout Scotland in the southern part, there are memorials and gravestones from that time.

[2:13] And one of the memorials has written on it, engraved in stone, innocent blood stained the heather on our moors and ran down the gutters of our streets with sorrow and sighing beyond contemplation.

The killing times. So I want to go to that time and that place. And I want to tell you a true story of a young lady who lived during that time.

Just a little story. She was a covenanter. She was going to attend a communion service. Like the kind of communion service we are having this evening.

She was going on a Sunday afternoon. Of course, those communion services were strictly prohibited and the king's soldiers were out and about looking for people who might go to meetings like that.

And as she was moving out of town, on her way out of town, she went around a corner and she ran right into a group of soldiers.

[3:22] And so she was trapped. And immediately she wondered, what am I going to say? So what are you doing? Where are you going? So what would you say?

Well, Jesus told us that in moments like that, we shouldn't worry about what we are going to say. It will be given to us. And so where are you going? What are you doing? And out of her mouth it came.

My elder brother has died. And they are going to read his will this afternoon. He has done something for me. And he has left something for me. And I want to hear them read that will.

And they let her go. Well, was she lying? No, her elder brother had died. Christ had died for her.

And he had left something for her. And in the communion service, what he had left her was going to be read out to her again and told to her again. And what he had done for her.

[4 : 26] Well, is there any biblical justification for talking like that? We're talking about Christ's will or inheritances and Christ's death.

And there is. There's one place. And I want to turn your attention to that place. It's Hebrews 9.15. Hebrews 9.15.

Hebrews 9.15. And there it says, For this reason, for this reason, because Christ died, for this reason, Christ is the mediator of a new covenant that those called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.

Now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. So here, the author to the Hebrews is thinking about inheritances.

He's thinking about us receiving our inheritance. And it seems that that jogged his thinking in a different direction just for a minute. And he starts thinking about wills.

[5 : 55] Because the Greek word for covenant, which is in Hebrews, it's most commonly translated as covenant, is also the very common Greek word for a will.

And in secular Greek, Greek outside of the Bible, the word was most commonly used and translated as a will. It was talking about wills. And so a will is a certain kind of covenant, a certain kind of arrangement.

And so he's thinking about that. He's thinking about inheritances. And then it sort of jogs his thinking in a different direction for a minute. And he goes on like this in verse 16.

In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it. Because a will is in force only when somebody has died.

It never takes effect while the one who made it is living. And so did that young Scottish girl have it right? Yes, she did.

[6 : 55] In communion, what we have is a remembrance of our elder brother's death. And in a way, we are reading out again what he has left for us.

What he has left us in his will. He died. And because he died, he set in motion that will. Now, you know that. And it's very obvious in Hebrews.

It's very obvious to all of us that a will has no power. It has no effect. It has no validity until the person who made it is dead. And then it goes into effect.

Doesn't mean anything until the person dies. But Jesus, our priest, has died. Our brother has died. And now the will is in effect.

And it comes powerfully alive. And its stipulations and its gifts and its inheritance comes to us. And so tonight what we're doing, we're gathering as brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.

[8 : 02] And we're going to read what he has done. What he has left us in his will. So you can picture this. Maybe you have actually experienced this in real life.

A reading of a will. And all the brothers and sisters are there. All the heirs are there. All the people who have an interest in the will are there. Tonight we're gathered around.

We're going to remember again what our Lord has left us. There are many things, but I just want to point out four of them to you. The first is he has left us a full discharge of all of our debts.

A full discharge of all of our debts. In his will, Jesus has left us a complete forgiveness of all of our sins.

We just sang it. Complete forgiveness. For in the will it says this, and you can read this in chapter 10 and verse 17.

[9:06] And here he's re-quoting something that he's already quoted and it's from the new covenant in Jeremiah. and for it in the will it says, I will forgive their wickedness and I will remember their sins no more.

And it says, I will cleanse their consciences from every act that leads to death. That's talking about our sin. Our sin is what leads to death. Our sin is what defiles us and defiles our consciences.

And Jesus says, I will cleanse you of every act that leads to death. Every sin. And we just read, or in verse 14 of Hebrews 9, I think it is, it says, I set you free from the sins committed under the first covenant under the law.

That's verse 15. So, this is the greatest news that anyone gathered around this could ever hear.

That this is the greatest news that lawbreakers like us could ever hear. that my falling short of that law, my falling short of the glory of God, my guilt.

[10:19] Jesus says to each one of us who have put our trust in him, I died, and because I died, there's full and complete forgiveness.

Your sins are forgiven. And you could say, but I'm wicked. He says, I forgive your wickedness. my sins are like chains around my ankles.

He says, I've set you free. Set you free from those things. But I'm dirty. Well, I'll cleanse you from every act that leads to death.

So, sin is a debt. And Jesus says to us in his will, I've discharged all of your debts. I've paid for them all. He takes the bill and he writes paid.

Do you do that? You get your bills in? I do this. I get a bill in and after I've written out the check and it's in the mailbox, I write on that bill paid and I write the date and I might write the check number and I file it away.

[11:27] Jesus says, I've taken all of your bills, all of your sin, and I've written paid on each one of them. So, he left us full forgiveness and so I say rejoice, brothers and sisters.

Whatever sin you have sinned, whatever you have done, Jesus now says, remember I have won you forgiveness in my death.

Because I died, you are forgiven. Well, there's more. Second, Jesus says, I leave you a personal relationship with God. I leave you a personal relationship with God the Father.

And you can see it here. Turn to Hebrews chapter 8, just a page back. Hebrews chapter 8, and here we have the new covenant quoted completely.

But I want you to just look at verse 10 and the second half. Eight. So, chapter 8, verse 10, the second half. And it says these words, I will be their God.

[12:37] I will be their God. And they will be my people. That's relationship language. You go to a wedding and the minister says, do you take, do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?

Do you take this man to be your lawfully wedded husband? It's a mutual ownership.

It's them saying, now I take you and you take me. I own you and you own me. And what do you see on so many, at least Christian, wedding invitations or programs.

It's those words, I am my beloved and he is mine. We belong to each other. We have this relationship. It's this permanent personal love relationship.

And that's what Jesus says, that's what I've died for you, to give you this relationship with God where he says of us, they are mine. And then we can say of him, he is mine.

[13:53] And so all that you are is his and vice versa, all that he is is yours.

All of his love, all of his compassion, his mercy, his affection, his faithfulness, his unfailing love, his forgiveness, his kindness, his sweetness, his gentleness, it's all yours.

And Jesus says, I've died to give you this. I've died to give you this relationship with God. And so take that relationship, enjoy that relationship, live in that relationship, know him.

Paul says, oh, to know him, to know Christ. Here in Hebrews or in Jeremiah, it says, Jesus, no longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man, his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they will all know me.

In the old covenant, you could be in the old covenant and not know the Lord, not have that personal relationship, but in the new covenant, it's different.

[15:09] No man or woman could say to their brother, their sister, you should know the Lord, for they would all know me. And so Jesus has bound our hand in his and God's hand in ours, and he has said, now you're friends, reconciled.

You're reconciled to God, and God is reconciled to you. That's what Jesus has died to give us. Third, what has Jesus left us? He's left us an open door.

So we've gathered around and as the will is being read out, to every Christian here, Jesus says, I leave you an open door to God.

Hebrews 4, 15, let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. And so no matter your need, Jesus says, the door is open.

You're never at a loss. You're never so backed into a corner that you have nowhere to turn. No, Jesus says, the door to heaven is open. The door to the throne room of heaven is open.

[16:22] And so are you under temptation? Jesus, the door is open. Have you fallen into temptation and now you're covered with your sin and your regret? Oh, Jesus says to you, the door is open.

Jesus himself knew the power of temptation not because he fell under it, but because he stood and he confronted it. He felt it and so he's able to sympathize with us in our weakness.

And our temptations. So he says the door to God is open. This is what I leave you. This wide open door that whenever you're in trouble, you can go to him.

And so what will we find there? Jesus says, I've left you something. I've left it though at the foot of the throne. and we go to that throne of grace and what do we find?

Mercy and grace to help us in our time of need. And so what is that worth? What is that worth?

[17:29] To have an open door, to have this ready access to mercy and grace whenever we need it. Could you live without it? Could you?

I couldn't live without it. And so Jesus is so kind to give us this open door. And now forth, what has he left us? Hebrews 9 says an eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 12 says, therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful. A kingdom that cannot be shaken.

It is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. We're receiving a kingdom. And so this world is going to be shaken.

And it's going to be shaken so fiercely that anything not permanent will be shaken right out of it, shaken and destroyed. And so anything of this world and purely of this fallen world will be shaken apart until nothing but what is eternal remains, what cannot be shaken.

[18:36] again. And Jesus says, that's the kingdom I give you. That's what I give you. I don't give you like the world gives.

No matter how much our moms and dads and all of our forefathers have loved us and maybe whatever they have left us, they have left us temporary things. But Jesus says, I leave you an eternal kingdom.

So, an eternal kingdom, living under Jesus forever, living under the living one, living under the sinless one, living under the one who is love, living under him.

And so now there's no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order has passed away. So much of what we have known will have been shaken out and gone, passed away.

But what will be there? What will be there? Well, the throne is in that city. Throne of God.

[19:45] And from the feet of the throne there comes a river, a river of life coming from God himself. And we will drink from that river of life, from God.

from that river of delights. And on each side of the river, there is the tree of life and the leaves are for the healing of the nations. I want you to think about what Jesus has left us.

We all go through life hurt, wounded, damaged, broken, and not one of us is excluded.

Not one of us walks through this life without a hurt, without some regret, some shame.

And if you look at someone and say, well, not them, but not them, I would say you just don't know them yet. But what has Jesus left us?

[20:55] Psalm 103 heals us of all of our diseases. Forever healed, forever whole, forever healthy in every way, forever rest, forever love, forever life.

Jesus says, that's what I leave you. That's what I give you in my death. And so we are rich. We are rich in everything that counts.

Have the forgiveness of sins, a relationship with God, an open door where we can go in this bright hope for tomorrow. That no matter what we go through and no matter what we endure here, there is forever, a forever kingdom waiting for us.

And so I say rejoice in your Savior's love. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Just one way. Certainly it's not the only way, but one way that you can tell what that person who has passed on, how they felt about you.

It's what they leave you. What has our Savior left us in his death? Oh, an eternal kingdom, friends with God, God forgiven, grace and mercy.

[22:14] And the greatest thing of all is even though he died, he rose again. In human wills, the person dies, and there is an executor. And the executor is not the person who died. He doesn't decide what's in the will. His job is to hand out what is in the will and to divvy things up and to make sure everything is all taken care of. Jesus is his own executor. He takes these things, and he gives them to us, and he's the living one, and he'll be the one that welcomes us into heaven. He'll be the one that heals us of our diseases. He's the one that offers us forgiveness. And we saw this morning as we worshiped, he's the living one who now meets with us in this meal. And so we should rejoice in our Lord because he's loved us so much. And last of all, we're gathered as brothers and sisters it's a family meal. And we've heard what our Savior has left us, what he's left his brothers and his sisters. And he's left us rich beyond words. So how should we leave this place?

How should we leave this place with knowing his great generosity? He verse 13 one, you don't have to turn there. Just listen to what it says. After the author has talked about so many wonderful things, he says this, keep on loving each other as brothers.

Keep on loving each other as brothers, as family. So our brother has left us rich beyond description. And he loves us so much. And so keep on loving each other as brothers. You know, self-centeredness, selfishness is such a dishonor to our brother's generosity. Oh, but but love, love for the brothers and sisters, the ones that he loves, that honors his generosity. And so as we meet, as we eat together, and as we leave, let us keep loving each other as brothers, as family, because that's what we are.

One in Jesus Christ.