

Finishing Well

Lesson #45 Wake Up! Your Birthright! Nov. 15, 2023

The 5 warnings in Hebrews admonish us to press on & obtain all God has promised to the faithful overcomer. These warnings represent the very real possibility of the loss of privileges or rewards offered to the believer.

These warnings relate the possible negative consequences for the unfaithful believer.

Each warning is progressively worse.

Warning #1 The danger of drifting from the Word > Neglect

Hebrews 2:1-3 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

Warning #2 The danger of not entering into His rest > Doubting His Word > Hard heart

Heb. 3:7-11 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice,⁸ Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. ¹⁰ Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

¹¹ So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.

Heb. 3:18-19 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Warning #3 The danger of not going on to maturity > Dullness toward the Word

Heb. 5:11 There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull of hearing [poor listeners]

Heb. 6:12 That you be not slothful [dull, lazy], but followers [imitate those] of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

The immature believer's works are burned at the Judgment Seat

Heb. 6:8 But that which bears thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.

Warning #4 The danger of despising the Word > Willfully Sin

Heb. 10:35-36 Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. ³⁶ For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Warning #5 The danger of disobeying the Word > Refusing to Hear > Bitterness

Context of #5: Race Of Faith > Run Strong > Finish Well

Heb. 12:1-2 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Consider the endurance of Jesus in completing His mission by enduring the agony of the wrath of both God & men. Endure suffering & adversity as divine discipline, lovingly administered for your growth & sanctification. Everything in your life is being done under the control of God to bring about your good > To conform you to the image of Jesus Christ.

➤ You are to be exercised by trials and adversities.

➤ If a heavy trial comes into your life, accept it. They will stretch & strengthen your faith.

I Tim. 4:7b-8 exercise thyself rather unto godliness. ⁸ For bodily exercise profits little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

Heb. 12:15-17 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For you know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

The Inheritance Involving the Birthright with Firstborn Sons

Birthright in the NT is from the Greek: prototokia: The rights of the Firstborn

1. The rights of firstborn sons consist of a plurality of rights, which are inherited rights.
2. The rights of the firstborn sons in the Jewish culture in the OT consisted of 3 things.
 - a. Ruler of the household under the Father
 - b. Priest of the family
 - c. Receive a Double Portion of the Father's estate [Deut. 21:17]

Key Point #1 EVERY Jewish firstborn son was in line to receive this threefold inheritance, but, according to that which God has revealed in His Word, this inheritance was FORFEITABLE.

➤ The firstborn rights and privileges were provisionally given at their birth.

Point #2 The Positional Standing as a firstborn son did not itself guarantee the inheritance would be received. The right to the inheritance was his; but he could lose it.

Point #3 A firstborn son, through rebellious actions, could FORFEIT his firstborn rights.

ALL the sons are heirs, but only those who met the conditions of the firstborn achieved the elevated status and authority and retained their inheritance.

Examples Of Forfeiture Of Firstborn

Inheritance

A. Esau forfeited his birthright and his blessings because of disobedience.

He was still his father's son, but he forfeited his inheritance. [Gen.27:35-40; Heb. 12:16-17]

All 12 of Jacob's sons were eligible to inherit because they were all sons.

However, all the sons did not behave the same way. It impacted their future.

The Bible shows that the father could rescind the birthright and pass it on to a younger son.

B. Reuben, the firstborn, [I Chron. 5:1] defiled his father's bed. His firstborn birthright was taken away from him [still his father's son] and given to Joseph's [#11] sons. Jacob blessed the younger son, Ephraim, above the elder son, Manasseh. Gen. 37:19-22; Gen. 49:1-4; 49:22-26.

- The double portion of the inheritance [of the land] went to Joseph through his two sons (Ephraim and Manasseh), each being given a portion of the land.
- The priestly service was given to the tribe of Levi. [Num. 1:47-51; Deut. 33:8-10]
- The position of authority was allotted to Judah, the tribe from which the Messiah, the future King, would arise. [I Chron. 5:2]

C. The birthright could be transferred to one who was not literally the firstborn.

In I Chronicles 26:10: Shimri, not the firstborn, was made first ["chief"] by his father, giving him the privileges of the firstborn.

The main meaning of being the firstborn = one of being chief or having the pre-eminence in rank. This is in distinction from just being biologically the first son born. The privilege of having the chief rank normally belonged to the first one born but could be transferred.

Firstborn Birthright In The New Testament

Jesus holds the "birthright" and is the heir of all the Father has. Heb. 1:2

God has given Christ all of creation which was created for Him. Col. 1:16; John 3:35

Christ's inheritance includes believers. John 6:37

As God's only begotten Son, Jesus will receive the kingdom from His Father.

Phil. 2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Rev. 19:16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King Of Kings, And Lord Of Lords.

As adopted sons of God, Christians are treated as firstborn heirs.

Heb. 12:23a To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, As New Testament Christians, we have an inherited "birthright" status through Jesus Christ as the firstborn Son of God. [See also Col. 1:15, 18; Rev. 1:5]

Romans 8:28-29 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he [Jesus] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

I Pet. 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you,

Christ promises to share with us His kingdom and inheritance. Gal. 3:29; Eph. 1:18

Our inheritance includes salvation [Heb. 1:14], eternal life [I Peter 1:4], and even a measure of the throne of Christ.

Rev. 3:21 To him that overcomes 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.

The Ultimate Significance of Human Life

Question: Why am I here? Why did God save me? What is God's purpose in calling me?

God's Original Purpose: *Man's Intended & Original Royal Position*

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;

let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Man was originally created in the image of God and called to reign over the whole earth.

Presented to 1st Adam + His Bride > Incredible Gift > Dominion & Rulership

Problem: Lucifer was determined to thwart God's plan. He devised a scheme to deceive Eve which also led Adam's to disobedience. God's purpose was not fulfilled. 1st Adam Failed God's Purpose In Saving Us & Calling Us:

1. Place us back in the position for which we were originally created - to be "joint-heirs" with Christ ruling and reigning with Him over the earth as His bride. [Gen. 1:26]

2. God has determined to accomplish this purpose in the Millennium where man will

finally occupy a regal position over a restored earth. [Acts 3:21] Last Adam + His Bride

3. Ruling & reigning with Christ is the mark or goal of the high calling of Christ. [Phil. 3:10-14]

Phil. 3:14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

4. God seeks our fellowship, communion & love. He wants to dwell among us.

Rev. 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Consider: The subject of my future inheritance in Christ's Millennial Kingdom is a major theme in God's Word. There are ~1518 verses in the OT and hundreds in the New that speak about His coming kingdom and the importance of my being able To Inherit It.

Consider: The Bible speaks of inherit or inheritance in 2 ways.

1. Strong's 2816 = kleronomEO = Inheritance By Birth or Sonship Inheritance

a. This inheritance belongs to me simply because I am a born-again child of God & I am an heir.

b. I am justified, the Holy Spirit of God resides in me. I have God Himself as my inheritance.

Gal. 4:6-7 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

c. This sonship inheritance is unconditional and automatic. I will always be a son.

d. This inheritance is a free gift - NO WORKS. [Rom. 4:1-4; 11:5-6; Eph. 2:8-9]

e. This inheritance GUARANTEES me eternal Life; open to all who will accept it.

➤ Eph. 1:11, 14; Heb. 9:15 = Our works are not mentioned.

Titus 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

I Pet. 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

f. This inheritance gives me entrance to His Kingdom.

Note: After our justification, the Holy Spirit spends the rest of our lives cleansing, renewing and sanctifying us for positions in the coming Kingdom.

Sanctification is NOT AUTOMATIC. I must humble myself and surrender to the process which can only be done by the Holy Spirit working in me through the active, living Word of God.

2. Strong's 2817 = κληρονομία = Inheritance From The Lord

The New Testament affirms again and again the principle of reward according to works.

Some Christians will obtain an extra portion of spiritual possession or blessing.

Given by the Lord because of faithfulness, obedience and perseverance

The extra portion of the inheritance: Relates To The 1,000 Year Kingdom Reward

Earned inheritance [meritorious reward] which entitles one to positions, rewards, authority and blessings in the Millennial Kingdom

Col. 3:24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the Reward Of The Inheritance;

For You Serve The Lord Christ. [works are noted]

➤ This inheritance is conditional because there are requirements.

Rev. 2:26 he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations

Rev. 21:7 He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

My Belief: People who are justified ENTER the Kingdom.

People who are justified and obedient to sanctification ENTER and INHERIT the kingdom.

SALVATION- Sonship Inheritance	REWARDS-Inheritance From The Lord
Past - I John 3:2	Future - Rev. 22:12
Free - Eph. 2:8-9	Earned - I Cor. 3:8
Can't Be Lost - John 10:28-29	Can Be Lost - II John 1:8
Same For All - Rom. 3:22	Differ Among Christians - I Cor. 3:12-15
For Those Who Believe - John 3:16	For Those Who Work - I Cor. 9:27

Difference Between Entering The Kingdom & Inheriting The Kingdom

Remember: We cannot lose our eternal life, but we can lose or forfeit our position in His Kingdom.

Consider: All justified believers will DWELL in the Kingdom. Not all justified believers will Inherit Or Rule in the Kingdom.

1. Strong's 1525 = We enter or come into the kingdom because of our new birth and because we have received God's Spirit.

2. Strong's 2817 = We inherit the kingdom [obtain, possess or receive it] as a reward for an obedient and faithful life here on earth; partakes of Christ's life; lives as overcomer

This is the "PRIZE" for surrendering to the work of the Holy Spirit in us to mold us into the image of Jesus Christ.

Heb. 12:1 Run with endurance.

I Cor. 9:24 Run to win the prize.

Acts 20:24 Finish with joy.

II Tim. 4:7 I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.

New Testament Differentiates Between Gift and Prize:

1. Gift = something that is bestowed freely upon someone = Our Justification
2. Prize = something that is gained through some performance = Our Sanctification

Paul in Phil. 3:12-15 is PRESSING toward the mark for the PRIZE.

This PRIZE Must Be Sought After in The Power Of The Holy Spirit.

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I Press Toward The Goal For The Prize Of The Upward Call Of God In Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us, as many as are mature, have this mind.

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.

Points out both the common inheritance of all believers and the extra portion of inheritance together with Christ in His 1,000-year Kingdom.

In this verse being an heir of God is dependent solely upon being His child.

However, being a co-heir with Christ when He inherits His coming 1,000-year Kingdom is dependent upon our willingness to suffer with Him.

Experience His crucifixion in our lives to die to the world, sin and self; sanctification.

Tony Evans: "There are Christians who have been set free from spiritual bondage, but who will never enjoy the full right and privileges they could have inherited in the coming kingdom. That's because these benefits accrue to believers based on their faithfulness to Christ here on earth. Inheritance from the Lord [co-reigning with Him] is earned; whereas, sonship is not."

Old Testament Scriptures > Requirements For An Inheritance In The Land

Entering the land is not the same as possessing or inheriting the land.

Consider: These Scriptures clearly show us the distinction between simply being in the land and inheriting or owning the land.

- Inheriting involved an automatic aspect.

They were eligible to inherit the land because they were the children of Israel.

Owning the land was a reward for faithfulness and obedience.

Deut. 6:18 "IF they [Israelites] do what is good and right, THEN they will not only go into the land, but also POSSESS it."

Deut. 19:9-10 "IF they shall keep the commandment, THEN they will INHERIT the cities and the land."

Conclusion: For Israel, possessing or inheriting the land had to be earned by their obedience and faithfulness. Heirship was meritorious.

New Testament Scriptures > Requirements For An Inheritance From The Lord

1. Matt. 24:43, 47 IF we are FAITHFUL, THEN He will make us RULER over all His goods.

2. II Tim. 2:5, 12 Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules. IF we SUFFER [ENDURE], THEN we shall REIGN with Him.
3. Heb. 10:35 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great REWARD.
- Conclusion: "Inheritance from the Lord," [in OT & NT] is always conditioned upon behavior.

Judgment	Time	Relationship
Condemnation To New Life	Past -Regeneration	As A Sinner
Discipline Or Rewards	Present - Sanctification	As A Son
Loss Or Rewards	Future - Glorification	As A Steward

D.L. Moody: "I have an idea that we are down here in training, that God is just polishing us for some higher service." [The Overcoming Life]

Ruling with Christ in His Kingdom is a tremendous privilege.

The rewards are not for merely believing but are for what we do after believing.

Question: Should A Believer Be Motivated By Eternal Rewards?

Heb. 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; ²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Scripture gives us Warnings & Admonitions: Your Inheritance Is A Treasure:

II Thess. 1:4-5 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:

⁵ Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

II John 1:8 Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that we may receive a full reward.*

James 1:22 Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, DECEIVING your own selves.

Luke 6:46 Why call Me Lord, if you don't DO the things I tell you?

I Cor. 4:2 Moreover it is Required In Stewards, [those who have been given a trust] that a man be found FAITHFUL.

I Thess. 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification: [must CHOOSE to be sanctified]

Heb. 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end,

Heb. 10:35-36 Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

Note: The FIVE WARNINGS in Hebrews are about the possibility of believers losing their reward of inheritance from God: NOT THEIR SONSHIP!

Rev. 21:7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things,...

Rev. 3:11 Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

Rev. 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

I John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

Donald G. Barnhouse "All believers will be in heaven, but the differences will be eternal. We may be sure that the consequences of our character will survive the grave and that we will face those consequences at the Judgment Seat of Christ."

Martin Luther "There are only two days on my calendar: today and 'that day.'"

I Cor. 2:9 What eye has not seen and ear has not heard and has not entered into the heart of man, [all that] God has prepared (made and keeps ready) for those who love Him [who hold Him in affectionate reverence, promptly obeying Him and gratefully recognizing the benefits He has bestowed].

II Cor. 4:16-18 Therefore we do not become discouraged (utterly spiritless, exhausted, and wearied out through fear). Though our outer man is [progressively] decaying *and* wasting away, yet our inner self is being [progressively] renewed day after day. ¹⁷ For our light, momentary affliction (this slight distress of the passing hour) is ever more and more abundantly preparing *and* producing *and* achieving for us an everlasting weight of glory [beyond all measure, excessively surpassing all comparisons and all calculations, a vast and transcendent glory and blessedness never to cease!],

II Cor. 5:9-10 Therefore, whether we are at home [on earth] or away from home [and with Him], it is our [constant] ambition to be pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we [believers will be called to account and] must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be repaid for what has been done in the body, whether good or bad [that is, each will be held responsible for his actions, purposes, goals, motives—the use or misuse of his time, opportunities and abilities].

I Cor. 9:24-25 Run [your race] in such a way that you may seize the prize *and* make it yours!

²⁵ Now every athlete who [goes into training and] competes in the games is disciplined *and* exercises self-control in all things. They do it to win a crown that withers, but we [do it to receive] an imperishable [crown that cannot wither].

II Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought the good (worthy, honorable, and noble) fight, I have finished the race, I have kept (firmly held) the faith. ⁸ [As to what remains] henceforth there is laid up for me the [victor's] crown of righteousness [for being right with God and doing right], which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me *and* recompense me on that [great] day—and not to me only, but also to all those who have loved *and* yearned for *and* welcomed His appearing (His return).

My life here [being sanctified] is the training ground, the proving ground and the testing ground for my future life there.

My Resolve: May I allow God to carry me on to maturity and fitness for ruling with Him in His coming Kingdom as I rightly respond to my circumstances and adversities of my present life.

Rom. 8:18 For I reckon [count on as true] that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Acts 20:32 And now I commend you to God [placing you in His protective, loving care] and [I commend you] to the word of His grace [the counsel and promises of His unmerited favor]. His grace is able to build you up and to give you the [rightful] inheritance among all those who are sanctified [that is, among those who are set apart for God's purpose—].