

Partake of the Inheritance:
Forgiveness and New Life

Col 1:12-14

*12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be **partakers of the inheritance** of the saints in light:*

13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

I. Introduction

1. The main event, the showcase, the spotlight, the focus of Easter weekend is the death of Jesus as the ultimate sacrificial Passover Lamb, and His glorious resurrection from death.
2. This fact that was recorded in history, affirmed by many witnesses, and has literally changed the world.
3. But how can a historical event that occurred 2000 years ago, continue to change anything for us today?
4. In a nutshell, a key benefit of these events is what it did to the power and control and dominion of sin over us.
5. Our sins were nailed to the cross—something we will look at in a bit—so those **sins**, their **power** over us, and their **judgment**, were covered by His blood and His **death**.
6. But Jesus' **resurrection** was the act that defeated Satan's control over death, and death was the penalty for sin.
7. Yes, Jesus died for our sins, and He was the one and only spotless Lamb whose sacrifice was worthy to take away our sins, but He also had the power to raise Himself from death.
8. **So not only is forgiveness possible, but new life is possible.**
9. So today, I want to bring you to your attention, this promised inheritance.
10. What Jesus did that we celebrate this weekend is more than history to study, and is more than theology to debate, it is an inheritance that we can partake of today: forgiveness, and new life.

II. Testimony

1. I will briefly state how this inheritance changed me.
2. In my early years, I was raised in a traditional religion that celebrated various rituals, but I ultimately found it lacking in the power to transform a life as the scriptures foretold.
3. And when dysfunction and abuse started to cast their dark shadows over our home, we needed something with life-transforming power to overcome that evil.
4. I was an emotional mess headed down a path that led to that same evil, but just in time, we were invited to a church that preached about this inheritance of forgiveness and new life.
5. And at age 14, I partook of this inheritance. I was baptized in the name of the Lord and felt the power of Jesus cleansing my sins in forgiveness. What a joy! Could it get any better?
6. Well soon I discovered it could. One night after the pastor finished his sermon, my friend asked me, do you want to go pray?

7. I knew what he was asking. I needed and wanted a transformed life. I wanted that baptism of the Holy Ghost promised in the scripture. I had been reading about and hungering for it every day.
8. At the altar that night in July 1976, I received the Holy Ghost. I knew it because I spoke in other tongues just like they did in the Bible, and plus I felt the demonstration of the power God operating like a fire in my heart.
9. And it was powerful! It was no contrived emotional manipulation. It was miraculous. It was the greatest miracle I had ever witnessed.
10. And although I made plenty of mistakes since that day nearly 45 years ago, I have found that there is a continual connection to that miracle source that has restored me over and over again.
11. And right now, on this day 45 years later, the power of that forgiveness and of the new life is still mightily present with me.
12. He has not diminished any since that day.
13. That is why I want to emphasize the miraculous nature of what Jesus has done which we celebrate today on Resurrection Sunday.
14. It was a real, miraculous event 2000 years ago that affected me in a real, miraculous way, 45 years ago, and today on April 12, 2020, it is still a real, miraculous experience for me and you today.
15. You can partake of the inheritance: forgiveness and new life!

III. Death brought forgiveness

A. Crucifixion is the power of God

1. That is why I say this is more than history and theology, it is a miracle!
2. Let us look at the events of that first Easter weekend and the weeks that followed to see how it impacted the eyewitnesses and those they preached to.
3. Their hope had been in their Messiah Jesus, but how sorrowful, and even embarrassing, and even foolish, that He had been killed.

1 Cor 1:23-24

*23 But we preach Christ **crucified**, unto the Jews a **stumblingblock**, and unto the Greeks **foolishness**;*

4. But the crucifixion, rather than being a stumbling block, or foolishness, demonstrated God's wisdom and power:

*24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the **power** of God, and the **wisdom** of God.*

5. God knew what He was doing—this was His power at work.

B. The sacrifice of the Lamb of God

1. On the day before Jesus was crucified, Jesus celebrated Passover with His disciples. We refer to that meal as the Last Supper.
2. A Passover feast was to include a roasted lamb as the center piece of the meal. It has been that way for over 1500 years, but there was no mention of roast lamb in that last supper.
3. But Jesus, whom John the Baptist had introduced as “The Lamb of God,” took the place as the Centerpiece of that meal when He broke the bread and made this announcement:
Matt 26:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

4. Luke added Jesus' words:
*Luke 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, **This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.***
 5. So instead of a lamb being offered, Jesus said, I am being offered.
 6. And then He took the cup and said:
*Matt 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the **remission of sins** [that is forgiveness].*
 7. Passover, with its slain lamb, had been an occasion to remember that the blood on the doorposts that kept the death angel away, and to remind of them that they were set free from slavery that night.
 8. But now, Jesus took the place of the lamb, and His blood would be the centerpiece of the New Testament, or new covenant with God, that would also set them free from sin and deliver them into a new life.
 9. The **blood** of Jesus would now be the key to receiving **remission** of sins.
 10. And only hours after the Last Supper, Jesus' literally gave His body to be beaten, broken, and bleeding, and was offered as the sacrificial Passover Lamb who would take away the sins of the world.
 11. That is important because without Jesus' sacrifice, our sinful condition and wicked works, **alienated**, or separated us from God.
Col 1:21-23
*21 And you, that were sometime **alienated** and **enemies** in your mind by **wicked works**, yet now hath he **reconciled***
*22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you **holy and unblameable** [without blemish] and **unreproveable** [blameless] in his sight:*
 12. But because He gave His body in death, we can be forgiven and be holy and blameless in God's sight.
 13. Forgiveness is part of our inheritance! We will return to that in a moment.
 14. If you are still alienated, just imagine your life as blameless before God.
 15. That is the power of God's grace and forgiveness that is available to us if we continue in the faith:
*23 If ye **continue in the faith** grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the **gospel** [good news of Jesus death and resurrection], which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;*
 16. Believing or having faith in the gospel is the starting point, but is another thing to **continue in the faith** all the way to **obeying the gospel** and living in it.
- IV. Resurrection gave new life
- A. Resurrection was center of preaching
 1. Was it not good enough that Jesus gave up His life as a judgment to pay for the atoning, cleansing, and remission of our sins? Why was the resurrection necessary?
 2. Well the resurrection gave two things: proof of who He was, plus a promise for new life for us.
 3. The lifechanging event of witnessing the resurrection of Jesus, became the centerpiece of the preaching in the early church.

4. We see it in Peter's first sermon preached in the church:
Acts 2:22-24
22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:
23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:
*24 Whom **God hath raised up**, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*
 5. We see the resurrection was preached again just a few days later.
 6. After healing the lame man in front of the temple, Peter told the crowd that they had healed the man by the power of Jesus, and tied that healing power to His resurrection:
Acts 3:13-15
13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.
14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;
*15 And killed the Prince of life, whom **God hath raised from the dead**; whereof we are witnesses.*
 7. Over and over, we see the resurrection was a central part of the preaching of the apostles.
 8. That was made clear in this summary of their ministry:
*Acts 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles **witness of the resurrection** of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*
 9. The resurrection of Jesus was the center of the preaching of the early church.
 10. And it is still important today.
- B. Confirmed Jesus' claims of divinity
1. Resurrection was important because it gives proof that Jesus was who He said He was.
 2. He had made some very bold claims about being from heaven, being one with the Father, and about returning to the right hand of power. Like here:
*John 8:24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that **I am** he, ye shall die in your sins.*
 3. Imagine someone making such a claim!
 4. Jesus equated Himself with the I Am, the God of Israel. And it was those claims of deity that made Jesus a target of the anger of the religious leaders.
 5. Who was Jesus to make claims of being God? It was those words that led their council to convict Jesus with the charge of blasphemy.
Matt 26:63-65
63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.
64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.
65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.
 6. Was it blasphemy that Jesus claimed to be God?

7. Was it blasphemy that He claimed to be raised in power to the clouds of heaven?
8. Well if I made that claim, yes, it would be. I would not be able to prove it.
9. But when Jesus made that claim, He demonstrated it when He did rise again!
10. Jesus gave His life in sacrifice for sins, and He rose again victorious over death. That confirmed He was who He said He was.

C. Resurrection power is for us

1. But the resurrection was also confirmation of Jesus' ability to forgive our sins as well as offer us hope of resurrection.

1 Cor 15:17-20

*17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; **ye are yet in your sins.***

*18 Then they also which are **fallen asleep in Christ** are perished.*

*19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men **most miserable.***

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

2. Meaning, we also have a hope of resurrection.
3. And this is a wonderful promise to cling to. If we have received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, we also have that same resurrection power in us!
*Rom 8:11 But if the **Spirit of him** that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*
4. So the fact that Jesus was resurrected, means we can have that same resurrection hope through the Holy Ghost.
5. And that is the power to have a new life. Not only forgiveness, but Jesus living inside of me giving me a new life with new desires.
6. **Through the power of the Holy Ghost, I have a power greater than my lustful desires;
a power that breaks the control that addictions had over me,
a power that will control my anger, my tongue, and my thoughts.**

D. How to partake of the inheritance

1. We will bring this to a close now by pointing to how we can continue in the faith; how we can partake of the inheritance of forgiveness and new life.
2. A moment ago, we said it is important to have faith in the gospel message, that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again from the grave. But how do you continue in that faith?
3. How can we obey the gospel and make the powerful message of Resurrection Sunday meaningful to us individually and personally?
4. Well as circumcision was the sign of the Old Testament covenant with Israel, baptism is the sign of the New Testament covenant of Jesus death and resurrection:

Col 2:11-15

*11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the **circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh** by the circumcision of Christ:*

*12 **Buried with him in baptism***

[when you go down in the water in Jesus' name—buried in baptism—that puts off, or washes away our sins—a circumcision without hands],

*wherein also ye are **risen with him** through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

5. And baptism is closely connected with repentance:
*13 And you, **being dead in your sins** [repentance] and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having **forgiven you all trespasses**;*
 6. So if we repent of our sins and are then baptized in Jesus' name, that is how we receive forgiveness of our sins. Believe the gospel and obey the gospel by repenting and be baptized.
 7. This is what that accomplishes for us personally:
*14 **Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances** [the law of God that we disobeyed] *that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **nailing it to his cross**;**
 8. Obeying the gospel through repentance and baptism literally takes all of our sins and nails them to the cross of Jesus where we receive forgiveness, remission, by His blood.
*15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, **triumphing over them in it.***
 9. Jesus death and resurrection made an open show of His triumph over the devil.
 10. And when we come out of that water, we are forgiven, giving a testimony to all openly, that Jesus whipped the devil on our behalf!
- V. Conclusion
1. We will close with this final passage that ties Jesus' death and resurrection with water baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost.
 2. This was what Peter preached to Cornelius' household:
Acts 10:38-40, 44-48
38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.
*39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom **they slew and hanged on a tree**:*
*40 Him **God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly**;*
...
44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.
45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.
46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,
47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?
48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.
 3. If you want to partake of the inheritance of forgiveness, repent and be baptized.
 4. If you want to partake of the inheritance of new life, receive the Holy Ghost.