

The Inheritance of the Saints

Sunday, March 15, 2020 at The First Congregational Church of Marshalltown,
Iowa

Scripture: Colossians 1:12 "...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light."

Introduction-Do you need a place or a community where you belong?

There is something about belonging, a family or community and a place that is essential to us. We are "hardwired" to belong. I found this in the health section of the CNN website. It goes like this; "You are not alone.' 'You belong.' 'And it gets better.' These are a few of a handful of powerful messages that an elegantly designed 'belonging intervention' by social psychologist and Stanford assistant professor Gregory Walton conveys to study participants who are going through a difficult period. In a series of ongoing studies, first published in 2007 in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, the belonging intervention uses a technique known as 'attributional retraining' to help people shift blame for negative events from 'It's just me' to 'I'm not alone, and there are others going through it.'"* It is not an accident that one of the most cherished promises of Jesus is that He is going to prepare a place for us, that we belong. Elsewhere in Scripture we read of an "inheritance". Today we take a brief look at that.

Inheritance
meaning

The word for "inheritance" is an old one, meaning "of the lot" or "for a share of the lot". Originally it referred to the pebble or piece of wood used to cast lots, and later for the land or inheritance the lots represented. In Acts 1:26 the remaining apostles used prayer and casting lots to choose Matthias to replace Judas as one of the twelve apostles of Jesus. "To have a lot" with someone involves having a place of one's own, and having the right to be part of a community. It is both now and in the future.

Now

To have an inheritance in Christ involves present spiritual growth and experience. An old commentary, the Preacher's Homiletical, puts it best: "Light is symbolic of knowledge, purity, and joy. The saints even now are called out of darkness into God's kingdom of marvelous light. 'They walk in

the light as He is in the light.' They have a measure of knowledge, but it is dimmed by many earthly obscurities; of purity, but it is surrounded with imperfections; of joy, but it is moderated by life's sorrows. In the prospective heavenly inheritance, of which the earthly portion is a preparation and pledge, knowledge shall be unclouded and complete, purity unsullied, joy uninterrupted. “

Future

One mention of the future inheritance comes from the Book of Revelation (22:14), where those obedient to Jesus may enter the New Jerusalem through the twelve gates of the city and are allowed to eat of the Tree of Life, the one denied to Adam and Eve because they ate of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. It is something to think about when pondering present troubles.

Needed

Both the hope of future inheritance in the Kingdom of God and the present hope and encouragement are necessary. We need endurance or we lose heart, and we need patience or we will get angry with life and act in a rash and foolish manner.

Application

The passage gives us the application, we are to pray for each other. But it also tells us what to pray. Look at the verses prior to the key verse and also other passages such as Ephesians 1 and 2 Peter 1 for specific instruction regarding how to pray for fellow church members.

Conclusion

We need an inheritance, a place to belong, a family and community of which we are part. It is psychologically hard-wired into us and is part of our spiritual destiny. It is also help and encouragement from the Holy Spirit in the present. Such is the inheritance of the saints.

*The importance of belonging

By Amanda Enayati, Special to CNN'

<https://www.cnn.com/2012/06/01/health/enayati-importance-of-belonging/index.html>

