

02-08-11b1 Revelation

Take and put it in the place of God falls in this category, covetousness, idolaters and all liars. The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can understand it? Jeremiah 17, 9. We deceive ourselves.

We deceive others. And if we make this a practice, all of us are going to be subject to this from time to time, but if this is habitual, if this is our way of life, if we live a life where we have fooled ourselves into thinking that we're spiritual and we're not, we've fooled ourselves into thinking we're on the narrow road and we're not, we've fooled ourselves into thinking we do what we do for the glory of God and we're not, guess what? We're liars. And where will liars reside? In the future kingdoms, in the kingdom of Christ and in the kingdom of God, outside.

Now, this is what I wanted to bring up and this is another lesson that's running long. I apologize, but I'm determined to finish this thought so that we can move on to Smyrna next time. The tree of life, the river of life, its origin under the throne of God, all of this is inside Jerusalem, both in the millennial kingdom and in the kingdom of the Father.

You find the water running out from under the temple, from out from under the throne of God. That is within the limits of the city and within the limits of the kingdom in the millennium. And there are people who are excluded.

Now, people say, oh, well, this is the lake of fire, these dogs and sorcerers, these are the unbelievers who never got saved, their sins were not forgiven and that's why they're called sorcerers and immoral and idolaters and that, because they didn't accept Christ and so they bear the load of their sins and they're going to hell for their sins. And so right outside the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem, in which are all believers that ever lived, right outside the gates, you have the smoke and the flame of the lake of fire. The smoke ascends forever, their worm doth not, the fire is not quenched.

Outside in the bobbing around in the lake are the dogs and sorcerers and etc. Wrong, wrong, wrong. I'm sorry if that sounds harsh, but think about it.

What is one of the rewards of the overcomers? To enter through the gates. Well, now, if your reward is to enter through the gates and everybody enters, you would only enter once and then you would never leave. But this has the idea of traversing back and forth.

Where are the nations who get the healing of these leaves from the tree of life? There's not nations inside the city. I mean, that's absurd. You don't pack a nation inside a city.

There's a city and there's a great expanse of territory outside the city that is built four square. And there are gates to that city because there is entrance and there is egress from the people who have their citizenship in the city versus those who have their citizenship out amongst the nations.

Citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem is a reward.

The right to walk up to the shore of the river of life in the new Jerusalem and reach up and pick one of those twelve fruits and eat of it is a citizenship right that is granted to those who overcome. It is not based on salvation alone. That's why you have the works listed, change of mind and obedience and faith.

These are not salvation terms, salvation from the lake of fire. These are lifestyle choices. These are priorities that we set.

These are goals that we set. These are values that we adhere to and persevere and endure with daily expressions of faith and obedience as a result of change of mind. It is lifestyle choices of believers.

You right now are determining, I right now am determining where we're going to live in the future. Does it matter to you? For some believers it doesn't really matter. Oh, I just want to get inside.

If I just get resurrected, I'll be happy. Well, that's a very selfish attitude because God's glory is reflected in the number of those who are worthy to be included in the citizenship of the new Jerusalem. God's glory is at stake.

It is not just you. And you say, well, I don't care. God just wants to resurrect me anywhere.

I'll be happy. That's a selfish attitude because that is not God's calling. God says, I want you to excel.

I want you to persevere. I want you to seize and lay hold of these because His glory is reflected in that. And we fail the grace of God and we fail the heavenly calling if we don't think that these rewards that Jesus offers and that God the Father guarantees and that the blood of Christ was spilled to obtain for us, if they're not important to us, people say, oh, that's selfish to want rewards for the eternal future.

No, it's not. Not if you understand them. Not if you realize that those are the fulfillment of the will and purpose of God.

That is your calling. It is as though God said, squad, I want you to go take that hill. See the hill up there? It's occupied by the enemy.

I want you to attack it. I want you to move up that slope. I want you to take that territory and I want you to occupy it and hold it until I come.

And when you do, I'm going to give you the battle ribbon of valor. I'm going to give you this reward that indicates that you heard what I said and you fulfilled it because there are so many who say, I'm not taking that hill. That could hurt me.

That looks dangerous. I'm not interested in that. I'm happy right here where I am.

I'm tucked away in my foxhole. I've got my little radio here. I'm all set.

It is our calling. We are enjoined. We are given imperatives in Scripture that say, seize and lay hold of these rewards.

So don't think you're feeling selfish when you seek to claim these rewards. We are saved for the purpose of being citizens of the Millennial Kingdom. We are saved with the objective of being citizens of the New Jerusalem.

And if we fall short of it, we have no one to blame but ourselves because God asks us. God enjoins us to do that. Now let me just tell you quickly, and you can look these scriptures up, we don't have time to turn to them, but those who have the right to the Tree of Life in the midst of the Paradise of God have that right of access because your home is in the city limits.

That is your dwelling place. You are the bond slave of the Lord, the doulos of the Lord. The bond slaves are those who do not have need of any light because the Lamb is the light.

He says that of the bond slaves. Every place you see bond slaves, think faithful, faithful unto death, overcomer, one who inherits, one who has laid claim to spiritual blessings in heavenly places. It is not a term that includes all of the resurrected.

It is not a term that includes all of the saved. There will be the majority of people outside the city, living amongst the nations, living outside because of the pattern of their life. Do you think that there are going to be sorcerers and idolaters and murderers and so forth in the kingdom of the Father? No.

So why are they characterized this way? When did these sorceries and murders and things take place? Previously. Previously. This is the fate of believers who live a lifestyle of faithlessness.

Their portion, their meros, is in the lake of fire which burns forever and ever. Where is the lake of fire that burns forever and ever? Is it within the city walls or outside? When you are in the city walls and you want to look for an inheritance, all you have to do is look at the trees growing by the river. All you have to do is look at your robe.

All you have to do is look at the white stone. All you have to do is think about your new name. All you have to do is enjoy the presence of Christ as you walk with Him and as you rule and reign with Him.

It says they are priests of God and they reign forever and ever. Is it all chiefs and no Indians? Who are you reigning over? What does it mean to reign in God's kingdom? To reign means to benefit, to dispense, if I can say this without sounding like a Catholic, to dispense the grace of God, to be a channel through which the grace of God flows. Angels benefit us.

The grace of God flows through their ministry to us. We are going to have that function if we are overcomers. If you have the right to the tree of life, guess what? You are not just going to go up there and munch away for yourself.

You are going to, symbolically speaking, you are going to gather those leaves for the healing of the nation and you are going to egress. You are going to go out. What do we do for all eternity? Sit around and watch old movies of human history? There is a civilization, there are functions, there are things that go on and the citizens of the New Jerusalem will bear that fruit, will go out with those leaves and minister and teach and do things in the eternal kingdom of the Father.

Do you want to be someone who is used by God in that way or do you want to dwell in the eternal Timbuktu and wait for someone who laid claim to those blessings to show up with the basket of leaves? This is the choice that we make. We think things are so important in this life we have no concept, we have no idea of what is on the line with how faithful we are from day to day to day. We are going to see as we go through each of these seven overcomer statements of the Lord Jesus Christ that these are privileges, these are opportunities.

Don't think of it as something to puff you up and let you strut around and say look what Jesus gave me. They are opportunities. If you value opportunities now, you are going to get the chance to exercise opportunities in the future.

If you spurn the opportunities of God now, guess what? You will spurn them in the future. You won't have them. They won't be there even to be spurned.

These are limited. They are exclusive. They are granted to those who listen and respond to what the Spirit has to say to the churches who change their minds and who live by faith.

It is extraordinarily important for us to hear and to heed. It may sound important while you are hearing the sound of my voice, but it is the time that you and I spend between now and next time thinking about is this really important to me? Do I care? Is it real to me? Is it going to change the way I think? Is it going to change the way I live? Do I really hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches? Do I really value what Jesus Christ came back and appeared to John to say to me? Or is it just something I'll write down in my notes and forget about until next time? We have the opportunity. We know better.

We are not of those who fall back unto perdition. What does it mean to fall back unto perdition? Perdition, perdere, think about the Latin root. It means to lose.

In Spanish, perdere means to lose something. To fall back unto loss. Loss of reward.

Loss of blessing. Loss of reflecting the glory of God in the future. We are not of those who fall back unto perdition, but those who, how? By faith and perseverance, inherit the promises.

That's our great calling and our great opportunity. And if you remember nothing else about the letter to Ephesus, think about the right to walk up, just to see those trees. There were people who would long for a glimpse through the gates to see the Tree of Life, and they won't see it.

They won't see it in the Millennium, and they won't see it in the Kingdom of the Father. And it is the same criteria for both. If you're outside the Kingdom in the Millennium, guess what? You're going to be outside the walls of the Heavenly Jerusalem.

If you do not have the right to the city in the Millennial Kingdom, you will not have it in the Kingdom of the Father. These things determine our eternal status, our eternal standing, our eternal opportunities. And there is no going back.

You can't unring the bell. Israel can't go back and respond to the calling of Jesus Christ in His first advent. And we're not going to be able to return to this life and get a do-over.

There's a couple of TV programs now. I just saw a tale end of something last night where somebody got an angel, brought him back, and let him have a do-over in their life. And they did it right the second time, and then they get immersed in the results of this better life.

There is no do-over. We get one go-round, and it's incumbent on us to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Well, let's close in a word of prayer.

Father, we thank You that not only have You given us Your sustaining grace and saved us from wrath and from the hopeless, helpless, and useless condition in which we were born, but You've given us so much by way of opportunity that there is power, there is calling, there is information, there is the presence of Your Spirit, everything we need to advance and to be faithful servants, to be those bond slaves that will live forever in Your direct presence and have the privilege of seeing Your face moment by moment throughout the eternal future. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts, that we will find the encouragement and the opportunity to spend time thinking on these things, that it will be a transforming influence in our souls and in our hearts and minds, and that as a result we will be ever more closely conformed to the example that the Lord Jesus Christ set for us and that we will fulfill all the potential for which He died. We pray that You'll be with us in the days ahead, and we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.