

96-09-27a

As we prepare to continue our study in the Book of Romans tonight, let's begin by taking a moment to clear our minds, prepare our hearts, and seek the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, so that our worship through the study of God's Word will accomplish the purpose for which we assemble. Shall we pray? Father, we thank you for the wonderful ways that you have provided for us and blessed us. We thank you for our salvation in Jesus Christ.

We thank you that through the expressions of grace that you have provided for us, we not only have our eternal salvation, but we have wonderful opportunities in this life to fulfill your purposes and to reflect your glory. We pray tonight that as we study this book, that God the Holy Spirit will enlighten us, that these things will become a part of the resources in our soul and motivate us and give us a clear view of our life as it is set in the context of your plan. We ask these things in Jesus' name.

Amen. As we return to our study tonight in Romans, we are finishing chapter 8, and before long we'll be starting chapter 9. We looked last time at the portion of Romans chapter 8, beginning in verse 31, where Paul says, What then shall we say to these things? And he has just given the sequence of events in God's purposing of our lives in this age. God knew ahead of time that there would be believers in this age who would respond to the work of Jesus Christ and who would express faith and desire to please God.

And so he pre-designated us in this particular age, those who would ask and seek and knock. And we know that this is a subset of believers. We know that there are believers who do not do this.

And he carved out a set of provisions in eternity past for us. He made it possible for us to be conformed to the image of his Son, Jesus Christ, so that our Lord would be the firstborn among many brethren. Having pre-designated us, he also called us.

He made provision for our declaration as righteous. He made it possible for us to be righteous, to have the righteousness of God through faith. And this is living faith after salvation.

This goes beyond our salvation. And also possible for us to be glorified as Christ is glorified. And we saw reference to this back in verse 17.

Heirship with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him, so that we may be glorified together with him. And that glorification is a potential based on what we do in this life. Do we share the sufferings of Christ? If we don't, we're not going to share his glory.

Jesus taught that. We saw that last time. So Paul, having reviewed these things in verse 31, says, what shall we say to these things? What conclusion should we draw? And he says, if God is for us, who can be against us? And we saw once again that this is not a defense of our

salvation.

There's not someone going to come up and challenge whether or not we should be delivered from the lake of fire and given eternal life. This is talking about a challenge to our inheritance, a challenge to our righteousness before God. And this challenge often comes from other believers.

It comes from believers who have a different view and a different idea of what constitutes righteousness. That was the case in Paul's day when this letter and when the letter to the Galatians were written. The prevailing idea was that righteousness came through the works of the law.

Some people felt like in the beginnings of Gnosticism, there were philosophical things that said, well, all things good are spiritual and you can't have any good in the physical world, so you can do what you please in the physical world because it can't touch the immaterial part of yourself. And they would get into licentiousness and immorality and had no regard for the actions that they performed or the thoughts that they engaged in because they said, well, that all partakes of the material world and my righteousness is otherworldly and spiritual. And so these people felt like righteousness, their definition of righteousness was that it was out of this world and not a part of this life.

And so they felt free to do what they wanted to. And so you had another extreme. You had legalism, keeping the law for righteousness on one extreme.

You had licentiousness, which felt like if it feels good, do it because nothing in this life can touch the sinless part of yourself that is spiritual. And all of these ideas were invalid. They don't express, reflect, or partake of the righteousness that God can put in us through faith.

And Paul's point is, if you're following God's plan for righteousness, God's purpose, responding to God's calling to righteousness in this time and in this age, none of these other people can bring a charge, a valid charge against us. Who is going to be against us if we are pleasing God? He is the court of last resort. He's the highest and the only valid judge in this area.

And it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks, believer, unbeliever, family member, associate, co-worker, co-church member, whatever it might be. If God is for us, who can be against us? This is in the realm of righteousness in life. Who's going to bring a charge? If the one who did not spare his own son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Anything that's worth having is going to come from the same source that our salvation came from.

What do you want that doesn't come from God and that isn't based on God's approval? Do you want the good opinion of people who have a faulty standard of measure? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect in verse 33? It is God who declares righteous. Only God can make that declaration. He's the only one that has the authority.

He's the only one that has the basis for doing that. Who is it that condemns in verse 34? Christ who died. And we saw last time that these in verse 33 and 34, this is really a series of questions.

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? God who justifies. Is the God who justifies us going to turn around and bring a charge against us? It's a contradiction. If God has declared us righteous, he's not going to turn around and bring a charge against us.

Now remember, this is living righteousness for believers. There will be believers against whom God will bring a charge. We're going to substantiate that more fully tonight.

We've seen it in the past. We saw it when we went through Romans chapter 2. But we're going to see that there is a charge that can be brought against believers. This is not in the realm of determining eternal destination as far as the lake of fire or the eternal kingdom of God.

This is talking about the judgment seat of Christ. Will there be condemnation for some believers at the judgment seat of Christ? Yes, there will. It's not an awards banquet.

In high school and in college, they have assemblies at the end of the year. They have awards banquets and virtually everybody comes. And then some people get called to the front and given special recognition and special awards.

That's not the nature of the judgment seat of Christ. It is a judgment seat. And there is both reward and there is discipline that is meted out at that judgment seat.

And we have seen that in the past. We won't have time to revisit that tonight. But that's the point here.

If God justifies a believer, if God says, you are pure and blameless, you are worthy of reward, He's not going to turn around and bring a charge. It's an either or kind of thing. We say, but we all sin, we all fail, so won't we all partake of some discipline from God at the judgment seat? We will not.

It is possible to be pure and blameless and undefiled, having committed sins, having failed at the judgment seat of Christ, because it isn't based on whether or not we sinned. It's based on what we did in life as we sinned and as we went through. And did we pursue the plan of God? Did we take advantage of His cleansing, of His forgiveness, as David did in the Old Testament? We saw last time those wonderful passages where David in the psalm states the fact that he stands before God on the basis of his righteousness.

And he claims blessing and covenant with God on the basis of his righteousness. And yet David had committed these terrible sins. How could David say that? Because David also claimed God's promise of forgiveness and cleansing.

Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. And we will

fail.

We will fall short, but it's a matter of taking advantage of God's provision in that area, just as it's a matter of taking advantage of God's provision of the Word and the Spirit and all of the other things that He has provided in eternity past for those who love Him and those who are called according to His purpose. So, who is it that's going to condemn? Christ, who died and is risen, who is even now at the right hand of God making intercession for us? God, who declares us righteous when we respond to His calling, isn't going to turn around and charge us. Jesus Christ, who died and now is sitting at the right hand of the Father interceding for us, isn't going to turn around and condemn us.

What shall separate us from the love of Christ? And then he gives a list of all of these things, tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword. As it is written, for your sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

This is a reminder that we share in the inheritance of Christ when we share the sufferings of Christ. And suffering is not always in the realm of bad circumstances. Suffering is not always poverty and it's not always destitution and it's not always pain.

Sometimes suffering comes in the form of mental pressure. It can come in the form of affliction, even when we're in prosperous circumstances. We don't have to live in a hovel and be begging for bread in order to experience this type of suffering.

In the same way that righteousness isn't a matter of what you do, suffering isn't a matter of what you experience in terms of what the world thinks is destitution. Much of the suffering that Christ partook of was grief over the lack of response in Israel, grief over the lack of understanding even among believers. You can go to John 11.35, the verse that everyone remembers out of the New Testament, Jesus wept.

But look at the circumstances. Why was he weeping? Lazarus had died and Jesus knew that he had died. It wasn't a matter of weeping because Lazarus had died.

Jesus knew that he was about to raise him. He had already said he was going to do so. That's the reason he went back to the hometown of Mary and Martha and Lazarus.

Jesus wept when he started talking with the people who were his best students in that area, Mary and Martha. And he gets in a conversation with Lazarus' sister and she misunderstands the teaching of Jesus Christ. And when he looks at her and looks at the crowd and the heaviness of heart that settles in on him, he weeps.

And he's not weeping in grief over Lazarus. Lazarus is going to be walking out in just a few minutes. He's weeping in grief over the hardness of heart of the people who are present, the lack of hope, the lack of understanding of who he is and what he's capable of.

And that's suffering. And the closer that we come to the heart of God and the purpose of God and understanding it, we will experience that suffering as well. It's hard to live in a fallen world and it's hard to live in a Christian culture that is so devoid of understanding of the plan of God.

It is a circumstance that can create grief and create pressure in our souls. We have to swim against the tide of our brothers in Christ in many cases. So whatever these things may be, in all of them, in verse 37, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

I am persuaded that neither death nor life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And what a wonderful promise it is. And we finished up last time on a high note because we have this great promise from God.

But we want to be clear before we leave this and move into a new subject in chapter 9 on exactly what is at stake in our life. What is it that Paul has been arguing and telling us up to this point in the book of Romans? What is it that he has made clear here in chapter 8? We have seen these very important concepts of God's calling and of the things that we have been called to. We went through a number of passages that address our calling and what constitutes that calling.

We saw in 1 Corinthians 1.9 that we have been called into fellowship with God's Son. Not all believers respond to that call. Not all believers have the fellowship of God's Son.

If we are disobedient, Jesus said, it's the one who keeps his commandments that loves him. And the one who loves him, the Father and the Son will come and make their abode there. We have been called to the hope of righteousness, Galatians 5.8 and 13 tells us.

We have been called to freedom. We have been called to the fruit of the Spirit. We have been called to a different kind of life, a life that is powered by the supernatural power of God.

Now, that faces us with a choice because like every other call of God, it requires a response. And some of us respond and some of us don't. We are all, as human beings, called to salvation in Christ.

Some people respond and some do not. We know the scriptures say, Jesus said, if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me. It is not the will of God that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, but not everyone does.

And in Christianity, we have a call. It's not a call to salvation. It's a call to righteousness.

And not all of us respond. First Peter is a great book for talking about our calling, and we are going to see that tonight. But what is at stake? We say, okay, we know we are supposed to pursue the plan of God.

We are supposed to learn his word and grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord. What are the

consequences? Is it a very big deal if we don't make this a priority? As we've already seen, there is a lot on the line at the judgment seat of Christ. And we know that there will be loss and there will be disappointment.

There will be grief at the judgment seat of Christ for believers who realize what they have, the magnitude of their failure. But there's also great reward. And what we'd like to do before we move into chapter nine is take a look at this concept of inheritance.

We saw in Romans chapter eight, verse 14 through 17, that we received a spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, Abba, Father. The spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. And if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.

Now, that's an if. It's a maybe. It's not true of all believers.

Not all believers suffer with Christ. Not all believers develop the understanding of the plan of God and the heart for the things of God that Jesus Christ had. And those believers are not going to inherit.

Now, the reason we're emphasizing this is that this is not something you hear talked about much. People misunderstand and misinterpret the scriptures of the New Testament that talk about calling and election and inheritance. So, what I'd like to do tonight is just clarify that as we go forward, because this is going to help us understand what Paul says about Israel.

Coming up in chapter nine and chapter 10 and chapter 11, Paul is going to address the issue of Israel. Why is it that we have this special designation in the church age and we're marked out for conformity to the image of Christ and sharing his glory? And it's a whole different covenant than what the nation of Israel had. Well, the natural response on the part of the Jews is going to be, well, what about the promises of God to Israel? Wasn't Israel also called? Wasn't Israel also promised an inheritance, going all the way back to the Abrahamic covenant? What about that? Well, as we understand our calling and our election and our inheritance, the same principles apply to Israel and Israel's calling, Israel's election and Israel's inheritance.

And in the same way that we see that ours is based on whether or not, as believers, we live the life of faith, we're going to see that the very same condition applied to Israel. So we have seen calling, we have seen election, and we want now to look at inheritance before we move forward. So what I'd like to do is address this subject.

And it's a fairly easy thing to do by going to a Greek concordance and looking at the words. We have one primary word in Greek that deals with inheritance, and that is kleronomeo, which is the verb that means to inherit. There are a couple of nouns that come from this, kleronomea, but k-l-e-r-o-n-o-m-e-o, kleronomeo is the word in question.

And surprisingly, it doesn't occur excessively often in the New Testament. And by looking at, even if we don't look at the nouns, if we just look at the place where the verb to inherit comes from, it gives us a very complete picture of what this concept entails. And that's what we're going to do tonight.

We'll look at pretty much every New Testament passage, with the exception of a couple in the Gospels where you have two different Gospels that record the same words. But we're going to begin tonight in Matthew chapter five, verse five. Now, if you have done a walk through the Bible, or if you know your different prominent chapters in the New Testament, you know that Matthew chapter five contains the Sermon on the Mount.

And it begins with the Beatitudes. And one of those well-worn ideas about the Beatitudes is that they are attitudes that should be. Jesus is talking about the type of thinking that we should engage in.

And these things are not talking about salvation. Jesus, when He is teaching truth, He's teaching it to believers. The only issue for unbelievers is the issue of salvation, response to the grace of God for salvation.

When Jesus starts teaching principles of life, that is always to believers. These are the Beatitudes. And in verse three, He says, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Now, right away we see that inheritance here is not based on faith in Christ.

It's not based on trust in God for salvation in the Old Testament sense. It's based on an attitude, a pattern of thinking that prevails in the life of this person. The very first verse of this sermon, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

They are going to gain possession of something based on an attitude that they have. And poor in spirit is recognition of need, recognition that we are insufficient in and of ourselves to please God, to accomplish God's purpose. Being poor in spirit is essentially recognition that what we need has to come from elsewhere, and it has to come specifically from God.

And recognizing that and living in that light is going to naturally motivate us to turn to God to satisfy those needs. And it's going to motivate us to live the life of faith, trusting in God for His provision, the fulfillment of His promises, the execution of His plan in our lives. And a result of that is obtaining possession of the kingdom of heaven.

That's a promise of God. Look at verse 5, blessed are the meek. This is humility.

It is not thinking of oneself more highly than we ought to think. They shall inherit the earth. And

this is our verb, kleronimeo.

They shall inherit the earth. Now, are there believers who are not meek? Are there believers who do not recognize the poverty in the spiritual realm that all of us begin with? There are believers who believe that they are sufficient, who think that by their works they can earn their way into God's favor. This was the problem that Paul addressed in Romans and in Galatians.

And those believers will not inherit. And we have specific passages of Scripture that we will see tonight that state that believers who seek to establish their righteousness by some means other than what God has provided will lose their inheritance. It's a strong statement, and it's a troubling statement.

And there are a lot of people who, for those reasons, refuse to believe it. But it's true. And there's no need to be bashful about what the Word of God teaches.

If the Word of God teaches something, we need to understand it and respond to it rather than trying to find ways to explain it away. These statements that Jesus makes talk about the consequences of the life of faith. Look down at verse 10.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Remember what we saw in Romans 8, sharing the suffering of Christ? Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Look at verse 12.

When you're reviled and persecuted and people say all kinds of evil things against you falsely, rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven. Reward in heaven is inheritance, and it is obtained in circumstances of suffering. It's obtained in the circumstances of life that want to draw us away and cause us to be self-centered.

And so Jesus, in the first great teaching passage in the Gospels, makes this issue clear. This is also going to be the issue that the New Testament ends with in Revelation, as we'll see tonight. So from Matthew 5 to Revelation 20, you have this bracket.

This is what's on the line. It's eternal inheritance. Turn over a few pages in Matthew, if you will, to Matthew chapter 19.

The viewpoint that we are running against here by looking at these scriptures is the viewpoint that says that every believer has an inheritance in the eternal future. That this is based simply on salvation and not on what we do or what we think after salvation. I will tell you, and feel free to check on this if you haven't heard it already, read the books, listen to the sermons, listen to the radio broadcasts, read the theologies, read the papers and the articles from evangelical theologians, religious writers of any stripe.

Anyone who has a reputation in the field will tell you that the inheritance is the possession of every believer because every believer is in Christ. How they arrive at that conclusion and how they defend it is an interesting process to observe. But if you just look at the scriptures, the

scriptures say that that's not so.

So I'm warning you ahead of time that by embracing this, we are very much in the minority. But I will leave it to your judgment after we look at what the scriptures say. Now, this is a classic example of this kind of passage.

Look at Matthew chapter 19 in verse 16. This is the rich young ruler passage. This man says, good teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? Now, eternal life in the salvation sense that we traditionally think of comes one way.

What is that way? Faith, right? Salvation in every age and every dispensation in terms of not going to the lake of fire is by grace through faith. Non-meritorious, no actions required, right? So if Jesus says that obtaining eternal life comes by some method other than faith, then this eternal life is what we have talked about before in this study, that this is eternal life that is a reference to reward and inheritance. This is partaking of life in the eternal realms.

This is supernatural life. This is above and beyond salvation because look what Jesus says. If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments in verse 17.

Salvation in terms of not going to the lake of fire has never in any age, any phase of human history been based on obedience. It's based on faith. But Jesus Christ says here, if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.

Now, this man is an Old Testament believer. He has kept the law from his youth. He believes in God.

He believes that disobedience is going to please God. If he was an unbeliever, didn't believe in God, didn't think that there was a hereafter, didn't think that there was any eternal life, why would he ask this question? He's a believer and he wants to know how is it that I can enter into life that partakes of the eternal, that I can please God and receive the fullness of what God has for believers. And Jesus says, keep the commandments.

He says, which ones? Jesus says, don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't bear false witness, honor your father and mother, i.e., the Ten Commandments. When Jewish people refer to the commandments, that was a reference to the Torah, to the five books of the law. There were a slew of commandments, put a fence around the ditches that you dig, don't touch the unclean thing, keep the feasts, don't do this, don't do that.

There are thousands of commands in the Old Testament. So when he says which one, he's not being facetious, Jesus makes reference to the Ten Commandments because they basically summarize the entire law of Moses. And so Jesus basically says, when he says which one should I keep, he says the Ten Commandments.

If you're keeping those, you're going to be in line with the rest of them. The young man says in verse 20, all these things I've kept for my youth, what yet do I lack? Jesus said, if you want to be complete, and we saw this word last time in our study from Telioo, the verb, T-E-L-E-I-O-O, and teleiosis is the noun form. If you want to be complete, if you want to be perfect, go and sell what you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven.

Now this treasure in heaven is a reference to inheritance. This is above and beyond, this is partaking of eternal life. Remember, this discussion is all on how may I enter into life, how may I have eternal life, and Jesus, another synonym for that is treasure in heaven.

These are all referring to essentially the same thing, reward and blessing from God in the eternal future. Jesus basically says, come follow me. Now this is pursuit of something after faith in God, after becoming a believer, this is pursuit of the plan and the purpose of God.

This is a response to the calling of God. This is an explicit call by Jesus Christ, come follow me, and it involves more than expressing faith. This involves abandoning the circumstances of this life.

He's got money in the bank, he's got lands and servants and a social life and so forth, and Jesus says, set that aside and prioritize relationship with me, sitting at the feet of Jesus, learning the truths that Jesus is teaching. That's what's on the line here for this eternal inheritance, and this young man goes away sorrowing because it's not worth it to him. It's more important to keep the material possessions that he has, and because he keeps hold of the material things, he's losing out on the eternal things.

He went away sorrowing because he had great possessions, and notice what Jesus says in verse 23, assuredly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven, and again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. This has been sort of a puzzling passage for a lot of people. Well, is it harder to come to Christ and be saved if you're rich? That's not what is being spoken of here.

It is hard to pursue the plan of God as a believer when you have so much material wealth distracting you, when you've got such a mental investment in your possessions, how it's hard to set that aside and follow the plan of God, and this entrance into the kingdom of God is the entrance that is richly granted through faith and patient endurance in pursuing the plan of God. This is not a reference to salvation at all, and if there's one thing that we've established in our study of Romans, it is that entrance into the kingdom of heaven is not a synonym for salvation from the lake of fire. Entrance in the kingdom of heaven is a synonym for inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and the eternal kingdom of God.

This is what's on the line for believers. So that's an inheritance passage where kleronimeo is used there in Matthew. In Matthew 19, 29, here in this same chapter, look at what Jesus says.

Verse 28, he says, Assuredly, I say to you that in the regeneration, when the son of man sits on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me, not you who have believed in me, not you who have trusted for salvation, you who have followed me, you who have done what this rich young ruler was not willing to do, will also sit on thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel. Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, lands, for my namesake, shall receive a hundredfold and inherit eternal life. Now, if inheriting eternal life is a synonym for salvation, then salvation comes by works because it requires sacrifice.

It requires putting the things of God ahead of family. Now, we know that there are a lot of us as believers who don't do this, and yet our salvation is secure. We're going to be with God in the eternal future.

So, once again, how the bulk of Christianity can change this around, I have no idea. Because when you read the words of Scripture, what does it say? That inheriting eternal life is based on following Christ. And if it comes down to a choice between following Christ and sticking with your family, it's following Christ.

If it comes to a choice between following Christ and keeping a family, it's following Christ. If it comes to a choice between following God or prosperity or whatever it might be, it's following Christ. These are life choices for believers.

These are priority decisions on the part of believers. What is on the line when we set those priorities and observe those priorities? Eternal inheritance. Life that partakes of the eternal, both now and in the future.

Look a few pages over at chapter 25. This is the great section. We've seen this before, the sheep and goats judgment.

And the critical thing is the context here. Look at verse 31 of Matthew 25. When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

That's the millennial kingdom. Jesus Christ, that's the kingdom of Christ, the millennial kingdom, the thousand year reign of Christ on the throne of His Father David. He is sitting on that throne.

He has come with His holy ones and we have that thousand years compressed in the space of a single verse. The judgment seat of Christ takes place seven years before He comes and sits on that throne. Right? Not after He sits on the throne of Israel.

So this is not a reference to the judgment seat of Christ. And of course that would be strange here because Jesus is still in the age of Israel. The church has not come yet.

The mystery has not yet been revealed. So this is teaching for Israel at this time. But He says in verse 32, all the nations will be gathered before Him and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

Now, who are these nations? Well, the kingdom. We know that we as the church are going to be there. We're going to accompany Christ back to earth when He sets up His kingdom.

We will have already been judged. So we're not going to get judged again, are we? So who are the nations? The saints, the Old Testament saints of Israel have been raised incorruptible just as we are. Seven years after the rapture, there's sort of a rapture for the Old Testament saints.

They get raised so that God can fulfill the Old Testament promises to Israel to them. They're raised. They're not going to be judged at this point.

This is at the end of the millennial kingdom. And for a thousand years of history, we have had people coming to maturity and making decisions for or against Jesus Christ. And this belief in whether or not Christ is there is much less of an issue because they live in the presence of Christ.

He's right there. And whether or not they respond to Christ and His rule and His kingdom is going to be manifested in how they act. And so essentially the judgment of faith is going to be based on whether or not that there was any faith.

Because if there's faith in Christ, it's going to be manifested in the presence of Christ in the millennial kingdom in what they do. So this is a judgment based on works because these works are going to manifest faith in Christ or lack of faith in Christ. Now there are people that try to argue for that kind of system now.

But there's a big difference in now in the millennial kingdom because Christ is not physically present on the earth ruling. And faith is much more of an issue for us because we're believing in something we can't see. And that's one of the reasons this age is so unique.

But the sheep and goats judgment is a judgment for those who have not yet been judged. And that's the people who have to make their decision about Christ in the millennial kingdom. And that's why it says when He comes, He sits on His throne of His glory.

And at the end of the millennial kingdom, all the nations will be gathered before Him and He will separate them one from another. Now you may say, well now, how do you know this is not at the beginning of the kingdom instead of the end of the kingdom? Well, we'll get to that. It's based on what happens at the end of this judgment.

He sets the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left. Now isn't this interesting? Jesus already knows who the sheep and the goats are. He doesn't bring them up one by one and say, you're a sheep, you're a goat, you're a sheep, you're a goat, and the judgment's all done.

He puts the sheep on His right and He puts the goats on His left. He already knows the sheep. He already knows them that are His.

How does He know that? What's the difference in a sheep and a goat? The sheep have expressed faith in Christ, salvation type faith, just as it's been true in every age. The goats have not expressed faith in Christ. The very same picture is expressed in the wheat and the tares.

They look similar, but they're not the same. Sheep and goats look similar, but they're not the same. Jesus already knows them that are His, and He puts His sheep on His right and He puts the goats, who look like sheep but are not, on the left.

What does this speak of? In the millennial kingdom, pretty much everyone is going to obey. Jesus Christ is going to rule with a rod of iron and there's going to be very little open disobedience and open rebellion because Jesus Christ is going to deal swiftly and justly. We're going to have a terrific justice system, and it is going to be so good that it's going to prevent 99.9% of crime.

So these people aren't going to be characterized by gross forms of crime. They're going to look very close to the sheep in terms of their actions, but there is going to be a difference. But notice, they're already identified as sheep and goats, and that's based on faith.

Now, we're going to find that those who have faith in Christ are going to have a certain kind of behavior, and He's going to point that out. He turns to those on His right hand, the sheep, those who have expressed faith in Him. Come, you who are blessed of My Father.

Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. I was hungry, you gave Me food. Thirsty, you gave Me drink.

Stranger, you took Me in. Naked, you clothed Me. Sick, you visited Me.

Prisoned, you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, When did we do these things? And in verse 40, Assuredly, I say to you, When you did it to the least of one of these My brethren, you did it to Me. Who are these My brethren? The sheep, fellow sheep, one to another.

We are not in that group. We are in a different category. These are millennial believers.

Then He turns to those on His left hand, the goats. Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Now, notice, at the beginning of the millennial kingdom, the Bible only tells us of two creatures that go into the lake of fire, and that's the beast and the false prophet.

Satan himself does not go into the lake of fire at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. Unbelievers don't go into the lake of fire at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. The first two to hit the lake of fire, the first two occupants are the beast and the false prophet.

You can check Revelation and find that out. That happens at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. Satan is in prison for a thousand years.

He's not in the lake of fire. Unbelievers have not yet been raised at the great white throne. They're not in the lake of fire.

This judgment, the sheep and goats judgment, precedes the great white throne judgment. And these folks are brought before the Lord, and if they are a goat, they go into the lake of fire. They join the beast and the false prophet.

And Jesus points out the manifestation of their lack of faith in their lack of love. Faith in Christ, especially in the millennial kingdom, will be expressed through love. And He's going to point out their lack of faith by their lack of love.

They didn't do any of the things that the sheep did because you did not do these to the least of these, my brethren. You didn't do it to me. Verse 46, these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

Notice the two groups get their portion at the same time. They face the same judgment and they get their eternal future right at that judgment. The goats go into eternal fire right away.

The sheep go into eternal life right away. This is the sheep and goats judgment. It is the judgment of millennial saints.

The Bible gives us the judgment of the different saints and the different dispensations. We know when we're going to get our judgment. We know when the Old Testament saints are going to get theirs, which is at the beginning of the millennial kingdom because it determines how much of the millennial kingdom they partake of because that is the inheritance for the faithful.

That is the fulfillment of God's promises to Old Testament saints. The sheep and goats judgment is the judgment for the millennial believers and unbelievers. There are going to be those who come to the point of decision during the millennial kingdom and this is their judgment.

The great white throne judgment are the unbelievers who died in every age. They face their judgment at the great white throne. What's the point here? Look at what Jesus says in verse 34.

Come you blessed of my father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world and this is the kingdom of the father. We've seen before the passage where Jesus says that they will shine like stars in the kingdom of the father. The kingdom of the father follows the millennial kingdom.

That's the eternal kingdom. That's the new Jerusalem. That's the tail end of revelation and there is an inheritance that is in the eternal kingdom of the father and that's what these believers from the millennial kingdom go into.

Now in Mark chapter 10 verse 17 we find our next use of the verb. Someone comes running to Jesus on the road and says good teacher what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? Very

similar question to the rich young ruler. In fact this is another record of the same episode.

It is the rich young ruler. One thing you lack go your way sell whatever you have. Once again Jesus follows this how hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God.

And in verse 24 children how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God. And you have the camel and the eye of the needle passage there. But notice again as we've seen in Matthew obedience and following are the conditions for receiving this.

Not faith and faith alone. It's not sola fide, the great battle cry of the reformation. This is obedience and following Christ.

These are lifestyle choices made by believers. Let's look at our last gospel passage before we take our break. This is in Luke chapter 10 verse 25 and you'll notice a great similarity to what Jesus said to the rich young ruler here.

Luke 10 verse 25. The lawyer stood up. This is not the rich young ruler but it's a lawyer.

Teacher what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus says what is written in the law? Now what's the first thing we learned about the law in Romans? Who is the law for? Believers or unbelievers? It's for believers right? God doesn't tell unbelievers keep the law. He tells unbelievers come to faith. The law in the Old Testament was the system of life for believers.

This was how to express righteousness. So Jesus tells this man what is written in the law? What is your reading of it? He says love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your strength. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Jesus says you have answered rightly. Do this and you will live. Notice do this, not believe this, but do this.

This is obedience for a believer. So once again we see that possessing this life, this eternal life, synonym for inheritance is based on what we do as believers. It was even true for Old Testament saints.

Okay we're going to pause here and take our break. When we come back we're going to see the passages that apply to us. We've seen the ones that are analogous because they apply to the Old Testament saints and the Millennial saints.

Now when we come back we're going to see what the New Testament says about our inheritance. We'll stop here.