

"ALL THINGS ARE YOURS"

"Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours." I Corinthians 3:21.

It is so easy to become hero worshipers and to pay homage to man which rightfully belongs to God only. That is why we have the command here, "Let no man glory in men." Why should we glory in man when we are told emphatically, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God?" (I Corinthians 10:31). Men are gifts from God, therefore, let us not glory in the gifts but in the Giver.

It is the opinion of many that when a man becomes a Christian he gives up everything that is worth having, and does not gain anything in return except the mere hope of something yet to come. They think that he gives up all hope of having a good time here for the mere promise of a good time hereafter. The fact is that when a man becomes a Christian he does not give up anything that is worth having. Instead, he gains everything that is worth having both here and hereafter. Perhaps the reason why Christians are not stronger, happier, and more useful is because they do not stop to consider what they have in Christ.

The riches of this statement, "all things are yours," are couched in the present tense. The children of God are rich, but many of them do not realize it. Our ignorance has kept us from enjoying the blessing which God has intended for us. An old lady, who lived in Scotland, had received from her son a monthly check over a period of years, but mistook them for pretty pieces of paper and carefully preserved them in her Bible. The result was that the dear soul went on living in poverty. She was in good circumstances, but she was not aware of it. She lived in poverty because of her ignorance. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

"All things are yours." That is a very startling statement. It is only through becoming a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ that any sinner can secure a title to all of the boundless wealth which is to be found in the Lord.

Many think that only a few can ever attain great things, and that the masses must rest content with small things or those of little value. That is not true. The greatest things, or those of infinite and eternal value, are open to all men. The greatest things, or those of priceless worth, are available to all of God's children.

Among the "all things" which are ours in and through Christ are the following: ---

I. A Great Joy.

When Christ was born in Bethlehem an angel came down from heaven and proclaimed, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

The birth of Christ brought great joy into the world, and the reception of Christ as Saviour and Lord brings great joy into the heart of the individual who receives Him. Christ fills with boundless joy every heart

into which He is admitted. Any person who receives Him will obtain great joy. No one ever really accepted Christ who did not find great joy. Others may rob a person of his money, his good name, or his friends, but no one can rob a Christian of his joy in Christ. If anyone will hear the truth regarding Christ and receive Him into his heart, there will be great joy in that heart.

II. A Great Peace.

Joy and peace are closely related, but they are not identical, even though they are obtained in much the same way.

In the Bible peace is mentioned in three ways: the peace of God (this is the peace that God enjoys Himself); peace from God (this is the peace that God gives); and peace with God (this is the peace which is enjoyed by true believers). Peace is not the result of self-effort or arduous endeavors. It is something which God gives freely and fully, and which we are to receive with gladness and gratitude. God the Father decreed this peace, Christ the Son purchased this peace, and the Holy Spirit applies this peace. If we receive Christ as our Saviour, and live in submission to His blessed will, we shall have great peace as well as great joy. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding" is available to anyone who really wants it. You, too, can have this great, abiding, abounding, and never-failing peace.

III. A Great Position.

Many think that the great positions are only for a select few. That is a mistaken idea. The greatest and grandest and most glorious of all positions is open to any person who will have it. Very few can ever be representative, senator, president, king or emperor. But, there is a position which is higher than either of these, and it is open to every one of us. Reference is made to that position in John 1:12, which says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." To be a child of God is to occupy a higher position than that of being a president, a king, or an emperor. The position of God's child is open to any and all who really desire it. Any man, woman, boy or girl can become a child of God.

IV. A Great Inheritance.

In verse twenty-four Paul enumerates some of the possessions which we as Christians have inherited. They are as follows:

1. God's ministers and teachers.

Unfortunately the Corinthian church members had engaged in a controversy over preachers. There were those who said, "Paul is my preacher. He gives me sound doctrine, good logic and strong argument. I like Paul because he feeds me on the meat and the bread of the Gospel." Others said, "I prefer Apollos. He is an orator. He takes me to the very skies upon the wings of his eloquence. Paul puts me to sleep with his long doctrinal preaching. Give me Apollos, first, last, and all the time." Then, there were some of the dear sisters who would say, "I would rather hear Cephas than Paul and Apollos put together. Cephas touches my heart, thrills my soul and makes me cry. He knows what trouble is and he comforts my heart. Bless his dear soul, I want Cephas."

Each of these great men of God belonged to each of the Christians at Corinth. They are ours also. Their faith, courage, examples, and teachings minister to our good. Let us not exclude ourselves from the riches of His grace which He has bestowed through others. All that truth requires to make its home in a personality is a hungry mind, a pure heart and an obedient will.

2. The world.

Perhaps this statement will strike you with surprise, but the world is yours. It is a world of mountains and lakes, of flowers and birds, of summers and winters, of music and art, of culture and love. They belong to God and He makes them yours. In the deepest and truest meaning of the word, no one can possess this world like the Christian.

3. Life.

The question is often raised, "Do you find life worth living?" The answer is "No." Nobody finds life worth living; he has to make it worth living. And the secret of the "making" is found adequately, joyously, and achievingly in Christ our Lord. He did not find life worthwhile; He had to make it so. What Christ found in our world was misunderstanding, jealousy, hatred, betrayal, sorrow, and a cross. Did He surrender to these things? Not at all. He seized them and turned them to profit. When life treated Him to its utmost villany, spitting in His face and nailing Him to a cross, He took hold of that cross and fashioned it into a ladder of love and light up which He climbed to His throne of leadership and lordship in the hearts of millions. Yes, life belonged to Him, and when we belong to Him, then life belongs to us.

Is life worth living? Yes, without a doubt, if it is lived in the service of Christ; otherwise it is not. Your life will be glad or sober, shadowed or brightened by the quality of shading you add to it. Nobody can take away your opportunities. There is no competition that will rob you of the chance to smile, to speak a good word, or to do a kindly deed. What you get out of life will depend on what you put into it. You need not expect returns without an investment.

4. Death.

You may have a peculiar dread of death and shrink from it, but it is one of God's servants which ministers to our good. Since death is the means by which God brings His children to His home, and unites them with their loved ones, it is one of our greatest possessions. Commendable indeed was the attitude of that Scottish clergyman who, when asked if he was dying, said: "I do not know and I do not care; for if I die I shall be with the Lord, and if I live the Lord will be with me."

5. Things present.

Things present, which include all of God's providences, are ours to enjoy. Have you a sweet home? Enjoy it, and thank God for it. Are you surrounded by loved ones? Enjoy them and praise the Lord for them. Thank God for all your blessings, and ask Him to let you use them for

the benefit of others. Our love for Christ is expressed only through service to Him and others.

A lady standing in front of the magnificent cathedral at Cologne, Germany, heard someone behind her say, "Didn't we do a fine piece of work here"? Turning she saw a man in the plainest of working clothes, and said to him, "Pray, what did you do about it?" "I mixed the mortar for two years," was his cheerful reply. God's work today needs cheerful, patient, diligent mortar mixers. Mixing mortar is one of the hardest and most disagreeable things to do in erecting a building. But what sort of a building could be erected without it? We are called upon to do the menial things prior to the use of the glorious things His precious blood has purchased for us.

6. Things to come.

There are so many wonderful things to come. One of them is that we shall see the time when we shall be entirely free from sin. Another is that we shall never have any more trouble. Another is the enjoyment of the blessed reunion with our loved ones. We shall never say goodbye in heaven. Another is that we shall see Christ. What a joyous privilege it will be to look into His blessed face and hear his loving voice speaking to us!

Peter described the Christian's heritage as "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith into salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Peter 1:4-5). That cannot be said about any earthly inheritance. Every earthly inheritance is corruptible, defiled, and will pass away as soon as its owner dies. Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:16-17). Think of that! Heirs of all God's infinite wealth, joy, and glory. This inheritance is open to anyone who will receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour. For any one who will place his faith in Christ as his Saviour, there is a great joy, a great peace, a great position, and a great inheritance. If you want these four great things, you can have them upon your reception of Christ.