

POSSESSING OUR INHERITANCE IN CHRIST

TEXT: *Joshua 13:1: Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the LORD said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.*

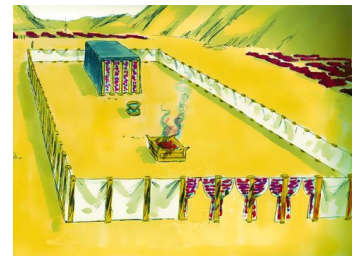
Joshua 18:3: And Joshua said unto the Children of Israel, How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

The Promises of God never can fail. If one group of people will not obey the Lord and receive — by faith and consecration — all His blessings, He will raise up another people in their stead.

The Promises of God never can fail.

In this Book of **Joshua**, we see the second generation entering the Promised Land. It was a three-fold conquest, with conflict and conquering from the very outset. It is one thing to fight a decisive battle, and quite another to complete the task which the Lord gives us to do.

This was the business of the conquerors of Canaan who were to go forth and possess their possessions. We find them resting at Shiloh in a strange and long delay. Not less than seven of the 12 great Tribes are still lingering around the Tabernacle, failing to go forward to claim their respective inheritances. God had to reprove them for their negligence and delay. A special commission was sent forth to divide the land and to apportion it to each Tribe.



This is the Lord's message to us today. There is more to spiritual life than conflict, overcoming temptation, and fighting against sin. Praise God! There are rich rewards for those who do not stand still, spiritually. He is asking us today:

Joshua 18:3b: How long are ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

There are hardly 5 Christians in 100 who have entered into the fullness of the Gospel of Christ. It is one thing to own some land, and another to work it and make it pay off. Most people are trying to hang around and live off someone else's inheritance, rather than trying to get their own.

Joshua 13:1b: There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

There is much unoccupied territory in God. We must move on.

Exodus 14:15: And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto Me? speak unto the Children of Israel, that they go forward:

All the blessings of our wonderful inheritance in Christ are ours ONLY if we go after them.

- **The things we know . . . have we fully believed?**
- **The things we believed . . . have we fully received and realized?**
- **The things we have received and realized . . . have we really, fully proved?**

Here it is. We believe in the love of God, and that it must fill every heart. We must love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.



Deuteronomy 6:5: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

Luke 10:27: And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

Now, do we? Have we experienced the love that suffers long and is kind? Have we proved the love that never fails, that loves our enemies, that envies not, that vaunteth not itself and is not puffed up, that does not behave itself unseemingly, and seeks not her own?

1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

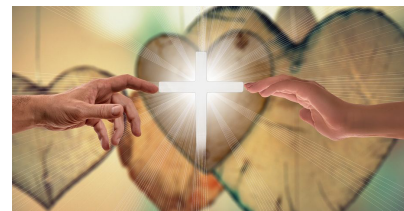
4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail;



whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

Have you learned — and fully proved — the Joy of the Lord. The Joy that James tells us about in:

James 1:2: My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

Have we submitted ourselves to the Will of God?

1 Thessalonians 4:3: For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:

Ephesians 5:17: Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Romans 12:2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We have learned some things about prayer that have hopefully left the head and gone to the heart; but are we learning to pray in the Spirit? And what about your spiritual gifts?

Jude 20: But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.

Why do we need to build ourselves up and pray in the Spirit?

Joshua 13:1b: there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.

You still have work to do.

John 4:35: Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.



How can we sit idly by, knowing souls are doomed to die in their sins?

Note the causes of failure in entering our full inheritance:

Joshua 18:3: How long are ye slack to go to possess the land,

This little word **slack** tells the whole tale of defeat in our Christian experience. It denotes LAZINESS. There is no vice in the world meaner than this.



Most people would be ashamed to claim laziness as a relation, but the fact is, more people are suffering from it than would be readily owned up to.



Proverbs 6:6: Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

Proverbs 22:29: Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.

1 Samuel 21:8: And David said unto Ahimelech, And is there not here under thine hand spear or sword? for I have neither brought my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's business required haste.

Many are kept from spiritual progress by a spirit of indolence. It is easier to be content with being saved, sanctified, and content with a has-been Spirit-baptized life. We are rich, increased in goods, and have need of nothing. But Jesus says, "Thou art wretched, poor and blind, miserable and naked".

Revelation 3:16-17:

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of My mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

We cannot reach the highest place *in heavenly things* unless we, like Paul, press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:14: I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Why are many lazy? Because they are eating too much, working too little, getting fat, flabby, and have become good for nothings.

INDIFFERENCE

Many have no intense or holy desire for a higher place in God. They are not forgetting the things which are behind, as did the apostle Paul:

Philippians 3:13:

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,



14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

God never gives His best to the indifferent church. Souls are not saved or sanctified, nor do they enter into their full possession in Christ in that kind of Church. God addressed such a church like that in the book of Revelation:

Revelation 3:1: And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

SELF-COMPLACENCY

Some are satisfied with what they have obtained and attained. So long as we are going to Heaven, just let the world go by. So long as my conscience does not hold a sense of guilt, I am alright. So long as there is no fear of future punishment tormenting me, I am satisfied. Have you not read your Bible? Do you know that judgment comes to the complacent?

Luke 12:47: And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

What about the 25th chapter in **Matthew**, where Jesus tells about being naked, in prison, hungry, and a stranger?

Matthew 25:34-46:

34 Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink?

38 When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee?

39 Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.

41 Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye

cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not.

44 Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee?

45 Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

How many opportunities to minister have been overlooked due to complacency?

Let us consider the parable about the Good Samaritan which Jesus gave to a lawyer who was questioning who his neighbor is since the law commands one to love his neighbor, and he was trying to justify himself.

Luke 10:29-37:

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

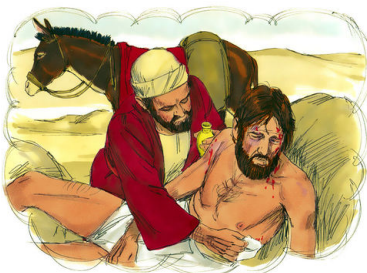
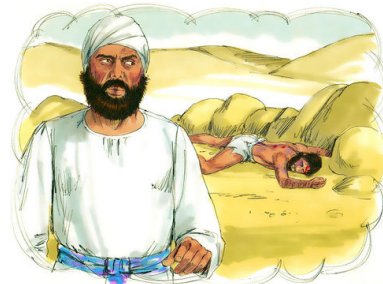
31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.



36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

How sad that complacency and a lack of conscience and compassion were found among a priest and a Levite.

Jesus likens one who hears His sayings but doesn't do them to a one who built his house on sand.

Matthew 7:24-27:



24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine [Jesus], and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.



There is nothing as deadly to a church as complacency. It chills the zeal and fervor of spiritual earnestness. It weakens the resisting power of the heart to would-be triumphant victories for Jesus Christ. It breaks the power to resist evil and temptation.

The cost of holiness is great for the lover of this present, evil world.

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Many are self-satisfied and do not hunger and thirst after righteousness because they are sick, dying, or already dead — spiritually.

Others have spiritual indigestion, being choked on the cares, riches, or the pleasures of this world. Shorn of spiritual power like Samson, the world of Delilahs robs the mighty, and brings disgrace and ruin to the cause of Christ by its fascinations.

Only fools will reject riches in Christ for the rags of this world.

Only fools will reject riches in Christ for the rags of this world. All that the world has is temporal. That which we

receive in Christ is eternal. Jesus purchased these riches at a very painful price, and we need them all to be complete in Christ. We cannot live without all His provisions.

John 16:7: Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.

If you miss any part, you shall be an eternal loser. Your future will be defective to the extent that you live in a lazy, indifferent, self-complacent state. The man or woman who goes along with the crowd is invariably wrong.

UNBELIEF

Many say it is no use to try to attempt this higher life. Like Israel at Kadesh-Barnea: they sent spies to search out the land — the land of Canaan — that God had promised to give them. They admitted that the land was a good one, but when they saw the giants in the land, fear and unbelief kept them from entering in to take possession of the land God had promised them:

Numbers 13:26-28, 33:

26 And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.

27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.

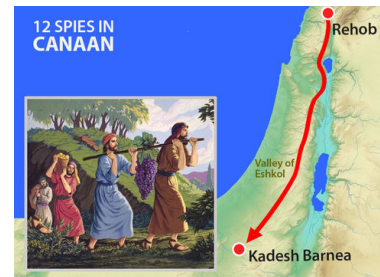


28 Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.

Numbers 13:33: And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

God, deliver us from grasshopper religion. Unbelief kills courage, saps spiritual strength, and throws ice water on zeal.

Some people are moral cowards. They are afraid of self-denial, criticism, conflict, and spiritual hardships. Cowards



***Cowards
always fail.***

always fail.

God is asking: ***How long are ye slack to go to possess the land?***

What does slack imply: it means to tarry, to delay.

2 Peter 3:9: The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

There is no reason for you to be fooling around. Provisions for Power, Victory, Joy, Love, Peace, Faith, Temperance, and an Overcoming Life are yours. You do not work for them. God says: *I give you the land.*

Deuteronomy 4:1: Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

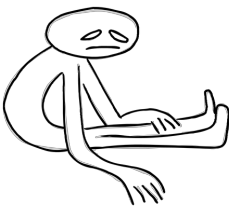
Now, it is up to you to cultivate it, pull the weeds, and plant the seeds. He will give the harvest, but you must break up the fallow ground. Then the Lord can rain righteousness upon you. This spiritual flabbiness is heartbreaking to God. There is too much laying around – not enough exercise.



This solemn rebuke is from the Holy Spirit. It is to be acted upon without delay. If we are not prepared to forward march for Jesus today, how can we be any better prepared tomorrow? If we take it easy today, we will pay for it tomorrow.

There is something very pathetic in the Scripture with which we opened in **Joshua**:

Joshua 13:1b: Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remaineth yet very much land to be possessed.



We may feel our life's work is done, but the work is not all done which must be accomplished, and every delay makes the work so much harder.

How many will lose all rewards on the other side by slackness? How many will lose their crown because of laziness, indifference, self-complacency, or unbelief?

Beloved, do not disobey the voice of the Holy Spirit today. Do not lose a moment. Be prepared for each day to give your best to the Master. **IF YOU LOSE TIME ON THIS HEAVENLY HIGHWAY, THERE IS NO TIME TO MAKE IT UP AGAIN!**

The conditions for success were given in the first chapter of **Joshua**.

Joshua 1:8: This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

The conditions for success or failure rest entirely upon you and me. We cannot blame others for our failures. This is an individual matter. It takes real courage and the power of God alone to cause us to go through with God. Jesus tells us:

We cannot blame others for our failures.

Luke 13:24: Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

Matthew 11:12: And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

God told Joshua and Israel:

Joshua 1:9: Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

God will not run away when the battle gets hot.

A lot of altar workers will kneel and pray for five or ten minutes, then they will either lay across the mourner's bench, or they will get up and talk or sit in a seat, leaving the seekers to pray alone.

But Jesus will never forsake the weary pilgrim. He's determined to dig through the surface soil and the hard clay, down to the Rock of Ages. There you will get a good foundation and be enabled to build a superstructure on the Fullness of Christ



The devil is a bluffer, and will tell you the blessings are too hard to get and are not for you. ***But, be thou not dismayed.*** Do not listen to the false teachers who claim that you get all you will ever get when you get saved. Believe and obey what God says. The Holy Spirit is given to them that obey Him.

Acts 2:39: For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

BE NOT SLACK.

Why are you so long slack to possess the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee?

Oh, are there any left who will weep over failures, and who will cry out to the Lord for the power to go on? Are there any in **Romans 7** (those struggling with sin) who want **Romans 8** (to be free from the law of sin and death through the Spirit of life) – more than life itself?

It is your possession — your inheritance in Christ. Possess ye *your possessions* — don't just view them afar off!



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