

Or text for this morning Col 1:12-14

*“giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”*

Last week

1. Fairly in depth look at our “fitness” to share in the inheritance of the saints in light
  - a. We are made fit by God Himself, not through our own efforts or merit
  - b. We are made fit as an act of His great and gracious love for us
  - c. We are made fit as a result of an eternal plan, rooted in the mind of God before the foundation of the world and to bring Him glory
  - d. We are made fit through the sacrificial act of the Son, Jesus, as he gave His life a ransom for many.
  - e. We are made fit through the creative work of the triune God, in making us bearers of His image and capable of understanding and receiving His grace and redemption

This week we will be looking at the nature and content of our inheritance

- It includes a “rescue from” and a “transfer to”
  - It is characterized by “light”, freedom from darkness
  - It includes the act and fruit of redemption
  - It comes from the hand of Jesus and the Father
1. First thing we see is a contrast between light and darkness; “saints in light”... “domain of darkness”
    - a. Characteristics of darkness
      - i. Domain of Satan
        1. “domain”; *exousia* often translated power, but not the raw power of ability; *dunamis* Rather, “the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege)” “the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed)”
          - a. Acts 26:18 Jesus talking to Saul, calling him *“to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.”*

- ii. Characterized by deception, ignorance , and blindness
    - 1. Makes sense as Satan is the “father of lies”
      - a. John 8:44 *“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”*
    - 2. Ps 82:5 *“They do not know nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken.”*
    - 3. 2 Cor 4:3ff *“if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*
  - iii. It is a place of sin and fruitlessness; of things hidden in shame
    - 1. 1 Cor 4:5 *“Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts;”*
    - 2. Eph 5:11 *“Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.”*
    - 3. Eph 4:17ff. *“walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.”*
  - iv. It is a place of captivity and enslavement
    - 1. Is 42:7 (in prophesying about Christ) *“To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison.”*
    - 2. John 8:34 *“Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.”*
- b. We have looked at the characteristics of the place of darkness...what about its inhabitants?

c. Description of men in/under darkness

i. 2 Pet 2:9-17 *“the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority... Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties..., They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, 14 having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; 15 forsaking the right way, they have gone astray ... 17 These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. 18 For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, 19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption”*

d. This is where Satan would have us end our deliberations...our considerations... our thinking. He would leave us downcast, in the shame of who we used to be. But into this darkness... this despondency... we hear the words of God resound through His prophet Isaiah...

i. Is 9:2; *“The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.”*

e. Paul brings his readers to a similar place in 1 Cor 6:9ff.

i. *“do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 Such were some of you; “*

1. These were legitimate accusations against a church that was still struggling and failing. But he continues...

ii. *“but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”*

f. And, of course, our text; *“For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,”*

i. We are called to remember our former state so that we understand, appreciate, and express thanksgiving for our current state...

- ii. We have seen what He has rescued us from. For the rest of our time together this morning, let's see what He has transferred us to.
  - 1. It is a place of light; "saints in light"
    - a. John 12:46 *"I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness."*
    - b. Eph 5:8,9 *"for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth)"*
    - c. Analogy of waking to find oneself in darkness
      - i. Confusion, fear, hopelessness, fatigue
      - ii. Then the sense of relief...of hope...with the first ray of light
  - 2. It is a place where Christ is the empowered and victorious king
    - a. *"transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son"*
  - 3. It is a place of abundance
    - a. Eph 1:3,8 *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"... In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He lavished on us."*
  - 4. It is a place of forgiveness and redemption
    - a. *"in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."*
    - b. 1 Cor 1:30 *"But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption"*
    - c. 2 Cor 5:17 *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."*
  - 5. It is a place of wisdom and understanding
    - a. Eph 1:8ff. *"In all wisdom and insight He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him"*
    - b. 1 Jo 5:20 *"And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ."*
  - 6. It is a place of purity and cleanness

- a. Is 1:18 *“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.”*
  - b. Ps 51:7ff *“Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ... Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*
7. It is a place of freedom... of release
- a. John 8:31ff *“So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free... So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”*
  - b. Rom 8:1 *“Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death”*
8. It is a place of joy
- a. Ps 43:3 *“O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your dwelling places. 4 Then I will go to the altar of God, To God my exceeding joy; And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.”*
  - b. Rom 14:17 *“for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”*
  - c. 1 Pet 1:8ff *“and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.”*
9. It is a place of comfort
- a. 2 Cor 1:3,4 *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction”*
  - b. 2 Th 2:16 *“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace,”*
10. It is a place of power
- a. Eph 1:19ff *“and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ,*

*when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet”*

- iii. A brief return to consider “darkness”, because it is against these forces that power is wielded.
  1. Eph 6:12 *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*
  2. 2 Cor 10:3ff *“For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. 5 We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,”*
- iv. Is it any wonder that Paul’s impassioned prayer concerning the Ephesian church is that it comes to know the great truths about the kingdom of God and our place in it?
- v. Eph 1:18 *“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.”*

So, what have we discovered this morning?

- We have been brought out of darkness and released from its bondage
- We have been transferred into the kingdom of His son, which:
  - Is a place of light... a place of abundance... a place of forgiveness and redemption... a place of wisdom and understanding... a place of purity and cleanness... a place of freedom and release... a place of joy and comfort... and a place of power for life and godliness.... and for the tearing down of strongholds.
- Do we live in these realizations? Do we find rest and purpose in our understanding of the kingdom in which we have been placed?

Next week we will start to look more closely at the nature and character of God. But for this week, let’s close with 1 John 3:1ff *“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know*

*us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.”*

Let us pray