

FIGHT FOR YOUR INHERITANCE

(No. 1203 – 4/26/21 – DR Zoom Meeting)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. As God’s children, we have an inheritance

1. Typically, a father writes out a will describing his children’s inheritance after his death; Christ’s death secured a spiritual inheritance for every believer:

Heb. 9:15-17: *¹⁵For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the **promised eternal inheritance**—now that He has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. ¹⁶In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, ¹⁷because **a will is in force only when somebody has died**; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.*

2. We have been born again (lit. “born from above”) into our Father’s heavenly inheritance:

1 Pet. 1:3-4: *³Praise be to the God and **Father** of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has **given us new birth** into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴and **into an inheritance** that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven for you.*

3. God’s Word promises us an inheritance:

Acts 20:32: *Now I commit you to God and to the **word of His grace**, which can build you up and **give you an inheritance** among all those who are sanctified.*

4. God has qualified (“made us fit”) to receive His inheritance:

Col. 1:12: *Giving thanks to the Father, who has **qualified you to share in the inheritance** of the saints in the kingdom of light.*

5. God gave the Holy Spirit as an earnest or down payment guaranteeing the full inheritance:

Eph. 1:13-14: *¹³And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the*

*promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is a **deposit guaranteeing our inheritance** until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of His glory.*

6. **Col. 3:23-24:** ²³*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, ²⁴since you know that you will **receive an inheritance** from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

B. What do we inherit?

1. The Kingdom of God

- a) **Jas. 2:5:** *Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to **inherit the kingdom** He promised those who love Him?*
- b) **1 Cor. 6:9-10:** ⁹*Do you not know that the wicked will not **inherit the kingdom of God**? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will **inherit the kingdom of God.***
- c) **Eph. 5:5:** *For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any **inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.***
- d) **Gal. 5:19-21:** ¹⁹*The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not **inherit the kingdom of God.***
- e) **Mat. 25:34:** *Then the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed by My Father; **take your inheritance, the kingdom** prepared for you since the creation of the world.”*
- f) **Rev. 21:7:** ***He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be My son.***

2. The New Testament “Promised Land” consists of God’s promises:

Heb. 6:12: *We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who **through faith and patience inherit** what has been promised.*

3. Eternal life

Mat. 19:29: *And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for My sake will receive a hundred times as much and will **inherit eternal life.***

C. Why do we need to fight?

1. We don’t normally have to fight to receive an earthly inheritance, unless we are fighting with other family members! [see Luke 12:13-15]
2. Some would say that our spiritual inheritance is promised by God and freely given us through His grace, so there is no need for us to fight—that would be legalism and self-effort.
3. But we will see that the inheritance is for those who use God’s grace to fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12) and overcome (Rev. 21:7). God promised the entire land of Canaan as an inheritance for Israel, but they had to mobilize as an army to fight and overcome many enemies in order to possess their inheritance.

II. OLD TESTAMENT – PROMISED LAND

- A. God promised His people Israel the land of Canaan as an inheritance—He called it “entering His rest” (Ps. 95:7-11). But there were enemies occupying the land that had to be driven out in order for Israel to **possess** the Promised Land. It is a graphic picture of the spiritual conquests necessary for the New Testament believer to inherit all that God has promised in Christ:

Acts 13:17-19: *¹⁷The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; He made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power He led them out of that country, ¹⁸He endured their conduct for about forty years in the desert, ¹⁹He **overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to His people as their inheritance.***

- B. God had promised and given the land of Canaan to Israel, but they had to go in and take possession:

Deut. 1:8, 21; 2:31: ⁸“*See, I have given you this land. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore He would give to your fathers—to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—and to their descendants after them...*” ²¹*See, the LORD your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the LORD, the God of your fathers, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged” ...* ^{2:31} *The LORD said to me, “See, I have begun to deliver Sihon and his country over to you. Now begin to conquer and possess his land.”*”

- C. God told them there were giants and enemies in Canaan that had to be conquered and driven out:

Deut. 7:1-2: ¹*When the LORD your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and drives out before you many nations—the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you—* ²*and when the LORD your God has delivered them over to you AND YOU have defeated them, then YOU must destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.*

Deut. 9:1-3: ¹*Hear, O Israel. You are now about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities that have walls up to the sky.* ²*The people are strong and tall—Anakites! You know about them and have heard it said: “Who can stand up against the Anakites?”* ³*But be assured today that the LORD your God is the one who goes across ahead of you like a devouring fire. He will destroy them; He will subdue them before you. And you will drive them out and annihilate them quickly, as the LORD has promised you.*

- D. God referred to Israel’s entering the Promised Land as “entering His rest”:

Deut. 12:8-10: ⁸*You are not to do as we do here today, everyone as he sees fit,* ⁹*since you have not yet reached the resting place and the inheritance the LORD your God is giving you.* ¹⁰*But you will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and*

He will give you rest from all your enemies around you so that you will live in safety.

- E. But many Israelites never entered God's Promised Land:

Heb. 3:7-18: ⁷So, as the Holy Spirit says: "Today, if you hear His voice, ⁸do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion, during the time of testing in the desert, ⁹where your fathers tested and tried Me and for forty years saw what I did. ¹⁰That is why I was angry with that generation, and I said, 'Their hearts are always going astray, and they have not known My ways.' ¹¹So I declared on oath in My anger, "**They shall never enter My rest.**" ¹²See to it, brothers, that none of you has a **sinful, unbelieving heart** that turns away from the living God. ¹³But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness... ¹⁶Who were they who heard and **rebelled**? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? ¹⁷And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? ¹⁸ And to whom did God swear that they would never enter His rest if not to those who **disobeyed**?

- F. The seven enemy nations did not prevent Israel from possessing their inheritance—their two worst enemies were **disobedience** and **unbelief**! With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, the rest of the Israelites were already defeated before they faced a single giant [see Num. 13-14]!
- G. The writer of Hebrews goes on to exhort New Testament believers to avoid the sins that disqualified Israel from their inheritance and to "make every effort" to enter His promised rest through faith and obedience:

Heb. 4:1-11: ¹Therefore, since the **promise of entering His rest still stands**, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. ²For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but **the message they heard did not combine it with faith.** ³Now we who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said, "So I declared on oath in My anger, 'They shall never enter My rest.'" ... ⁶It still remains that some will enter that rest, and **those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience...** ⁹There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; ¹⁰for

*anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His. ¹¹Let us, therefore, **MAKE EVERY EFFORT** to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.*

III. BY GRACE AND BY FORCE

A. All by grace

1. **Eph. 2:8-10:** *⁸For it is **by grace** you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹**not by works**, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **to do good works**, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*
2. **Gal. 3:18:** *For if the **inheritance** depends on the law, then it no longer **depends on a promise**; but **God in His grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.***

B. God's promises are all YES!

1. **2 Cor. 1:18-22:** *¹⁸But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." ¹⁹For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in Him it has always been "Yes." ²⁰For **no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.** And so through Him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. ²¹Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²²set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, **guaranteeing what is to come.***
2. **2 Pet. 1:2-7:** *²Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these **He has given us His very great and precious promises**, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵**For this very reason, make every effort** to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.*

C. Self-effort vs. grace working

1. (Eph. 2:8-10 – 2 different kinds of works: human self-effort called “dead works” and works of faith and grace)
2. **1 Cor. 15:10:** *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*
3. God works *in*, we must work *out*:
Phil. 2:12-13: ¹²*Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to **work out your salvation with fear and trembling**, ¹³for it is **God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.***
4. The lazy or doubting will not inherit God’s promises:
Heb. 6:12: *We do not want you to become **lazy**, but to imitate those who **through faith and patience INHERIT what has been promised.***
5. God’s promises motivate us to take action:
2 Cor. 7:1: *Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*
6. Grace teaches us to put forth effort in our Christian life:
 - a) **Luke 13:24:** *Make every effort* [“strive” NKJV] *to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to.*
 - b) **Rom. 14:19:** *Let us therefore **make every effort** to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.*
 - c) **Eph. 4:3:** *Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*
 - d) **Heb. 4:11:** *Let us, therefore, **make every effort** to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.*
 - e) **2 Pet. 1:5:** *For this very reason, **make every effort** to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge.*

- f) **2 Pet. 3:14:** *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, **make every effort** to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*
7. Paul was pressing and straining to lay hold of all that God had promised him:

Phil. 3:12-14: ¹²*Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I **press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.***

¹³*Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and **straining** toward what is ahead, ¹⁴**I press on** toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

D. The violent take the Kingdom by force

1. **Mat. 11:11-12** (NKJV): ¹¹*Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²And from the days of John the Baptist until now the **kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force** [“has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it” NIV].*
2. The kingdom is not for double-minded, lukewarm, milk-toast, lazy, excuse-making wimps! It is for bold warriors like Joshua and Caleb, Phinehas and David... leaders like the apostles Peter, John and Paul! [see Rev. 21:7-8]
3. We need to be like Jacob and wrestle for God’s blessing:

Gen. 32:24-32: ²⁴*So Jacob was left alone, and a **Man wrestled with him till daybreak.** ²⁵When the Man saw that He could not overpower him, He touched the socket of Jacob’s hip so that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the Man. ²⁶Then the Man said, “Let Me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob replied, “**I will not let You go unless You bless me.**” ²⁷The Man asked him, “What is your name?” “Jacob,” he answered. ²⁸Then the Man said, “Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because **you have struggled with God** and with men and have overcome.” ²⁹Jacob said, “Please tell me Your name.” But He replied, “Why do you ask My name?” Then **He blessed him there.** ³⁰So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, “It is*

because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”³¹The sun rose above him as he passed Peniel, and he was limping because of his hip.³²Therefore to this day the Israelites do not eat the tendon attached to the socket of the hip, because the socket of Jacob’s hip was touched near the tendon.

- E. Summary of verbs that describe a New Testament believer:
1. Strive, run, press, wrestle, fight, contend
 2. Resist, strain, labor, make every effort, travail
 3. NOTE: Doesn’t sound like today’s “easy-believe gospel”!

IV. WHAT/WHO ARE WE FIGHTING?

A. Devil

1. **Jas. 4:6-8:** *⁶But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”⁷Submit yourselves, then, to God. **Resist the devil**, and he will flee from you. ⁸Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*
2. **1 Pet. 5:8-9:** *⁸Be self-controlled and alert. **Your enemy the devil** prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹**Resist him, standing firm in the faith**, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*

B. World

1. We are *in* the world, but not *of* it—we do not partake of its ways:
John 17:15-16: *¹⁵My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They are **not of the world**, even as I am not of it.*
2. We must reject the wisdom, philosophy, and spirit of the world:
 - a) **1 Cor. 1:20-21:** *²⁰Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not **God made foolish the wisdom of the world?** ²¹For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through*

the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

- b) **1 Cor. 2:12:** *We have **not received the spirit of the world** but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.*
- c) **1 Cor. 3:18-19:** ¹⁸*Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a “fool” so that he may become wise.* ¹⁹*For the **wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight**. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness.”*

- 3. We no longer try to conform to worldly ideas or fashions:

Rom. 12:2: ***Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Eph. 2:1-3: ¹*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when **you followed the ways of this world** and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.*

- 4. We are crucified to the world:

Gal. 6:14: *May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which **the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.***

- 5. Loving the world will prevent us from possessing our spiritual inheritance:

1 John 2:15-17: ¹⁵***Do not love the world or anything in the world.** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷The **world and its desires pass away**, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.*

C. Carnal/natural mind and reasonings

1. The real battle is in the mind—we have to constantly fight against natural reasonings, doubts, and fears—these are the enemies of faith that limit the power of God:

Ps. 78:40-41: ⁴⁰*How often they provoked Him in the wilderness, and grieved Him in the desert!* ⁴¹ *Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.*

Mark 6:5-6 (NKJV): ⁵*Now He [Jesus] could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them.* ⁶*And He marveled because of their unbelief.*

2. **Prov. 3:5:** *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.*
3. **Rom. 8:5-9** (NKJV): ⁵*For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* ⁶*For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* ⁷*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.* ⁸*So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.* ⁹*But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.*
4. The strongholds are in the mind—we must battle any and all thoughts, reasonings, and philosophies which are contrary to the knowledge and Word of God:

2 Cor. 10:3-5: ³*For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.* ⁴*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.* ⁵*We demolish arguments* [“theories and reasonings and every proud and lofty thing” AMP] *and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

D. Sin (especially disobedience and unbelief)

1. We must constantly resist and throw off any sin:

Heb. 12:1-4: ¹*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that*

*hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. ⁴In **your struggle against sin**, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.*

2. Review 1 Cor. 6:9-10, Eph. 5:5, Gal. 5:19-21, Rev. 21:7-8
3. See Heb. 3 & 4 (disobedience and unbelief)
4. **Rom. 14:23** (NKJV): *But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for **whatever is not from faith is sin.***
5. Inaction can still be sin (Jas. 4:17)

V. HOW DO WE FIGHT?

A. Fight the good fight of faith

1. **1 Tim. 1:18-20:** ¹⁸*Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may **fight the good fight,** ¹⁹**holding on to faith** and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have **shipwrecked their faith.** ²⁰*Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.**
2. **1 Tim. 6:12:** ***Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.***
3. **2 Tim. 4:6-8:** ⁶*For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. ⁷**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.** ⁸Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.*
4. **Jude 3:** *Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to **contend for the faith** that was once for all entrusted to the saints.*

- B. Put on the whole armor and stand your ground:

Eph. 6:10-18: ¹⁰Finally, **be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.** ¹¹**Put on the full armor of God** so that you can **take your stand against the devil's schemes.** ¹²**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.** ¹³Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to **stand your ground**, and after you have done everything, to **stand.** ¹⁴**Stand firm** then, with the belt of **truth** buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of **righteousness** in place, ¹⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the **gospel** of peace. ¹⁶In addition to all this, take up the **shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the **sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.** ¹⁸And **pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.** With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Study, learn, and become fully convinced of God's promises
B. Wrestle in prayer, ask, seek and knock, fast, cry out to God until you POSSESS the promise!
C. Be bold, be courageous—take your stand!

2 Sam. 23:8-12: ⁸These are the names of David's mighty men... ⁹Next to him was **Eleazar**... As one of the three mighty men, he was with David when they taunted the Philistines gathered at Pas Dammim for battle. Then the men of Israel retreated, ¹⁰but he **stood his ground** and struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword. The **LORD brought about a great victory** that day. The troops returned to Eleazar, but only to strip the dead. ¹¹Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils, Israel's troops fled from them. ¹²But **Shammah took his stand** in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the **LORD brought about a great victory.**

- D. God has promised us a glorious inheritance—let's stand and fight for every square inch of it!