THE INHERITANCE

Intro: Life upon this earth is brief and temporary; Jam. 4:13-14 “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 13Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Death is a fact, Heb. 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment!” But life is not defined as existence upon earth. There is an eternity. Man has one of two destinies; heaven or hell. The possibility of heaven should prompt us to faithfully serve God; 2 Tim. 4:7-8 “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 7Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” Thus, as a basis for studying this inheritance, let us notice 1 Pet. 1:3-5 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

I. CHRISTIANS ARE HEIRS OF GOD.
A. One becomes a child of God by the new birth.
   1. John 3:3-7 “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”
   2. 1 Pet. 1:22-23 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
B. God's children are heirs of God.
   1. Rom. 8:16-17 “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”
   2. Gal. 4:7 “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”
C. God is giving unto His children that which they could not give themselves. Life by grace.

II. THE CHARACTER OF THIS INHERITANCE.
A. It means salvation.
   1. 1 Pet. 1:5 “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”
   2. Salvation, or deliverance, from a world of sin, lust, suffering and even death; Rev. 21:4 “And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”
   3. Salvation or deliverance into a position of glory and honor; Rom. 2:7 “To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:”
B. The inheritance will be incorruptible.
   1. 1 Pet. 1:4 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,”
2. In contrast to things of earth which are subject to decay, God’s things are incorruptible; 
   1 Pet. 1:23 “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which 
   liveth and abideth for ever.”
3. This inheritance will have to do with the incorruptible part of man, his spirit; 1 Pet. 3:4 
   “But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek 
   and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”
4. Heaven will be permanent.
   a. Luke 12:33 “Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure 
      in the heavens that falleth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.”
   b. Mat. 6:19-20 “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, 
      and where thieves break through and steal: 20But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where 
      neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:”
5. Life in heaven will never end; 1 Cor. 9:25 “And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate 
   in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.”
C. The inheritance will be undefiled.
   1. 1 Pet. 1:4 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven 
       for you,”
   2. This term was applied to our great High Priest; Heb. 7:26 “For such an high priest became us, 
       who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;”
   3. In heaven God’s children will be separated from a sinful world.
      a. Rev. 21:27 “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh 
         abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”
      b. Imagine living in a place where there is no hate, no greed, no backbiting, no slander, 
         no suffering—physical or mental.
      c. Truly, “There is a land that is fairer than day.”
D. The inheritance will be unfading.
   1. 1 Pet. 1:4 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven 
       for you,”
   2. Things on earth wear out, grow old, the beauty fades.
   3. Heaven will be perpetually new; Rev. 21:1-2 “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first 
       heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2And I John saw the holy city, new 
       Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”
E. This inheritance is reserved in heaven for God’s people.
   1. 1 Pet. 1:4 “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven 
       for you,”
   2. Earthly things shall ultimately end.
      a. Heb. 1:10-11 “And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the 
         heavens are the works of thine hands: 11They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax 
         old as doth a garment;”
      b. 2 Pet. 3:10-11 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens 
         shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the 
         works that are therein shall be burned up. 11Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what 
         manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,”
   3. Life on earth shall one day end; Heb. 9:27 “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after 
       this the judgment:”
   4. Since the Christian’s inheritance is in heaven, it can never be touched, tarnished or 
       destroyed by earthly things.
III. **The Assurance of This Inheritance.**

A. **Hope based on the resurrection of Christ from the dead.**

1. 1 Pet. 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,”

2. The resurrection was the proof that Jesus was no mere man; Rom. 1:4 “And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:”

3. Therefore, what He promises is true and reliable; 2 Pet. 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.”

B. The inheritance is “guarded”.

1. 1 Pet. 1:5 “Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

   a. This is a military term meaning to protect with a military guard. It suggest a band of soldiers thrown about the faithful to protect and guarantee their safety, so long as they remain in the stockade of faith.

   b. By God.

      (1) His power

      (2) Greek δύναμις (dunamis) from which we get dynamic, dynamo, dynamite; but means power.

   c. By man’s faith.

      (1) It is not an independent operation of God.

      (2) It takes our effort.

2. Man’s obedient faith connected with God’s immutable promises gives hope (expectation and assurance) to man of this salvation (inheritance); Heb. 6:10-19 “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: 12That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 13For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, 14Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: 18That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;”

C. **Add Christian graces and insure inheritance.**

1. 2 Pet. 1:5-11 “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

2. These graces are practical, man can translate them into practice.

3. The practice of these, on the part of the Christian, insures him that the inheritance will be his.
Conclusion: The acid test: do we believe God’s Word? Jam. 1:22 “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.” No faith means no power of God; no power of God means no inheritance; no inheritance means condemnation to hell.

Notice, we are “kept by”, efficient cause (able to perform an action and bring about the desired result); “through”, secondary agency; “unto,” the result: salvation.

If you miss heaven, your life on earth has been a failure. Look by faith, at the unseen; 2 Cor. 4:16-5:1 “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 19 For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Set your affections on things above; Col. 3:1-2 “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” No person goes to heaven who does not first send his heart on ahead.