

THE PATHFINDER

#294.18

Who Shall *INHERIT* The Kingdom of God?

"Know ye not that the unrighteous **shall not inherit the kingdom of God**? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." *1 Corinthians 6:9-10*, KJV.

"Why not? Why can't they inherit the Kingdom of God? Come on Brother Elwin: Don't you know that if people are saved but happen to have various problems with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, they are still saved? And since they are saved, why can't they inherit the kingdom of God? Are such people lost forever even though they did everything they were told to do in order to be saved? If it is true, what then? What does all this mean? Do we suppose it is saying that every *unrighteous* man or woman that has ever lived to this day and beyond will never walk the golden streets in God's celestial city? Will they

never know the good graces of God and His eternal love? Are they really doomed to never taste the sweet essence of His Spirit while writhing in the company of demons in a cauldron of fire?"

Apparently, these questions are asked because it is commonly taught that whosoever does not *inherit the kingdom of God* will be banished from His presence to be tormented in hell forever.

But is this true? Should we equate *inheriting the kingdom of God* with that which is generally thought of as *being saved*? Not at all. The two are not the same. This sort of thinking is similar to the scenario of a stern, wealthy father that draws up his irrevocable Last Will and Testament.

He has been heard to say that all the seas and oceans of the world would have to dry up before he would sacrifice his righteous standards by which he lives. The man is known to demand the same of his family, and there will be a price to pay if they fail to heed his demands.

His will stipulates that his entire estate is left to only one of his children. The others are left in the cold without two pennies to rub together. The reason is that each of them had lifelong issues that caused problems to their father and destroyed their lives. One drank more than was acceptable according to his father's standards. One or two of his siblings were promiscuous and had too many boyfriends and girlfriends, and a couple of them were bent on the wine, women, and song party life. Except for the golden child, they all were snared by problems from which they simply could not escape.

The chosen son had pleased his father and gets the lion's share of his fortune; but the drunkard and the others were left with nothing, not even a roof over their heads or a scrap of food for their empty stomachs. They had to fend for themselves.

Some who live by the letter of the law and are proud of it might say that *"It serves them right. They knew what would please their father but didn't try hard enough to turn around and do what was right. All that was required of the prodigal children was to just say 'no' to their slave masters. If they had done so, they would have been in the good graces of their uncompromising father. They were warned over and over, but to no avail. They just had to drink, party, sleep around and now have lost everything."*

Surprisingly, there is no sin more accepted or more widespread in the world of religion than those entrenched in legalism. Such legalists are not usually thought of as sinners, especially in the same sense as adulterers, thieves, liars, and the likes. To the contrary, they are often envied for their disciplined life. These students of the law are often looked upon as being exceptionally righteous, even as they judge and condemn others by their yardstick of *legalism*.

To be reminded, Jesus had more problems with the religious legalists of His day than anyone else. He didn't rail on the adulterers, liars, drunkards, or thieves. Those who put Jesus on the cross were the legalists, not those we usually think of as sinners. The apostle Paul also contended with them. They dogged his trail everywhere he went. They plucked up the good seed he planted and perverted his good news of the grace of God. They were

messengers of Satan, the thorn in his flesh.

Jesus deliberately provoked the legalists. For instance, He could have healed people on any other day of the week, but He often did it on the Sabbath. He could have been more discrete in violating the Pharisees' rules and laws, but He did so openly. When a Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner, He could have gone along with their hand-washing custom.

For sanitary reasons, it is good for everyone to wash their hands before eating, but since it was a religious custom, it seems that He purposely ignored it on this occasion. When they questioned Him about it, we might think that He could have been more polite and considerate of their feelings, but not so. He lambasted them for their hypocrisy. When a lawyer pointed out that Jesus had offended them as well, He didn't say, "*Oh, forgive me friends. I am sorry to have offended you good folks.*" By no means! He did not mince his words when He said: "You experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them." ***Luke 11:46 NIV***. You see, Jesus addressed legalism as a noxious sin, not a virtue of righteousness.

Of course, we know others who believe that if people die as drunkards, fornicators, adulterers, etc. if at one time in the past they had confessed Jesus as Lord, they have a free ticket to heaven. It is believed that *they will inherit the kingdom of God*. An expression that is used for this is: "*Once saved always saved.*" Of course, the salvation that they are talking about is the version that is generally preached as "***being saved from hell.***"

Not only is "*once saved always saved*" a common thread of thought in some religious belief systems, but "*sinners saved by grace*" is also sewn into their doctrinal arras.

Another wrote some things along these lines that are good to notice:

"This writing comes from my frustration with quite a number of Christians accepting any wind of doctrine that sounds plausible. They pronounce '*sinners saved by grace*' with such vigor, such tenacity. They wear it like a suit of armor, and some would even argue this point to no end. They negate the fact that the Bible itself debunks this statement time and time again, but they are not Bible readers; they are Bible hearers. Meaning they listen to the word preached, but don't search, or read the word for themselves.

"How many times have you heard someone say, or said it yourself: 'I'm just a sinner saved by grace?' While I will admit that it sounds good and it will make for great preaching; it is not true.

"**1 Timothy 1:15** states: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...' If Jesus came to save sinners and we are sinners saved by grace, is Jesus' coming and death in vain? For the scripture says that He came to save sinners, we therefore say we are saved; what are we saved from if we remain sinners? It is, therefore, impossible for us to be sinners and saved by grace. For if we are sinners saved by

grace then our sin remains, and Christ's death is in vain.

"Now some have commented that the scripture above is not complete, in that Paul continues on saying 'of which I am chief.' Therefore, the entire scripture reads as thus: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am Chief.' This is the scripture they attempt to use to justify this false teaching of Sinners Saved by Grace. However, what Paul is saying here is 'I am the chief sinner whom Jesus saved.' In other words, he is attesting to the fact that Jesus has saved him from sin who in his own eyes was a chief sinner due to having been responsible for the deaths of the saints. Paul in no way justifies a person remaining in sin once they confess they have been saved.

"Romans 6:2 states: '...How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?' We were buried into Christ by baptism into his death, and have risen in the newness of life in the likeness of His resurrection. If this be so, then we have been redeemed from the death of sin into the glorious life of Christ who knew no sin. If Christ knew no sin, and we are born into Christ by baptism into a new life free from sin, how say we then; we are sinners saved by grace? Being born of a sinless God, if be that the Holy Ghost which is sinless dwells in us; as stated in the scripture: 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.' (**1 John 3:9**).

"Sinners saved by grace gives us the consciousness of sin, therefore, because I am just a sinner saved by grace, my

constant falling into sin is understandable, or even expected. It is often used to make others comfortable in living a saved life filled of compromise. Never able to move into holiness because we are sinners saved by grace. Wherefore, we never obtain the fullness of Christ because we live a life conscious of sin.

"Sinner saved by grace reminds me of sin, therefore, reminding me of death, because the wages of sin is death (see ***Romans 6:23***). It constantly reminds me of the sin I was slave to and brings me back into bondage of sin. However, if I am simply saved by grace, then am I free from the law of sin and death from which Jesus' blood cleansed me. Wherefore, we are not sinners saved by grace, we are simply saved by grace. He has freed us from sin that we should not obey sin in the flesh.

"Sinner or saved, you make the choice, but you will have to choose because no sinner will inherit the kingdom of God."
— James Bligen

(<https://jamesbli.wordpress.com/2009/12/02/no-sinner-saved-by-grace/>)

Let us continue and see what it is ***to not inherit*** as well as what it is ***to inherit*** the kingdom of God. First, we will examine more closely the word, ***inherit***.

The Greek word ***kleronomeo*** is no different than our English, which is ***to be an heir***. To be an heir speaks of ***ownership***, and Paul said that ***we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus***

Christ. Being heirs such as this tells us that ***we own whatever God owns*** and we are ***joint heirs of all He owns with Jesus Christ***. As owners, we possess the authority of God as His kings and priests in the Kingdom that we have inherited. We must know, however, it cannot be executed until we are of mature age, we are trustworthy, dependable, and we are of honorable character. But those lacking these qualifications will not inherit His kingdom in this age, the age to come, and perhaps never.

One translation tells us of this godly reign in which the unrighteous will have no part:

"Have ye not known that the unrighteous **THE REIGN OF GOD SHALL NOT INHERIT?** Be not led astray; **NEITHER** whoremongers, **nor** idolaters, **nor** adulterers, **nor** effeminate, **nor** sodomites, **nor** thieves, **nor** covetous, **nor** drunkards, **nor** revilers, **nor** extortioners, **THE REIGN OF GOD SHALL INHERIT.**" ***1 Corinthians 6:9-10***, Young's Literal Translation.

Read the verse again if need be, and see that it is not saying those excluded from reigning will not be in the kingdom. It just says that **they will not be reigning** together with Jesus Christ.

Now for a look at the Greek concerning **the kingdom of God** that **the righteous will inherit: KINGDOM:** "basileia, from basileus (**foundation of power**)... **royalty...rule**, or (concretely) a realm." Strong's Exhaustive Concordance.

The Righteous Shall Inherit The Kingdom of God

You see, ***inheriting the kingdom of God*** has to do with ***legal***

owners ruling and reigning over everything in the realm of the kingdom. Inheriting the kingdom has nothing to do with citizenship but has everything to do with leadership, rulership, kingship. For instance, verses two and three puts it into that perspective: "Do ye not know that the saints shall **judge the world?....** Know ye not that we shall **judge angels?" 1 Corinthians 6:2-3. The overcomers are *heirs and joints heirs with Jesus Christ.* They inherit the Kingdom and rule over all things.**

Once more, in case some might have missed it. Inheriting the kingdom is not the same as being justified by faith! Inheriting the kingdom means to rule and reign with Christ! It denotes authority, power, responsibility, position, dominion, and rulership! It means to sit upon the throne! Contrary to the childish teaching of the church systems, responsibility and rulership in the kingdom is not given to every believer. The throne is not promised to "*him that believeth*" nor to "*him that is justified.*" The throne is promised "*to him that overcometh!*" "**To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,** even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in His throne. **He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!" Revelation 3:21-22.**

Drunkards, liars, murders and the like shall not inherit the kingdom of God; for they have not overcome and are not responsible enough to be inheritors; but they will have their part in the lake of fire which will bring them to a godly sorrow that will work repentance unto salvation. It is then that they will enter God's kingdom, but they will not reign as overcomers in it.

It is not because God cannot tolerate such lowly, sin laden sinners that they do not inherit the kingdom of God. Nor have they made Him so mad that He just can't love drunkards, or liars, or murders after they die. They are not **men and women that will be consigned to hell and lost forever**. No not at all! Not on your life, and especially not on our Lord's life!

The mystery to many is that He loves them all just as much now as He did when Jesus died for them, and He will always love them as much. Love does not end or diminish once a person dies. His love never fails.

When one INHERITS something, it means that they take possession of it. They claim ownership of it. They have rule over it and everything in it. They are co-heirs with Jesus who owns and rules over the Kingdom.

After a drunkard repents and is saved, that is, delivered from his handicap, he can be a citizen of God's Kingdom, but by not being an overcomer, he cannot be a ruler in it. He simply does not qualify to rule over the citizens. A Christian that has confessed Jesus as Lord but has a drinking problem to excess may not inherit the kingdom of God; but never think that such a one will be going to hell forever. The problem has been that more than a few religions have conveyed the message that ruling in the Kingdom of God is the same as being a citizen of the Kingdom. Please keep in mind, **all rulers are citizens; but all citizens are not rulers**.

There are some things that are common among those who are the overcoming ones. Their spirit and the Lord's Spirit cleave one to the other. They are one. They are meek like the Lamb yet

powerful as the Lion, and they lay down together. Their angered passion is restrained and trained. They are meek but mighty. They are angry for the right reasons, against the right people, in the right way, and for the right amount of time.

They are the ones that "...the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." ***Daniel 7:27***. For it will then be that they can be angry and sin not. Without meekness they cannot be angry and not sin. Without meekness, they will miss the mark, and will be disqualified from inheriting the Kingdom of God.

In unrefined anger great harm would be brought to His holy mountain. Without the gentleness of the child coupled with the cunning of the serpent, the venom of the asp would be injected into the Kingdom. It would be as it was with the world when the beast and serpent in the first man were unleashed in the earth. But it will not be with the overcomers. They will rule, yet in meekness, in righteousness, in power, in godliness. They talk less of what they are doing, and become ever smaller in their own esteem, until, like the morning star it fades away at the presence of the rising sun.

In closing we will note a similar word penned by Mary E. Kendrew sometime in the latter part of the 1800s:

Each Day

Each day to grow more humble,
Yet stronger in Thy might;
More valiant, Lord, to carry

Thy standard for the right.

Each day to grow more gracious
More sweet and gentle, too;
Yet braver, more courageous,
More firm, more pure, more true.

That I may grow more like Thee;
In me Thy Spirit shine;
Transformed from grace to glory,
Touched by the power Divine

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So now, do we understand why *the unrighteous SHALL NOT inherit the kingdom of God?* And do we also understand that if a person happens to be classified as being one of those who are *unrighteous, they are not lost forever* to never know the good graces of God and His eternal love. There is no way that they are doomed to never taste the sweet essence of His Spirit. They will surely not *inherit the kingdom of God*; but neither will they be banished forever from His presence. They will know Him and all the wonders that His heavenly kingdom in the earth has to offer.

Something to ponder! Don't you think? I do...

Elwin R. Roach

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