

1. In Jesus the Christian Receives an Inheritance of Nearness With Each Other NOW
  - a. You always forsake something (in priority) in order to pursue something
    - i. This is because our relationships all promise similar things, some appropriately and some inappropriately
    - ii. Parents offer *provision*
    - iii. Spouses offer *companionship*
    - iv. Siblings offer...*patience*
    - v. Houses offer a summary of all of the above and the physical needs of life
  - b. To come to Christ Jesus as the King means that He is the preeminent relationship that we turn to for all of these things
    - i. He is preeminent
      1. The others are subsistent
    - ii. He is necessary
      1. The others are supplementary
  - c. However, when we turn to Christ as the preeminent desire of our hearts, we find that we receive a kingdom that is not empty or devoid of any other relationships, but is rather *abounding* with such relationships NOW
    - i. You gain mothers and brothers and homes
      1. Luke 8:21 – Jesus prioritizes the Spirit-filled family over blood
    - ii. You gain providers and companions and patience-producers
      1. Acts 2:44-47; 20:35 – “**distributed their proceeds to all, as any had need**” “**help the weak**”
      2. Eph 4:28 – “**work with your own hands that you might share with the one in need**”
      3. 1 Tim 6:18 – “**be generous and ready to share**”
    - iii. In short, you gain a larger home, a kingdom of homes, and a family being formed into the image of Jesus
      1. Of love from those who have been loved – self-sacrificial other-focused attaching love
      2. Of mercy from those who have been shown mercy – given freely and often
      3. Of truth from those who know the truth – with accountability of love and familial protection
    - iv. These blessings of mutual camaraderie and familial relationships are for THIS AGE
      1. In His Church!
        - a. We are a community of dynamic diversity united in the faith, in the knowledge of God through His Son
        - b. No matter your social status, your race, your nationality, your gender, etc.
        - c. He has made one new humanity, diverse and unified by blood under the Kingship of Jesus – a family of redeemed sinners made sons/daughters!
      2. Eph 2:11-22
        - a. Nobody stands superior to another in the Church, for we all come as absolutely dependent needy infants; a family of mutual dependence!

- b. Thus, nationalism, racism, moralism, classism is abolished in the Church for **we all brought "under Christ" by the blood of His cross**

## 2. In Jesus the Christian Receives an Inheritance of Nearness to God FOREVER

- a. Even better, there is the promise of life that has an eternal, unshakable, incorruptible, glorious quality that we will receive IN THE COMING AGE
  - i. Eternal Life
    - 1. Quality, not quantity
  - ii. Though eternal life has begun, it is not received in its fullness, yet (ALREADY, NOT YET)
- b. What is "eternal life"?
  - i. Eternal life is to know God rightly, the relationship of knowledge that runs beyond facts into experiential understanding of Him in His presence
    - 1. John 17:3 - "to know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You sent"
    - 2. 1 John 5:20 – We know the Son has come that we might know Him who is true
  - ii. Eph 1:17 - prayer that God would give us His Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself
  - iii. Eph 3:19 - knowledge of the love of Christ which surpasses mere factual knowledge is to be filled with the fullness of God
  - iv. Eph 4:13 - unity of the faith is in the knowledge of God's Son, which is Christian maturity and the full measure of the fullness of Christ
  - v. Col 1:10 – bearing good fruit and increasing in the knowledge of God pleases Him
  - vi. 2 Pet 1:2 – grace and peace multiplied to you in the knowledge of God
  - vii. 2 Cor 4:6 - we are given the knowledge of God in the face of Jesus
    - 1. 1 John 5:11 - this eternal life is in His Son
- c. The Levites as Forerunners to the Church: The Royal Priesthood and Family

The tribe of Levi were made priests unto God, and in the allotted divisions of the land of Canaan God gave them no physical land, not inheritance in this world but one: Himself.

In this priesthood, God made Levi the richest of the tribes of Israel, for their inheritance was Him and they were never to be exiled or removed from a greater land than this, the eternal swallowing up the "loss" of the eternal.

They received the brotherhood of fellow priests, those whom also knew the holy intimacy and joyful terror of the awesome Majesty in His purity and perfections, the demands of the Law and its provisions for sinners. They knew alongside of this experience of original sin the great provision of God's mercy so that sinners could draw near to Him without profaning His justice: the blood of the covenant. They smelled the blood of the sacrifice lit the fires that consumed the animals, hearing, seeing, smelling, and even tasting the reality of life in the place of life.

They say that community is formed around intense shared experience. Nobody experienced this nearness to the Lord day-in and day-out like the Levites. Nobody experienced the terror of His holiness, the fear of His presence, or the dreadfulness of His demands like those nearest to Him. Yet nobody experienced the wondrous provision of grace expressed so clearly and

brightly and powerfully as they, either. They were called to deep humility daily and to great joy hourly at the doorposts of the house of God.

Maybe this is why it is the priests who deal so clearly with God in the Psalms. The hymns of Asaph the Levite, one of David's chief and most trusted musicians (1 Ch 6:24; Psalm 50, 73-83), the sons of Korah the Levite whose father fell in the wilderness contending against God's anointed and thusly knew of the holiness of God and of His glorious worthiness and who wrote the eloquent expression of the heart who pursues hard the God of glory, "As the deer pants for the water, so my soul desires you, O God!" (Ps 42, 44-49; 84-85; 87-88).

Psalms 73 expresses the toil and struggle that we have concerning the love of the things of this earth and the loss of them compared to the love of the Lord and the gain of Him.

3. We Are Given Such an Inheritance Now and Then Because Our King Gave Himself For Us
  - a. The only way that we will be willing to leave all to follow Jesus **is by an experience of God's mercy** through the Christ who suffered, died, and was raised again *for me*.
    - i. And He is going toward death to secure you that hope. His love compelled Him to the cross that the Father might be just and the justifier of those in Him.
    - ii. He goes forward as the High Priest and propitiates (declares sinners scrutinized and approved by His holy blood) His disciples, making them a kingdom of priests (Rev 1:6; 5:10; 1 Pet 2:9), a new elect humanity, the God-possessed people, that we might proclaim His excellences who called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light.
    - iii. GOSPEL JOY!! He is worth it!!
  - b. It is not that I can find peace in my soul based upon anything else but His mercy. And this is not an act of the will, a mere choice to be different.
    - i. **I cannot say, "I should give everything up for God" without a deep understanding of His mercy towards me in Christ, that all I can stand upon is His merciful work and Christ's atoning death and gift of righteousness to me.**
    - ii. I am tempted to switch foundations for my identity from one idol to another, all of which equally fail, but when I see the Lord of Glory crucified for my sins, the love that will not let me go, the mercy that runs deeper than all my sins, THEN I find peace with God.
  - c. We cannot push out an old affection by merely willing it to go away and willing ourselves to entrust our very souls to the Lord.
    - i. The only way that we will give up our name in this world, to ruin our soul for this world, is to see the great value of Jesus so that our hearts are wooed by an ever greater affection for Him

"The love of the world cannot be expunged by a mere demonstration of the world's worthlessness. But may it not be supplanted by the love of that which is more worthy than itself? The heart cannot be prevailed upon to part with the world, by a simple act of resignation. But may not the heart be prevailed upon to admit into its preference another, who shall subordinate the world, and bring it **down from its wonted ascendancy?**"

-Thomas Chalmers, *The Expulsive Power of a New Affection*

- d. So, today – is He worth giving up everything that you rely upon to give your life meaning?

- i. vv31-34
  - 1. Behold the God who dies for sinners to make them sons!
- ii. The Christ who gave Himself up for His Bride?
  - 1. Jesus went to Jerusalem to die, knowing what lied ahead!
  - 2. He went willingly and purposefully *to redeem, reconcile, and restore you to God.*
- iii. The Christ who made Himself poor that you might gain the joy of the Father and the Son **and the Spirit's heavenly relationship?**
- e. There is a promise in this passage that if you entrust yourself to Christ Jesus, the King who bore your shame and calls you to suffer loss for His sake and find in Him the delight of your soul – real life – the way it is supposed to be.

Conclusion:

Your marriage isn't everything. God is. Your home isn't everything. God is. Your children aren't everything. God is. The truth is that Jesus is worth losing every relationship, parting ways (if not physically, at the least in emotional priority) with every relationship. This is how the Christian can rejoice in the midst of a marriage where the unbelieving spouse constricts and restricts and is simply overly-strict in regards to following Jesus; to having joy when sexual pleasure has been taken away or never given; to deep and abiding peace when there are no dollars left; to steadfast and immovable hope when the pain of cancer swells or the executor drags you to the pyre.

This is eternal life, the life of God manifest and revealed to those in Christ and in those in Christ. His life in us, a down payment now in His Holy Spirit, and the fullness of eternal life when sin and death are obliterated forever. This is the coming age's ultimate fulfillment and the glorious promise for those in Jesus.

It is **only in seeing Jesus, the depth of His love for you and God's mercy through Him, that He is the only** Master worth following, for He will never fail you or ruin you and if you should fail Him He draws near to you with His own blood. Only then will you find eternal life. Only when you see that He took your judgment upon Himself, for you, that you will be able to know the truth which sets you free from the bondage of having to please everybody around you. He who, while our sins bore upon His soul, and the hammer pierced his flesh with **sharpened iron point, cried out, "Father, forgive them, for they don't understand what they're doing!"** The One who *longed* to bear the fires of judgment for you rather than call them down from heaven upon you. When we see Him, really see Him as He is, the things of this earth grow strangely dim, our need for attention wanes, and our clamor to be loved and honored by others fades to silence in the glow of His great and glorious grace until all that we see is Him. In Him our joy is made complete, our hope made stalwart in our ever-changing reputations and relationships, and our dependence swells to the fullness of the knowledge of the Son of God by which we are transformed to truly be who we were meant to be. In the words of Keith Green: I pledge my head to heaven for the gospel, my beloved children to heaven for the sake of Christ, only for the presence of Jesus. In your mercy, Lord Jesus, may it be.