

## 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Sunday 10/1/2006

SEC: The Rock of Ages: Parallels in Life

Reverend Toplady, a preacher, song leader, and songwriter, lived in the late Philadelphia Church age, around the 1800s. He was traveling from one city to another, from town to village, to preach. A gigantic, severe thunderstorm flew in. Back then, in the 1800s, you were pretty much on your own. But he found refuge in a gigantic cliff rock that had an indentation, not really a cave, but a place where you could get back from the storm. He crawled in there and weathered the storm. He was protected while the lightning crashed, the thunder roared, and the rain came down. He was kept safe by that rock and the cutaway in it.

It was at that point that God's Holy Spirit brought the parallels together: the rock being Christ, in the hollow of His hand, Christ, and the storm, the storm of life, all coming down around him. It is things like that, and you will find that if you are paying attention and have a real relationship with God based on His principles, you are going to find that a lot of things in life are parallels. You may not write a song about them, but they will certainly impact you to the place where it will be a parallel in life that you will never forget. In this case, he verbalized that into a song, which is still one of the greatest songs.

SEC: Recap: The Judgment Seat of Christ and Seven Judgments

Last week, we were dealing with the concept of the Judgment Seat of Christ. Within that concept, we have been talking about seven judgments. We talked about how the first three judgments are all for a Christian. We talked about the three aspects of a child of God: sinner, son, and servant.

The first judgment in the Bible is Jesus Christ dying on the cross, a sinless Man dying for a sinful world. By His death on the cross, everybody on planet Earth is judged as a sinner. Up to that point, when you get saved, God looks at you as a sinner; He deals with you as a sinner. Then, of course, He judges you if you die as a sinner. But God made a way. God made a way. In the midst of our wilderness, God gave us a fountain, and that fountain is the salvation that God provides through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

When you and I hear the salvation message, the fact that Jesus died for your sins according to the Scriptures, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and in Romans 10:9-10, it says:

*Romans 10:9-10*

*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Then in Romans 10:13 it says:

*Romans 10:13*

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

When you recognize your need as a sinner and you trust the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior, then at that point, you are no longer a sinner in God's sight. Yes, you still do things that are wrong, but the whole dynamic of your life has changed. At this point, God now accepts you into His family, and He looks at you as His Son.

We talked about that the second week when we discussed the judgment of a son. As you go through life, you either confess the things that you do wrong, not to be saved again but to restore fellowship, or God comes down like any loving Father and chastises us to bring us back to Him and to correct us in the way that is wrong. So, we talked about sinner, we talked about God's judgment as a son, and then we began to talk about the third judgment to you and I, the Judgment Seat of Christ.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, God will not judge you as a sinner; God will not judge you as a son. Those two judgments took place at Calvary and as you went through your walk on this planet in your relationship with God. No, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, He judges us for our service: sinner, son, and servant.

We began to talk about that aspect, and I told you that the Judgment Seat of Christ and all the ramifications of our faithfulness and all the things that we do for God really come down to two aspects: rewards and an inheritance.

SEC: Rewards vs. Inheritance

Last week, I talked about the rewards out of 1 Corinthians 3. If every man does what he is supposed to do, he shall receive a reward. I defined those rewards for you as five crowns in the Bible. We talked about those crowns, how you get those crowns, and defined them.

- 1 Corinthians 9: The incorruptible crown.
- 2 Timothy 4: A crown for your attitude of heart of loving His appearing or wanting the Lord to come back, understanding your situation.
- 1 Peter 5: The crown that deals with the feeding of the flock or feeding of God's people.
- 1 Thessalonians 2: A crown that deals with soul winning or winning people to Christ.
- James: The crown of life, which focuses on the times that you and I are tried greatly for our faith, up to the point of giving our life. This is sometimes called a martyr's crown, though you do not necessarily have to die to get it.

In the midst of all that, we talked about the contrast of two churches. I showed you that in church history, you had the Laodicean church, which we are living in now, and we contrasted that with the greatest period in church history, the Philadelphia church period. The Philadelphia church period, if you remember, starts about 1600 with the Reformation and carries up to about 1900. Then the Laodicean church transitions in and brings us up to the time that we are living in now, right up to the Rapture of the church.

We looked at all of that, and we should have a good comprehension of it. Last week, I told you that there was a difference between the rewards you get and your inheritance that you get. Last week, we talked about the rewards, and this week, I want to focus on the inheritance. This is a very important thing for you to learn. That is why we are taking the time with it, because this is what it all rises and falls on. You can go through your whole life thinking you are doing what God wants you to do with the right motive and the right purpose, and wind up at the Judgment Seat of Christ and find out that you did not have what you needed to have. So, it is very important that we look at this and see the difference, and look at the Bible principles that go along with it.

Your rewards will always deal with the Judgment Seat of Christ, and we know now that it deals with that in the form of crowns. I told you last week that somebody may say, "What is the purpose of getting crowns? What do we need a crown for? We are in heaven." Well, it sets up a great principle because in Revelation 14:10, the Bible gives the indication very clearly that the crowns that we win, we at some point lay them at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. The bottom line is, He is the One that gave us the ability to do it, and all honor and glory goes back to Him. It is a beautiful expression of really how we should be living our lives right now today.

The Judgment Seat of Christ ends where it all should start for you and I. It ends with what we should be in our hearts and our attitudes right now: that everything that we have, physically and spiritually, our families, our homes, our jobs, our finances, everything that we have, the bottom line is this: if you are a child of God, you only have those things because of the goodness of God in your life. The key to maturity in a Christian's life is simple, and I know there are a lot of ramifications to it, but in its most simplistic form, it is just recognizing that all that you have, you got from Him. Then, of course, you give it back to Him and say, "Lord, I recognize that whatever I have physically in this life, You have given to me only to be a steward of it, that I may use it for You." Of course, it is a great principle that is taught all the way through the Bible, a great principle that I shorten up in my own life and remind myself of many, many times: if you want to keep it, you have to give it away.

SEC: The Principle of Giving It Away: Moses' Mother

I have talked a lot lately about models in the Bible and how there is a model for everything. The model for that is all the way back in the Old Testament with Moses and his mother. Here is a great story that illustrates this great principle: "You want to keep it, you have to give it away," recognizing that all that we have, we got from God, and then having the grace and the ability to trust God to give it all back and say, "I am here for You. I am just going to manage this for You so that I can get things done." At the Judgment Seat of Christ, everything you get, you give it back again, because ultimately, it all goes back to Him.

In Exodus 1-3, you have the story of Moses. Moses was born a Jew; his mother brought him into the world. Right about the time of his birth, Pharaoh was getting a little upset with all these Jews around. They were probably up to two or three million people, and he was saying to himself, "One of these days, these people are going to overtake us." Pharaoh was not very secure in his own kingdom, so what he did is he got thinking about it and said, "I will stop the growth. What I

will do is I will just kill all the male babies. If I kill all the male babies, it will X out generation after generation after generation, and that will keep them in check." So the plan is that they kill all the babies, and he tells all the people that are associated, the midwives and all of that, "If when you deliver, when those Hebrew women deliver a male child, you let me know, and then they go down and they kill that child, thereby stopping Israel's growth." Then they are already working in the brick factories, making bricks for the pyramids or whatever, so he is killing them there. Basically, he is going to systematically wipe them out by just cutting off the race at both ends.

Moses' mother loved this little boy, as any mother would love a little child, but she also knew that if she kept him, she was going to get killed. So what she does is she builds a little basket, kind of like an ark, and she takes that baby and she puts it in that ark, and she hides it down in the bullrushes, or what we call cattails, in the swamp down there. Then she goes back to find out what is going to happen. God had a plan for Moses, just like God has a plan for you, and Moses' mother was key in that plan.

I have heard all kinds of guys say that this whole story is not a very good deal because she was not obeying her government. Yet I answer that, I am sure she did. The government said you had to get rid of your baby; she did. She threw it in the swamp. It did not say anything about not putting a basket around it. There is always a way around the deal. So she puts him in the swamp down there.

When she goes back, through the providence of God, here comes the daughter of Pharaoh. She is walking down by the swamp, and she hears this baby cry. So she walks over there, and she picks up this baby, and she says, "Oh, this is a little Hebrew boy, and I am going to keep him." God put it in her heart. The Bible says, "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord." So she takes this little baby, and she goes back into Pharaoh's palace, and she says, "I am going to keep it."

Here is where God's hand gets in, because the great principle is, "If you want to keep it, you have to give it away." Moses' mother knew that that was a goodly child, and God was going to use him. She also knew she could not keep him, or she was going to get killed. So, she turned him over to God. She gave him to God. God took over, and then He gave it back. I can just see her; she is watching this whole thing. She is checking this whole thing out as she sees Pharaoh's daughter come around. Now she is glad that the baby is saved, but she is heartbroken because what mother would not be? It is your child. So she goes home heavy-hearted, knowing she did what God told her to do. As she walks down the road and goes into the gate to her house, the phone is ringing. She picks up the phone, and it is somebody from the office of Pharaoh Unlimited, and they are saying, "Hey, we need your help here. Pharaoh would like to hire you. We have a new baby we found, and Pharaoh's daughter wants to keep it, but she does not have time to raise it. Would you like to come and be a surrogate mother, and we will pay you this amount of money, and you can live here, and we will take care of all this, and you do for Pharaoh's daughter and raise this child?"

What a deal! She gave it away, and then God gave it back to her. When God gave it back, God paid all the bills. Do you know why we sometimes have such a tough time in life financially? Do

you know why we have such a tough time in life with all the physical things in life? It is because we just cannot get to the point in our life that we can understand that great principle: "If you want to keep it, you have to give it away." We just cannot let go of our own control of it. Control is a big thing, and we just want to hang on to every last drop. The great principle is taught here: if you want to keep it, you have to give it away, because when you get to the Judgment Seat of Christ, you are going to give it all back to Him anyhow. So the point is, it does not make any difference.

### SEC: Inheritance and the Millennial Reign

Today, we are going to look at and examine our inheritance. Whereas rewards are lost at the Judgment Seat of Christ, your inheritance has to do with the Millennial Reign of Christ. Let me explain for those of you that may be new here and just trying to pick all this up. Let me explain to you what the Millennium is. I hate using terms that people do not understand, so I can give you a very brief, quick capsule picture of it.

Here is how the events play out, basically from the New Testament to the end of the New Testament, Matthew to Revelation. Here is how it plays out:

- First Coming of Christ: Jesus Christ shows up, and He dies for the sin of mankind. Then He goes back to heaven.
- Church Age: We have a period of time called the Church Age, which runs approximately about 2,000 years. It is a time period you and I are living in right now. One of these days, the Rapture of the church is going to take place.
- During that Church Age, God has a plan for you and for me. The job for you and for I is to find out what that is if you are a Christian, and then do it. You want to keep it, you have to give it away, recognizing that all your assets are given to you for God's use. He wants to channel them through you. When you figure that out, the Rapture takes place, you go to the Judgment Seat of Christ, and then when you come back from the Judgment Seat of Christ, while the Tribulation is going on, then we go into a thousand-year period. The word "millennium" comes from the word "mill," which means 1,000. So we go into the Millennium, a thousand-year process by which Christ rewards you and I, if we have been faithful, with an inheritance.

That inheritance is built on the concept that I talked to you about before: you have only so many years to give to God. If you are willing to give up those years of yourself and give them to Him, He will give you ten times back. It is a lot like the example I used a couple of weeks ago. I ask Pam for twenty dollars because I really need it, and I say, "I will make it up to you." I do not have any money with me. Can I have twenty dollars? She says, "Sure." The next day, I see Pam, and I say, "Pam, you do not know what that did for me. You helped me out in a jam. You did not even think about it. You gave up that. Here is a thousand dollars back." Who would not do that? That is what God wants. He wants whatever you have in your life to give Him, and then He will reward you for the thousand years. That is your inheritance. Your rewards are the crowns you get at the Judgment Seat of Christ; you dump them at His feet. The inheritance is what you are going to do during that thousand-year reign.

There are two inheritances in the Bible: one is physical, one is spiritual. Israel in the Millennium has two purposes; that thousand-year reign has two deals.

1. The first deal is for Israel. Israel gets an inheritance. Israel's inheritance is the land; it is physical. It is a piece of ground called Palestine today, with Jerusalem as the capital. That was their inheritance back in the Old Testament, but what happened? They forfeited it because of sin. But when God reinstates them and they get right with God and they go into the Millennium, they get their inheritance, which is physical, a physical piece of ground that God promised to Abraham all the way back in Genesis 15.
2. The second aspect that He inherits is spiritual. It is for you and for me. He rewards Israel physically with their inheritance; He rewards us spiritually with our inheritance, which is reigning with Christ for a thousand years.

Here is the deal: right now, you are supposed to be in the trenches. Right now, you are a soldier for Jesus Christ. Right now, you live in a foxhole. Right now, you eat mud. Right now, you are in the brunt of the battle. Right now, people should be trying to kill you. Right now, people ought to hate you. Right now, you do not get much sleep because the bomb bursts are going off overhead, and any time there is going to be a bomb site charge right over the north wall. That is what you ought to be into as a child of God. You ought to be in the thick of battle, wearing yourself out for the Lord. Basically, that is an oversimplification, but you get my gist.

When you do that, when you get there, you have a thousand-year furlough. God says, "If you find out what I want you to do, and you do not get distracted by all the other things in this world, and you keep your focus, and you accomplish with your life, after you become My child, what I want you to accomplish, and you do the job for Me, and you find out what it is, you get in the New Testament local church, you learn your Bible, you get on the tail of a preacher and stay with him and let him teach you, work you, grow you, and then you get part of the deal and you go off and you do it." If you will do that, when we get home to heaven, and you will pay the price for it, but if you do that, when we get home to heaven, "Look what I got for you." That is how it works.

Now, the next thing I am about to say is really important. You want to get this down. Your rewards, we already know, are connected with the Judgment Seat of Christ. The rewards will always be connected with crowns. You want to remember that. Your inheritance now has to do with the Millennial Reign of Christ. Your inheritance always has to do with clothing. The rewards deal with something you wear on your head; the inheritance deals with something you wear on your body. It is all based on Psalms 90:9-10. Basically, you give me twenty years today, I will give you a thousand years over there.

The Bible answers a lot of questions. This is why, and do not take this in a wrong way, but it is just a true result; everything runs by the Bible. This is why ladies love to buy new clothes. That is just the way it is. That is why our commercializing of the season: you have to buy a different outfit for different times of the year. You give a guy a pair of camouflage shorts and a brown t-shirt, we are good. The only time we have to change clothes is when the leaves change. Green does not go good with brown leaves. That is all we have to worry about. But women have to be well-coordinated, and you have to have shoes. I am not fighting it; I think it is a good deal. It is

good for us because you come out and you look like a million bucks, as long as it does not cost us a million bucks to get you to look like a million bucks. That is the catch.

This whole world is "gimme." We talk about the fall, the new. We get them in the mail all the time, these leaflets that go inside the paper. I always get the paper first, so I just tear those out and do not send them in. But it is the fall fashion, or it is the spring fashion, and then we have the winter fashion, and then we have the summer fashion. It is all geared because they know that a woman's preoccupation is clothes. I am not saying it is wrong. The reason why that is, is because you and I, as the body of Christ, are likened to a female, a virgin who is going to marry Christ someday. Our preoccupation ought to be with clothing. The Bible lays it all out, and you have to remember that you women, even though we are men in God's sight, in one of the ways that we are connected with Christ spiritually, we are women. So you are going to find that women picture some great things.

Most people do not know the Bible is a model for everything. That is why the reason why women are preoccupied with clothes is because there is coming a day when I, as a female body of the bride of Christ, even though I am male, not talking about someday I am going to be a woman, I am talking about the fact that spiritually, in my relationship with Christ, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, I am going to be preoccupied in the Millennium with my clothing.

Most people do not know why women wear lipstick. Did you ever stop and think of this? I am going to use the word "stupidity" here, but not in a bad way. Did you ever wonder why a woman wears lipstick? What does that do for you? Did you ever stop thinking about it? It has got to taste terrible. You always worry about it smearing. You cannot kiss the dog. I have never understood it, but I understand the principle behind it. Do you know why women have an affinity for lip gloss, lipstick, to make their lips red? It goes back to Genesis 3. I do not have time to go into it this morning, but that is why.

I will tell you something else. Do you know why a woman wears high heels? She wears high heels because of Ezekiel 1 and Revelation 4. You cannot tell me that high heels are comfortable. I have tried them on just to see how you do it. I do not know how you guys do it. I do not know how you do that. I would fall over every time. That just goes to show you that women have a superior balance. Why do people do that? The Bible is the source behind everything. I know why women are susceptible to those kinds of things, and they are not bad things. I know why a woman wears makeup. She wears makeup and why she should not be satisfied with her natural beauty. I am not against any of that. My wife puts on makeup; my two girls put on makeup. I do not ever know a woman that ever wanted a man to see her without her real face. But even in that is kind of ironic, is it not? Because that is not your real face. You pick her up, and she says she looks beautiful. Just grab her by the hair, put her on your arm, and rub all that stuff off and say, "Now that is what I got. I can live with that." I am not fighting it, but why do they do that? The basis for that is the same reason why a woman wears perfume, found in Song of Solomon. Why do you think that your natural smell is not enough?

Let me tell you how this thing works. Behind all of this stuff is a picture, and you as a woman are prone to those things, to want to do those things, because everything runs by the Bible. For me,

someday, I am going to be the bride of Christ, and the spiritual aspect of perfume, the spiritual aspect of the lipstick, the spiritual aspect of fixing the face, the spiritual aspect of the hair (forgot that one, that is in Song of Solomon too), the spiritual aspect of the clothes, the garments, all represent something that we are going to have in a spiritual sense. So you see, the Bible is such an exact book that men and women run by it, live by it, do everything by it, whether they believe it or not, because it is that. When I tell you it is the source of all truth, I mean that.

None of these things are bad. In our world, we would call someone who is dressed beautifully, who has the makeup done just right, who has the eyes done and the hair done, we would call that a "total woman." She is totaled out. That is what you want to be at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You want to be totaled out, but not in a physical sense, in a spiritual sense. I am not saying, and there are some churches that look at that, that make you a little nervous. There are some churches that say to the women, "No makeup." We do not want to do that. But there are some churches that do not allow women to wear makeup. You have to look like a rag doll when you go in, and I do not believe that. I believe like old Bob Jones Senior, the old Philadelphia preacher used to say from old South Jacksonville, South Carolina, "If the barn door needs painting, paint it." You like that, do not you? That is where I am at. I do not have a problem with it. I think that you are all lovely. I know that the real loveliness about you is not on the outside, no matter how you try to fix yourself up and how beautiful you are. I am not attracted to that. I look at the beauty on the inside. That is where the real beauty is. That is what the Bible says. That does not mean that if you are going to marry somebody or you are looking for a wife that you have to marry somebody ugly. It just means that true beauty can be deceiving on the outside sometimes, but the real beauty will never be deceiving when you see it on the inside. If you happen to be lucky enough to match them both up, you are doing good. But you certainly do not have to go around. That is the way the mindset is today. All of that stuff represents something in a spiritual sense.

In the Old Testament, talking about your inheritance and becoming that totaled woman at the Judgment Seat of Christ in a spiritual sense, the right garments, the right smells, the right look, it is all for you in Song of Solomon. It is all laid out for you; you could not miss it unless you were busy doing something else.

#### SEC: The Right of the Firstborn

In the Old Testament, when it comes to inheritance, there is a great picture of this New Testament doctrine in Jewish culture. Under the Old Testament law, the firstborn male of any family was held in a very special light. In the Bible, this is called the "right of the firstborn." There were four things that if you were the firstborn male, not female, but male, in the Old Testament under the right of the firstborn, that you got that the other children that came after you did not get. You have to see this.

3. As the firstborn, you had a right to a double portion of the father's inheritance. Where everybody got something and it was doled out, what was left, you got a double portion of everything that he had.
4. The second thing is the firstborn had a right to the blessings of God, the promises of God. He had a direct line to those that were given to Abraham in Genesis 12.

5. The third thing, as the head of the family or the firstborn, he and he alone was entitled that through the administration of God as time went on, he would have the gift of prophecy.
6. The last thing, by right of birth, the birthright being the firstborn, he also had the ability to be counted in the physical line of Christ.

Those were the four things that the right of the firstborn brought to any young man who was the firstborn of the family. That is in a physical sense in the Old Testament. In a New Testament sense, the birthright, the right by birth, the firstborn, is a picture of you and I after we are born again. Once you as a Christian get saved and become God's child, you become the firstborn in God's family.

Let us talk about that for a moment. I want to give you a couple of verses here. First of all, you can write them down; just follow me through here.

*Hebrews 12:23*

*To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*

There is a verse that tells you that the church is called the church of the firstborn. Let us go on.

*Colossians 1:15-18*

*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:*

*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*

*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*

*And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

You see that thing? Jesus Christ was the firstborn of God. Let us hold up a second. Last verse.

*Romans 8:29*

*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

You see that thing? Here is how it works, real simple. In the Old Testament, in a physical sense, remember everything in the Old Testament physically pictured something in the New Testament spiritually. We have already covered that many, many times. In the Old Testament, you have a model. That model was the Jewish family. In the Old Testament, there was a physical line of Christ that was coming through the Old Testament that was going to wind up with the birth of Christ at the First Coming of Christ. When you start coming through that line, you will find that when a man had a male child who was the firstborn, that firstborn male child was lifted out and said, "Okay, there is something special about this because of what it represents." Physically, it

represented the Jewish culture by which he got the four things that I mentioned. Spiritually, it pictured you and I in a spiritual sense that was to come as being born a child of God.

You were born by your earthly family. The Bible says Christ is the firstborn. What does that mean? That means that He was the first Man born, but not born of a woman. Christ had no, He was born through a woman's womb, but He never had the woman's blood or the male's blood in Him. He only had God's blood in Him, and He was set aside as a special thing. He is sometimes called the firstborn, the first begotten of the dead, sometimes the firstborn of the egg. You know what that means? It means that He was the first Man born supernaturally. Therefore, Christ is the firstborn of God. The day you and I got saved, you got born again supernaturally, which now makes you the firstborn of God because you are born in the image of Jesus Christ, who is the firstborn of God, and the two become one. See how it works?

Based on that, all the things that they got physically, you and I get spiritually. So you and I, as a child of God, get the right of the firstborn in a spiritual sense, just as the physical born in the Old Testament got the right of God for the firstborn in a physical sense. Let us look at it. See how they got a double portion? I told you that Romans 8 says that you and I as the body of Christ get a greater portion of God than anybody else in the family of God. Let me show it to you now. This one you want to turn to. Turn over to Matthew 11. I am going to show you a really hard verse, or it seems that it is hard, and if you read this verse, you would scratch your head. I scratched my head for many, many years, and this looks like a very tough verse, but when you put it in the light of what we are talking about, it becomes an easy verse to see. Remember, we are in Matthew now. Matthew is going to be talking about the Kingdom of Heaven, but this is how it works. This is a strange verse.

*Matthew 11:11*

*Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

That is a wild verse, is it not? That is a strange verse, and if you do not understand the context of what I am talking to you about here, and you do not grasp the concept of the family of God, those seven members, and I showed you how that out of all the seven-member families of God that start from Genesis to Revelation that represent all the dispensations, the one that marries His Son is the church, you and me.

Here is what He is saying. He is saying this: "Those that are born of women, there is none greater than John the Baptist. But He is saying that whoever is least in the Kingdom, the Millennial Reign of Christ, is still going to be better than John." Do you know who the least is? You and me if we lose our inheritance. How are we still better than John? Because John was just born of a woman. You and I were born of a woman, but then we got born of God, and John never did. It is talking about the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. John was born of a woman, but John never became a Christian. He died before the Church Age. He represents the Old Testament saints in the law and the prophets. We know that. He was born of a woman. John never got born again. Nobody ever sat down with John and said, "You must be born again." John never went to Romans 10:9-10 and asked the Lord to come into his heart and save him.

John was out there in the wilderness, baptizing to Israel for the repentance of Israel's sin. When he died, he died as an Old Testament saint who was born of a woman, but never born of God.

You were born of a woman, but the Bible said, John 8:44, that was the wrong birth because that puts you into this world as a sinner. So you had to get born again spiritually. What it is saying is, you may lose all your rewards and all your inheritance, 1 Corinthians 3, in the Millennium, but the bottom line is, because you were born of God, you are still better than somebody in the Old Testament in the Kingdom. The difference is that once you got saved, you have the right of the spiritual firstborn. He did not have that. You get a double portion of God. He does not. He gets the Kingdom to Israel. You get the spiritual blessings of God that are throughout the New Testament and the Old Testament. He only got the ones in the Old Testament. He never got anything in the New Testament. He died before it came in, as all the Old Testament saints. You got the gift of prophecy. He had it in a very limited way. You got the gift of prophecy in a book that covers everything. He never had that. He did not have the mind of Christ. He only knew what he knew at the time that he lived based on the Old Testament Scriptures. You have the complete knowledge of God, and you have the gift of prophecy as the right of the firstborn because God gave you the book of prophecy. See how it goes? On top of that, you get the last one because now that you are saved and Christ is living inside you, you are in the line of Christ, not for the physical Christ. You are going to get the glorified body of the risen Christ. See how it works? One is physical, one is spiritual. One deals with Israel, the other one deals with the church. Do you understand where I am coming from here? I am making sense. If not, I will break it down even better for you. That is where you are at.

#### SEC: Forfeiting the Inheritance: Esau's Example

The only way that in the Old Testament you could forfeit that inheritance was by sin. The only way you can forfeit that inheritance in the New Testament is by sin. A person in the Old Testament could say, "I care nothing about the birthright. I care nothing about the things of God. I care nothing about the line of Christ. I care nothing about the blessings of God. I care nothing about the double portion. I just want to have what I have," and he would lose his inheritance of his birthright because of sin.

Who is the great example of that in the Bible? Esau and Jacob. Here is the story. Esau was the firstborn. Jacob was the second born. Esau should have had the birthright by the right of the firstborn, but he lost it because of his attitude of heart toward the things of God. I know that everybody blamed Jacob for deceiving him, but let me tell you something. You cannot be deceived unless you are a deceiver. A professional criminal once said the easiest people to con, or the hardest people to con, are honest people. The easiest people to con are people who think that there is a quick way to make a buck. The con artist gets them in their own weakness because they are a crook just like the con artist; they are just not as sophisticated a crook. In other words, his statement was, "You cannot con an honest man because an honest man knows you have to earn it honestly." That is a great principle.

You know the story, and I love this story because this is a story of every child of God that is out there in the world today. I use this story and the principles of it so many times in dealing with

people and circumstances. It is a great counseling principle. You know the deception. Here comes the place that Jacob's mother gets in on the deal. Esau is out there hunting; he cannot get a deer. The old man is back there, and we go through the whole process, and it is a deal where he comes back, and Jacob says to Esau, who has been out there running through the fields all day, and Jacob is back home whipping up some chili, Texas style, three-alarm chili, with beans and all that stuff in it. I am sure as Esau is coming over the hill, he smells that chili, and it is making him hungry because he has been out all day. So he comes down there, and he kind of comes in there, and he is whipping up some things, and he says, "Hey, Jake, how are you doing?" He says, "Esau, how are you doing? I am doing just fine." He says, "Man," and I love this story. It shows you the character of Esau.

Esau has probably missed one meal, maybe two. Yet his reasoning to Jacob is, "I am at the point of death." I do not know if you know this or not, here is a little survival tip for you: you can go two to three weeks without food before you die. You can go four or five days, maybe two or three days, depending on the environment, without water. You can go about sixty or seventy seconds without air, depending on the environment. But the bottom line is, he was nowhere near death. It goes to show you how a man will rationalize his position because of his own flesh to give up the most important thing he has got for just a little mess of pottage. I have seen God's people lose their inheritance for a lot less than a bowl of pottage.

His thing is, here is what he says. He is reasoning it out; he is hungry. He says, "I am at a point to die, what good is this birthright unto me?" That is the greatest irrational rationalization of a man's life anywhere in the Bible. Missed two meals, probably has a headache, his belly is groaning, he is being enticed by the smell and the aroma of the things of this world. In the middle, it is all it takes. In a moment of passion, it only takes a second. In an unguarded second, in a moment of passion, when your flesh is overriding the spiritual side, you actually look at a bowl of beans and you compare it with the inheritance of the father and you say, "What good is this inheritance to me because I want this right now?" That is how it works.

The Bible says that he sold his birthright. He sold his birthright. He said, "Sell me this birthright this day." And he says in verse 32, "I am at the point of death. What good is this birthright to me?" I am telling you what, in a physical sense, it happens in the Old Testament with Esau and Jacob, but that forms the New Testament principle that he gave away his right of the firstborn and lost his inheritance. How many times have I told you? Life is a series of choices and a series of trade-offs. You find yourself in good position this morning or terrible position this morning based on your ability to make trades and make decisions, physically and spiritually. Many a child of God has sold his birthright and the inheritance that goes with it for a mess of pottage. Yes, he still goes to heaven. Yes, he still winds up there, but he loses his rewards and he loses the inheritance, which is his clothing.

*Hebrews 12:16-17*

*Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.*

*For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.*

I want to tell you something, verse 17 is a strange verse. I have a sneaking suspicion that at the Judgment Seat of Christ, when you find out you lost your rewards and you find out that you have lost your inheritance, and you finally get into a place where now you see the mind of God and you have the mind of God incorporated in you, which you should have had while you were down here, and now you realize what you forsook down here, now you understand how you traded this for this, and now you come to the place where you absolutely realize, I promise you, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, there will be hundreds of thousands of Christians who are seeking their inheritance with tears, asking God for just five minutes to go back now that they know what they know. The truth of the matter is, you are not going back because there is no excuse for you not to know what you know then, because God has given you His mind in a book now. Do you know what the issue is? The things of this life that you sell that for. That is what the issue is.

SEC: Warnings: Losing Crowns vs. Selling Inheritance

Two warnings in your Bible. Last week, we saw Revelation 3:11, and we were talking about the crown. The Bible said there that "let no man take your crown." Then Revelation 16:15 is your second warning. It says in verse 15:

*Revelation 16:15*

*Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.*

Somebody is going to lose their garments, and they are going to walk naked, and somebody is going to see their shame. I am telling you, this thing is so clear in the Word of God that it is unbelievable. Yet God's people do not even have a clue.

At this point, I do want you to turn over to 2 Corinthians 5:1-10. I want you to see this. This is the second great passage in your Bible on the Judgment Seat of Christ. I told you the first one, the definitive passage, was in 1 Corinthians 3. This is the second greatest chapter and really goes along with it. You really cannot separate the two out, but here we go.

*2 Corinthians 5:1-10*

*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.*

*For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:*

*If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.*

*For we that in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*

*Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*

*Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

*(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

*We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

*Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.*

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

*Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.*

That is one of the greatest passages. After all the verses that I gave you in the last couple of weeks, you can obviously see the cross-references. I told you in Revelation 3:18, when we contrasted the Laodicean and the Philadelphia church, the Laodicean church was a church that lost its way with God and winds up at the Judgment Seat of Christ naked. Now you can make that passage back here to verse 10 in 2 Corinthians 5, when it says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." When you go over to Revelation 3:18, it tells that church that they are to "buy gold tried in the fire, that the shame of their nakedness do not appear." You can take the word "appear" there, take the word "appear" in 2 Corinthians 5, and it is the same appearing. That appearing is at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Somebody is going to show up without their clothes on at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and it is going to affect the right of the firstborn to an inheritance.

You do not think, do you? I know what is going through some of your mind right now because I am a human being too. I know what is going through some of your minds. You are thinking now, "What is the point of God stripping me naked without the Judgment Seat of Christ for all the world to see my nakedness?" Let me help you. Let me enlighten you. Let me broaden your horizons. Do you think for a moment, for a heartbeat, for a millisecond, do you think for a second that God is going to let them strip His Son naked on the cross and hang before the whole world to look at, and then let you just skate through with your fashion on? Do you really? Do you think that you will be able to take your winter fashion, your spring fashion, your fall fashion, or your summer fashion into the Judgment Seat of Christ with all you got when He hung on the cross naked for you, and the world laughed at Him, made fun of Him? No, no, no. He gets stripped naked, you get stripped naked. The only thing that keeps you from getting stripped naked then is to get stripped naked now. Let them laugh at you. Let them make fun of you. Let them laugh at you like they did Him. Let them ridicule you now like they did Him. You be naked to them as far as open and honest and transparent, that everybody sees what you are.

God is not going to allow His Son. I know some of you cannot grasp this because you have no concept of the death of Christ for you. I feel terribly sorry for you. But I am telling you this: when you understand the magnitude of His Son dying on the cross, the price that was paid, the shame, the open shame, the rebuke, the laughter, the mocking, and you just get a glimpse of it in

the New Testament. I gave you those Old Testament passages back there that show you the nakedness, the shame of it, and Him hanging there, and them laughing at Him, and the agony for you. Then He asks you to take your life and give it back to Him in the same fashion, bearing His reproach without the camp. When He is doing what He has once done, and when He comes back, He says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." He dumps all these crowns on you. You take the crowns and you say, "Lord, thank You, but praise God, all of my life, I realize that all I had was what You gave me, and I gave it for You. I cannot keep these crowns. All hail the power of Jesus' name, let angels prostrate fall and lay them at His feet." That is what it is about. Then He says, "Well, I will tell you what, well done, thou good and faithful."

I told you a couple of weeks ago about when we were talking about this, about when I was in the military, I got to be part of a guy who won the Medal of Honor. I never was so, I thought to myself many, many times, "What must it be like?" All the divisions lined up, the commanding generals down there, everybody is pumping the circumstance of everything going on. What a day that must have been. But you know what? Since I got saved and I looked at that thing and analyzed that thing, I will tell you something. There is a day coming, and it is all I care about. It is all that drives me. I have come to the place in life where most of the stuff out there, I could care less about. I do not care about being rich. I do not care about having this. I do not care about having that. I do not care about any of that stuff. I have one goal in my mind, and that is when I stand before Him, I just want Him to say one thing. I want Him to look down. I want Him to say to me, "Bob, well done, thou good and faithful servant." When He puts His arm around me and He says that, it will make all the Medal of Honor winners look like kid stuff. That is the day you are looking for. That is the day when the reality of getting home steps in. That is what every child of God needs to be looking for right now. That is the key.

He says, "We all must appear." Revelation 16:15, I gave it to you, talks about losing your garments. He says in 2 Corinthians 5:3 that you may not be found naked. Last week, I showed you that a man can take your crown. You follow the right man, the wrong man who leads you down the wrong path and takes you out of the Word of God. He will take your crown. You saw the parallels last week. I do not have time to get into them today. Some man will take your crown, but you sell your birthright on eBay. You look at all that God has given you and all God has for you, and you look at then and you look at what you want now. Then it is a simple trade. Put it on eBay. "I will sell my birthright for a new car. I will sell my birthright for a big house. I will sell my birthright for a life of sin. I will sell my birthright for this, for that." That is exact. Somebody may take your crown, but you sell your birthright. You give up your inheritance. That is on you and on me.

Look at 2 Timothy 2. Some man will steal your crown, but you make a conscious decision to put your inheritance, the right of the firstborn, up for sale. Let me tell you something, the devil will snatch it up like somebody finding an art masterpiece worth millions of dollars on eBay for twenty bucks.

*2 Timothy 2:11-12*

*It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:*

*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*

I gave you this verse a couple of weeks ago. I want you to analyze it with me one more time. "It is a faithful saying," he says, "For if we be dead with him, we shall live with him." Do you know what that means? That means you are now right to the firstborn. You are dead to the world. You live for Him. You have been born again. "If we suffer," that is your job right now. Suffer as He suffered. "If we suffer, we shall reign with him." There is your inheritance. You do not reign at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You reign in the Millennium. If you suffer now, you reign then. "If we deny him," sell your birthright, "he will deny us." Not that you are His child. The context of what He denies is your reign. It is that simple. He denies you your reign because you do not choose to see the big picture of what is going on. He denies us our reign because we sell our birthright. The right of the firstborn means nothing to us. We would sell it in a minute for a bowl of chili. That is what it is all about.

It comes down to God's people. Some man can take your crown, but you offer up your own birthright. Esau looked at the circumstances. All he saw was his own fleshly desires. He got himself rationalized in a place that he was going to die, and he is at the point of death. "Now that I am about to die, what good is the birthright?" We have seen him there. I have seen him there. I have seen young men say, "Why do I have to serve God now? I am still young. I am going to just do what I want to do, and when I get older, I have plenty of time to serve God." The devil will get out in fifteen minutes, and you are dumb enough to buy it. Of course, the only part of that is, the longer you go in sin, the less chance you have got to turn back around to God. That is all. You have God's people amassing everything they have down here because they think this is life. This is what it is all about. What a rude awakening it is going to be in that day. What a reality it is going to be from the myth that is portrayed among God's people, that they live their lives for their own self, their own purpose. Your pottage is your own life and what you want. That is where it is.

We do not understand the reality that we are here for one purpose, for one reason. We are a church for one purpose, for one reason: to suffer together for Him. To put it on the line, to lay it out, to give everything we have back to Him and say, "God, all right, here we are. We are in the foxhole, we are in the mud, we are in the battle, we are going to win this war no matter what it takes, and we are going to stay on the firing line, and when we get over there, we will take a break." We cannot get there. Too many things in life take us from that.

SEC: You're Not Home Yet

I had a friend of mine years and years ago, he was a missionary, a good man. He is dead now. This guy had spent thirty or forty years on the mission field, way back in the Philippine islands, way back from Manila, way back there past Baguio, way back there where there was hardly anybody around. He gave his whole life to that thing. In the course of thirty or forty years, your friends back here lose touch with you. You have churches that support you, you have people that, but a lot of the ties go, people die. Forty years, thirty years is a long time. Finally, his health was really bad, and he had to leave the mission field. He was about sixty-five or sixty-six now. He told me this story; I have never forgotten it.

He said to me, "You know," he said, "I did not have the money for an airplane ticket." He put everything he had in the mission field. So he said, "I tried to take a ship from the Philippines, there at Manila, going to the West Coast." He said, "It took about two weeks to get from Manila to there." He says, "And it was a very depressing time for me. I have got to tell you," he says, "I was somewhat angry because I did not want to leave the mission field. I was bitter because I felt like that I had more to give. I did not understand why God was bringing me home." He said, "I just had a lot of things." Then he says, "The depression had set in that I was all by myself." He had lost his wife; she had died some years before. I do not know that they had any children.

He said, "You know what, Bob?" He said, "I will never forget the day that we pulled into the dock there in San Francisco." He says, "There was a rock concert group that was on the same ship with me." He says, "And I was down in the lower levels, in the third class, second class." He says, "And they were up in first class." He said, "When we pulled into the dock," he said, "I was feeling so sorry for myself and so alone, and so dealing with all these emotions of leaving the mission field and all of the things that go along with that." He says, "I remember," he said, "when we pulled up to the dock, and I was on the side rail, there must have been five hundred people with banners welcoming this rock group to America." He said, "It was the final straw." He said, "I just," he said, "I just fell apart." He said, "I got my stuff." He said, "I was really feeling sorry for myself." He said, "I feel so stupid even telling you this story, but maybe it will help you." Boy, it ever did.

He said, "I am walking down that thing." He says, "Everybody is yelling and screaming and holding signs." He says, "I looked back around, and the group is up there waving on the deck; they had not come ashore yet." All the girls and all the guys, and there were five hundred or six hundred people there meeting them. "I remember saying to myself, 'Lord, I gave thirty years of my life on the mission field. I gave it everything I had. I never asked for anything. And now when I come home,' he says, 'a godless, worldly rock group has somebody waiting for them, and I do not even know where I am going. There is not anybody here to pick me up.' He says, 'I do not understand it.'" He says, "At that exact moment, it was like God put His arm around me and He says, 'Son, that is because you are not home yet.'"

You are not home yet. This is not your home. Do not get comfortable down here. This is not it. There is going to be discouragement. There is going to be heartache. There are going to be things in this life that hurt. Job said, "This life is a veil of tears." There is going to be disappointment. There is going to be heartache. There is going to be death. There are going to be times that you feel like you are alone. There are going to be times when you, in the middle of a battle, do not feel like anybody understands. There are going to be times when you do stupid things. There are going to be times when you feel all the oppression of all the hordes of hell around you. There are going to be times that the devil lines up with all his stuff to stop you. There are going to be times when everybody in this world is going to seemingly leave you, forsake you. The bottom line is, when we feel like we are all by ourselves and we have come to the place where God has forsaken us, I just got something for you: you are not home yet. That is the way it is supposed to be down here. But what a grand time it will be when we get up there.

You want to make sure you have your crowns, and you want to make sure you do not sell your inheritance. You want to make sure the old song says that I quoted to you last week in our hymnal, "Must I go in empty handed?" Do not go in empty handed. No reason for it. No reason for it all, except you look at what you have here, what God has for you, and you sell this one on eBay for something you want down here. That is all it is. It is that simple. Your crowns always deal with the Judgment Seat of Christ. Your Millennium inheritance always deals with your garments in eternity, in the Millennium. Do not think for a second God is going to let Him hang naked. The greatest shame of all the world that I can think of for all the world to see is a son of God, the firstborn of God, in a glorified body for a thousand years, walking naked in the midst of the literal physical spiritual kingdom. Everybody knowing that that person did not do a thing for God, that lost everything. You have to bear the shame now for twenty years, thirty years, or you bear it there for a thousand. I do not even have to pray about that. I am not even clapping on being fully clothed. If I just get a towel, I will be satisfied.

Every head bowed, every eye closed. Now maybe you are here this morning and you heard what I said this morning, and it all comes down to this: it comes down to you getting a saving knowledge.