

Facing Giants in Life

Next week we have our Celebration Sunday, so this week we finish up the messages for our Spiritual Growth Campaign. Today we look at what you're investing your life in now.

Your ability to dream is a God given gift. It makes you different from animals - they don't envision the future. They may look forward to things they know from experience are coming up, but they don't have the capacity to envision a meaningful future in life. As someone made in his image, God gave you the ability to visualize the future. And without a vision for your life you're just drifting; letting life happen to you. This is one of the greatest gifts God has given you and we're more like our Creator when we are creative about it.

The problem is, for every person who has a dream, who figures out their purpose - which is far more than just your job - and heads out after it, there are nine people reluctant or afraid to get started. They see the barriers they'll face and let them become giants, standing in their way. Those giants can be financial problems; relational problems; problems with health. How do you face the giants in your life?

Fortunately we have a wonderful story in the Bible that shows us how to deal with giants in life. Most of you know the basics of a duel that happened three thousand years ago, but let's look at some detail: The land it happened in has a mountain range running down its eastern side that has some famous cities like Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The western end is a flat coastal plain bordering the Mediterranean. That's where Tel Aviv is today. In between the plain and the mountains there's an area called the Shephelah - a series of valleys and ridges that run east to west and connects the plain with the mountains. If you've ever been to Israel you'll know that it's one of the most beautiful regions.

It is also a strategically important region. Those valleys are how people in the plains have to advance into the mountains. So time and time again in history, battles have been fought for control of the Shefela.

That's what happened three thousand years ago with the Philistines and the Israelites. The Philistines originally came from Crete as a sea faring people and they occupied the plains in and around what is now Tel Aviv, but they wanted to conquer the kingdom of Israel which was clustered in the mountains. So they had to climb through one of those valleys.

King Saul of Israel caught wind of what they were doing and brought his army down from the mountains to meet them. The two sides meet in an area of the Shefela called the Valley of Elah. It's a valley with ridges to the north and south. The Israelites dug in along the northern ridge. The Philistines dug in along the southern ridge. It's a standoff. Neither could attack because you'd have to come down the ridge onto the valley floor, then up the other ridge. Uphill and exposed.

So it's a deadlock. And they sit there for weeks just looking at each other. Finally the Philistines sent a mighty warrior, a giant, down on to the valley floor and he challenged the Israelites to send a mighty warrior of their own to duke it out. They would settle the conflict in a one on one combat - something that occasionally happened in ancient times. Two warriors, one from each side would fight in single combat on behalf of their armies. Each side would accept the outcome.

So this giant stood there waiting but no one had the guts to take him on. He's too big. He's outfitted top to bottom in incredible armor. He's really a terrifying figure. Nobody will take him on except for this kid who comes up to King Saul and says I'll do it. Saul was dubious. He said, "You can't take on a giant warrior." The kid says I'm a shepherd. I've killed wild beasts in my day. Finally Saul realized he didn't have a choice - no one else was volunteering. This was all he had.

He tried to give the kid his armor but the kid refused, picked up some stones, put them in his pouch, and headed down the hill with his shepherd's staff and bag of rocks.

Goliath, the giant, looked at him and said: "*Come here,*" he said to David, "*and I'll feed your flesh to the wild birds and the wild animals!*" Like, come! I'm going to chew you up! But then the giant saw all he had was a shepherd's staff and a little bag and was insulted. He's the biggest warrior anywhere and they send this kid up against him. He says, "*Am I some sort of dog that you come at me with sticks?*" They get even closer and David says "*I come against you in the name of the Lord of heavenly forces.*" He reaches into his bag, takes out a rock, puts it in a sling, whirls it around and the rock flies and hits the giant between the eyes. The giant falls over and the kid runs up, grabs the giant's sword and chops off his head. Israel wins the day and the Philistines go back to the coast.

That's the story of David and Goliath. We use the story as a metaphor about improbable victories. The one in a million long shot goes up against the overwhelming favorite and wins. We think of David as a one in a million long shot because he's a kid who works with sheep - a farmer. And he's normal size, up against a huge guy who's an experienced warrior. Beside all that, Goliath is heavily armed and decked out in head to toe armor. All David has is a staff and a sling.

But let's put aside modern impressions of ancient times and look at the situation in context: Ancient armies had three kinds of warriors: people who rode on horseback or in chariots – cavalry; foot soldiers wearing full body armor and carrying swords and shields - infantry; and people with spears, bows and arrows and slings - the artillery. Very often when we tell the story of David and Goliath, we act like all David had was a slingshot like we see today - a child's toy. Slingshots are generally not deadly weapons. David did not have a slingshot. He had a sling - a leather pouch with two long ropes attached. You put a rock in the middle of the pouch and whirled it around and let one of the ropes go and the rock would be propelled forward.

The rock David used was probably a very dense stone called barium sulfate which is common in the Valley of Elah.

An experienced slinger would rotate that sling six or seven times a second. When released, the rock would travel at 35 meters per second. Once released, the rock would reach Goliath in less than a second. So he wouldn't have time to figure out what's happening before, boom, it's hit him in the head. If we do the math on the ballistics at that distance, that rock had a stopping power equal to a bullet from a 45 caliber hand gun. This is a serious weapon.

We know from ancient documents that experienced slingers – and David was an experienced slinger – could be incredibly accurate. They could hit birds in flight. So there's no question that this is a weapon that's entirely capable of taking out Goliath. In fact in ancient warfare, slingers were often used to take out infantry before they got too close.

Goliath, being heavy infantry, was expecting a battle with another heavy infantry man. That's why he says, "*Come to me...*" Come close enough to have hand to hand combat. But David's not idiot enough to try hand to hand combat with a guy twice his size. He's going to use the weapon he's spent years training with as a shepherd.

So David has superior technology AND he is filled with the Spirit of the Lord. Why call him an underdog?

But there are also some things to note about Goliath. He was supposed to be an undefeatable warrior, but if you read the account there are details inconsistent with that.

Notice that he's led onto the valley floor by an shield bearer. That's not how it would normally work. Why is the shield bearer going ahead of him? Notice that when David gets close he sees he's got a staff but he asks David about his "*sticks*". Endocrinologists - medical experts - have pointed out some things about Goliath:

First, his size. He's huge. Head and shoulders above anyone else of his day. When people are that big, there's usually some physiological explanation. Goliath most likely has condition called acromegaly. That's caused by a tumor on the pituitary gland that causes over production of human growth hormone. Most of the giants in human history had this. Andre the Giant, the professional wrestler had it as did Richard Kiel, the actor who played, "Jaws" in two James Bond movies and the tallest documented man of all time, Robert Wadlow who was eight foot eleven.

It's quite likely Goliath had the same thing and there are several things that tend to come along with that. Many people with this condition have vision problems. So Goliath had to be careful because he couldn't see too far away and needed to follow his shield bearer to the valley floor. When he says "*Am I some sort of dog that you come at me with sticks?.*" He can't tell that it's a shepherds staff. He just sees sticks.

For close in fighting he was a mighty warrior but the very thing that gave him his advantage also caused weakness - he couldn't see that David might have advantages over him. That's an important lesson: Giants may not be all they seem. The obstacles we face in our life are often not nearly as insurmountable as they appear. Look closely and you'll see a different truth. Giants can be slain. Particularly by those who have the Spirit of the Lord in their hearts.

But David actually had to fight four other kinds of giants before he fought Goliath. They weren't physical giants but they were the kind of giants you're far more likely to have to face. They can feel just as big and intimidating and can keep you from fulfilling what God puts in your heart.

The first giant you usually face when you have a dream is **1. The Giant of Delay**. God gives you purpose but God doesn't often fulfill it the next day. There's a time delay.

In the chapter before this, the prophet Samuel was sent by God to the town of Bethlehem to anoint one of Jesse's sons as the next king of Israel. The existing king, Saul, was still very much alive. But God had already decided Saul's days were over. So Samuel finds Jesse and goes to have a look at his sons. Jesse showed him seven of the eight from oldest to youngest. None is the one. Samuel asked, are there any others? Jesse says one more - the youngest, David, out tending sheep. They bring him in. Samuel says, that's the guy. And he anoints him as the king of Israel.

And then... nothing happened. Nothing happened for a long time. No change in his life. He'd been given a purpose, but at first nothing much changed. There was a long delay between when David was anointed and when he actually saw the fulfillment of that decades later. In David's case he was held back to tend sheep. In verse 12-15 it says, *"...David was Jesse's son,... (David was the youngest.) ...three older sons followed Saul, but David went back and forth from Saul's side to shepherd his father's flock in Bethlehem."* His father kept him at home to take care of the sheep part of the family business. In life, there are going to be people, situations, and circumstances that may hold you back from your purpose.

Some people are held back because of their age or race or gender or because someone decided they weren't pretty or handsome or smart enough or whatever. This is a barrier we have to break through. There will be people who want to hold you back and the sad part is, sometimes the ones who hold you back the most can be those who also love you the most. In this case it's David's dad and dad isn't going for it! No. He says, Get back there and tend the sheep. Jesse can't see his son being important. Besides, he'd lose a worker.

God has a plan for your life. But so do lots of people. When God's plan contradicts someone else's plan, they may try to hold you back and that can delay things.

Then Jesse sends David to the battlefield, but just as an errand: deliver food to his brothers. He hears Goliath taunting the army and no one's doing anything. They're scared to death. It's the second barrier you'll face in finding and fulfilling your dream: **2. The Giant of Discouragement.** We face discouragement when we allow our fears to overcome us. This happens when you or people around you don't believe it can be done or that you can do it. It's a consequence of fear and thinking it's impossible to make any difference.

Goliath had created a climate of fear. And everyone had decided they were going to lose; that no one could beat him. Verses 8-11 say, *"Select one of your men, and let him come down against me. If he is able to fight me and kill me, then we will become your slaves, but if I overcome him and kill him, then you will become our slaves and you will serve us. I insult Israel's troops today!" The Philistine continued, 'Give me an opponent, and we'll fight!' When Saul and all Israel heard what the Philistine said, they were distressed and terrified."*

They're demoralized, gripped by anxiety, feel hopeless. Have you ever been in a situation where everyone around you thought this way? Maybe something like, "In this situation no one can do anything. We can't solve it. It's never going to happen." They're discouraged and conventional wisdom says there's nothing that can be done about the problem.

Let me tell you something. Conventional wisdom is often wrong. It is often wrong.

Goliath challenged thousands of people - a whole army - and no one did anything. Sometimes a solution has to come from outside those who have been living with the situation up until now. You need fresh eyes. Someone who knows, "We can do this!" The crowd was wrong. Just because everyone says it, doesn't make it so. The crowd is often wrong.

Somebody had to challenge the status quo. Why had everyone given up? Why had they gotten so discouraged? It was because they were listening to the wrong voice. They were listening to the giant every day. Verse 16 says *"For forty days straight the Philistine came out and took his stand, both morning and evening."* They're listening to this guy day after day after day. It's no wonder they got discouraged.

Question: Who are you listening to? Who says it can't be done? Who's telling you that you're not able to do it? If you listen to negative people long enough, you get negative. It's contagious. Maybe one of the best things you could do is stop listening to these 24 hour TV news networks. It's negative, negative, 24 hours. If you listen to it, you know what you become? A negative bitter person. If you listen to people who are against things you end up being against everything. Negativity, fear, and discouragement are contagious.

Let me give you some important advice. Don't hang out with fearful people. If you do you'll become fearful. If you hang out with bitter people you become bitter. Hang out with angry people you become angry. Hang out with negative people you become negative. It's contagious.

The third dream buster is **3. The Giant of Disapproval**. David had to be willing to face the disapproval of people around him. You will too. The reason why most people don't ever go after a dream is they're afraid of disapproval; afraid of rejection. In this case David's own brother questions his motives and disapproved of David going after the giant.

Most of us want everyone to like us and praise what we do. But if you go after God's dream for your life, I guarantee you: There will be nay-sayers and critics, misunderstandings and attacks. People will judge you because they don't get it. David's own brother questioned his motivation, treated him with disdain and disregarded him. In verse 28-29 notice his conversation between the brothers: *"When David's oldest brother Eliab heard him talking to the soldiers, he got very mad at David. 'Why did you come down here?' he said. 'Who is watching those few sheep for you in the wilderness? I know how arrogant you are and your devious plan: you came down just to see the battle!' 'What did I do wrong this time?' David replied. 'It was just a question!'"*

This sort of thing is common in families - the people closest to you can't see it; can't imagine you accomplishing something that they've never imagined themselves. It may be envy. It may be jealousy. It may be they think they know your weaknesses. But they don't realize God's strength. They think they know you but they don't know you like God knows you.

If you have big vision, people ask, "Do you think you're special or something?" That's the wrong question. The question isn't, who do we think we are? The question is, who do we think God is? Let the size of your God determine the size of your goal. If you have a big God you better have some big goals. God doesn't give wimpy dreams. If it's from God, it will be so big you're guaranteed failure unless you depend on God for it happen.

When God gives you a dream that others are afraid to attempt, if you accept it and go for it, you may be misjudged, maligned, misinterpreted and misunderstood. You have to decide what matters more— the approval of other people or the approval of God. I decided long ago that the approval of God is more important to me than the approval of people. It's not about what you think of me. It's about what God thinks.

Then there's the fourth thing David had to face before facing Goliath: **4. The Giant of Doubt**. Am I capable of this? Am I up to the task? Can I actually do what God is asking? The thing is, there are people around you who will tell you, you can't. In David's case the expert doubted his ability.

King Saul was an expert on war - he'd been in battle his entire life. So David goes to see King Saul. Here's verses 32-33: *"Don't let anyone lose courage because of this Philistine!" David told Saul. 'I, your servant, will go out and fight him!' [Let me say this: Confidence in God is often misinterpreted as cockiness. A lot of people might think a person is cocky when they're just a person of faith. It's not that they think that they can do it; it's that they know God can do it.] 'You can't go out and fight this Philistine,' Saul answered David. 'You are still a boy. But he's been a warrior since he was a boy!'"*

Sometimes experts will say you can't do it. That's enough to make you start doubting yourself. But experts are often wrong. When Rick Warren wrote the Purpose Driven Life, he got a letter from the editor. He framed it. It said "This book will never work. Nobody's going to read forty chapters." That book is the number one best-selling book other than the Bible. Experts are often very wrong.

So how do you defeat these giants that can keep you from being the person God wants you to be? You do the four things that David did to defeat them before he got to Goliath.

1. I Remember How God Has Helped Me in the Past. That's the first thing you do to face the giants and fulfill your dream. When I remember ways God has helped me in the past it gives me confidence for the future. This is what David did. In verse 36, David says to King Saul when everyone tells him it can't be done *"Your servant has fought both lions and bears. [He did this protecting his sheep as a shepherd.] This uncircumcised Philistine will be just like one of them because he has insulted the army of the living God. The Lord,' David added, 'who rescued me from the power of both lions and bears, will rescue me from the power of this Philistine.'" His confidence comes from remembering God's help in the past.*

2. I Use the Tools that God Has Given Me Now. I don't wait for something I don't have. I don't sit around worrying that I don't have enough money; enough education; enough connections; enough opportunities; enough this or that. No. You start with the tools you've got right now. You don't wait for your ship to come in. You swim out to it.

David goes to see Saul and Saul says if you're going to fight this guy use my armor. How ridiculous! David's a small guy. Saul's a tall, grown man. David has no experience wearing armor. Verses 38-40 say, *"Then Saul*

dressed David in his own gear, putting a coat of armor on him and a bronze helmet on his head. David strapped his sword on over the armor, but he couldn't walk around well because he'd never tried it before. 'I can't walk in this,' David told Saul, 'because I've never tried it before.' So he took them off. He then grabbed his staff and chose five smooth stones from the streambed. He put them in the pocket of his shepherd's bag and with sling in hand went out to the Philistine."

Let me just say this: When you start going after your dream that God has given you some people are going to oppose you, but others will say, Yeah go after your dream but do it my way. The problem with that is, you're not them. God made you to be you. And God's going to use you to fulfill the dream that he has for you. If you try to do it the way somebody else did it, it's like trying to wear Saul's armor. You can't wear it because you're not Saul. Often people will try to load some things on you that are just too heavy for you and you're not going to fulfill your dream that way.

The third thing he did was, **3. I Ignore the Dream-busters!** Ignore dream-busters in your life. Notice that as David's going to take on a giant that everyone else is scared to take on, he doesn't get a single word of encouragement from anyone. Not from his dad or his brothers or the soldiers he was letting off the hook by taking on the giant, or the king whose reputation was on the line. And the giant certainly wasn't impressed, It says, *"When the Philistine looked David over, he sneered at David because he was just a boy."*

If you're going to go after your dream you're going to have to encourage yourself in the Lord because sometimes no one else will. This is very different from simply having a positive mental attitude. I'm not against positive thinking. Considering the alternative I think you ought to be a positive thinker. But this is far deeper. When you encourage yourself in the Lord there is a bedrock trust in God's grace, God's provision, God's kindness, God's power. You're trusting in God. It's not just a positive mental attitude.

The fourth thing David did: **4. I expect God to Help Me for God's Glory!** I love what David says to Goliath as he goes onto the field: *"...David told the Philistine, 'You are coming against me with sword, spear, and scimitar, but I come against you in the name of the Lord of heavenly forces, the God of Israel's army, the one you've insulted. Today the Lord will hand you over to me. I will strike you down and cut off your head! ...Then the whole world will know that there is a God on Israel's side. And all those gathered here will know that the Lord doesn't save by means of sword and spear. The Lord owns this war, and he will hand all of you over to us!'"*

What are you expecting God to do in your life? I can tell you this: Except in extraordinary circumstances, God generally does what you expect God to do. The Bible says *"According to your faith it will be done unto you."* The Bible says *"Without faith it is impossible to please God."* The Bible says *"Whatever is not of faith is sin."* According to your faith it will be done unto you. You get to choose how much God does in your life. It's about how much you choose to trust.

You have no idea how much your unbelief could be limiting you and you have no idea how much it could be limiting someone you love. Is your unbelief limiting your spouse? Is your unbelief limiting your child? Your friend? People in our church? Don't hold them back when God has a great dream for their life. It's not your dream for them; it's God's dream for them. You need to say I'm not going to let anyone else's unbelief hold me back and I'm not going to let my unbelief hold anyone else back.

Next Sunday we're ending this campaign, Transformed! So that is the day to start a new dream; that is the day to start going after it. When everybody else is saying you can't do it – discouragement. When you're full of doubt – Are you going to trust God? And when there's been a delay – people have held you back. And when people disapprove, you just say sorry I've got to do what God's asking them to do.

The Rules of Inheritance

by Andrine Redsteer

Laws of intestate succession apply when a person fails to make a valid will.

The rules of inheritance are set according to state law. Each state has its own statutes that explain which relatives have priority and how much inheritance they are entitled to receive. These statutes, known as "laws of intestate succession," differ from state to state. However, there is a priority of heirs common in many state statutes.

Intestate Vs. Testate

Certain rules apply when an individual dies with a will or without one. A person dies without a valid will is said to have died intestate; a person who dies with a valid will is said to have died testate.

Although state laws differ regarding wills, most require a person to be at least 18 years of age and capable of understanding the effect of making a will. Most states allow parents to disinherit their children in a will, if they so choose. However, a married person may not usually disinherit her spouse, unless her spouse agreed to forfeit his right to inheritance via a prenuptial agreement.

Spouses, Children and Grandchildren

Surviving spouses are typically given priority under intestate succession laws. Generally, if someone dies married and has no surviving children, her surviving spouse inherits her whole estate. It's also a common rule for children to receive all of their deceased

A Priceless Inheritance

If you've made a will, you're aware of how much (or – let's be honest – *how little*) your children will inherit.

In terms of material possessions, ours would receive:

- ~ a hefty slice of overgrown land
- ~ a couple of (aging) cats
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And I haven't even itemized the *ton* of household clutter (that's just a rough estimate. I suspect it's closer to two tons). That's everything we own, entrusted to these two.

Our Inheritance:

God's inheritance for His children? You can't see it; you can't sell it. It is nontransferable. It was bought and paid for, *by Jesus Himself*. It is fully insured, *by the Holy Spirit Himself*.

Matthew 25:34 (NLT)

³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.

Psalm 16:5 (NLT)

⁵ LORD, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing.

You guard all that is mine.

God's children inherit nothing less than His Kingdom, shared with His Son, Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:4 says this kingdom is priceless, pure, beyond corruption, unfading. It is "reserved in heaven" for those who belong to God.

And it's *God Himself* who "has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light" (Colossians 1:12) through His gift of Jesus. Receiving Jesus means receiving a place in God's family, as an heir. We already possess the first installment of this inheritance, by the way: the Holy Spirit's life in us is a down payment, a guarantee of what's to come.

2 Corinthians 1:22 (NLT)

BLESSED WITH A HEAVENLY INHERITANCE

Ephesians 1:11-14

Ephesians 1:11-14 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who^[a] is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

INTRODUCTION: A man relates the following story: "I got off at the train depot one day as a tramp. For a year I had begged on the streets. Badly in need of food, I touched a man on the shoulder and said, "Mister, please give me a dime." As soon as I saw his face, I recognized my aging father. "Don't you know me?" I asked. Throwing his arms around me, he cried, "Oh, my son, I have found you at last! All I have is yours!" Think of it -- I was a tramp who begged for 10 cents from a man I didn't know was my father, when for 18 years he had been looking for me to give me all he possessed!" Many Christians wonder through the world not knowing what they have "in Christ." They think they are penniless but really have vast spiritual wealth promised to them by their Father.

BODY

I. WE HAVE AN INHERITANCE FROM GOD. (Verse 11)

A. The inheritance is a promise of a blessing to be extended in the future.

1. It is just like a will that has been executed promising future wealth. One mentioned in that will does not now enjoy all of those blessings but has the sure promise of them, as long as the will is not changed.

2. The inheritance of God has been promised through the last will and testament of Jesus Christ.

a. Hebrews 9:15-17 "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives."

B. Notice the progression that Paul says concerning the inheritance.

1. It starts with God planning the scheme of redemption from before the beginning of the world.

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Matthew 25:34 (NLT)

³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.

Psalm 16:5 (NLT)

⁵ LORD, you alone are my inheritance, my cup of blessing.

You guard all that is mine.

God's children inherit nothing less than His Kingdom, shared with His Son, Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:4 says this kingdom is priceless, pure, beyond corruption, unfading. It is "reserved in heaven" for those who belong to God.

And it's *God Himself* who "has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light" (Colossians 1:12) through His gift of Jesus. Receiving Jesus means receiving a place in God's family, as an heir. We already possess the first installment of this inheritance, by the way: the Holy Spirit's life in us is a down payment, a guarantee of what's to come.

2 Corinthians 1:22 (NLT)

BLESSED WITH A HEAVENLY INHERITANCE

Ephesians 1:11-14

Ephesians 1:11-14 New King James Version (NKJV)

¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who^[a] is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

INTRODUCTION: A man relates the following story: "I got off at the train depot one day as a tramp. For a year I had begged on the streets. Badly in need of food, I touched a man on the shoulder and said, "Mister, please give me a dime." As soon as I saw his face, I recognized my aging father. "Don't you know me?" I asked. Throwing his arms around me, he cried, "Oh, my son, I have found you at last! All I have is yours!" Think of it -- I was a tramp who begged for 10 cents from a man I didn't know was my father, when for 18 years he had been looking for me to give me all he possessed!" Many Christians wonder through the world not knowing what they have "in Christ." They think they are penniless but really have vast spiritual wealth promised to them by their Father.

BODY

I. WE HAVE AN INHERITANCE FROM GOD. (Verse 11)

A. The inheritance is a promise of a blessing to be extended in the future.

1. It is just like a will that has been executed promising future wealth. One mentioned in that will does not now enjoy all of those blessings but has the sure promise of them, as long as the will is not changed.

2. The inheritance of God has been promised through the last will and testament of Jesus Christ.

a. Hebrews 9:15-17 "And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives."

B. Notice the progression that Paul says concerning the inheritance.

1. It starts with God planning the scheme of redemption from before the beginning of the world.