

KANSAS COMMUNITIES MINISTRY UPDATE

"My objective is to know Christ in my own life in ever-increasing depth and to make disciples and develop laborers at all times, under any conditions, in every place I go."

Psalm 63:4-6

"For this reason I will praise you while I live; in your name I will lift up my hands. As if with choice meat you satisfy my soul. My mouth joyfully praises you, whenever I remember you on my bed, and think about you during the nighttime hours." (NET Bible—used by permission)

Establishing/Equipping

A number of years ago, there was a discipleship program in a church that sounded fantastic. It was an intensive multi-year program covering all the major doctrines of the church. At the conclusion of the three years, the participants were required to take an extensive test covering what they had learned as well as defending their positions verbally. Wow!

However, one of the participants, who did very well on defending the true doctrines of Scripture and knew and believed all the correct answers, seemed to lack love. She displayed a certain lack of warmth, of caring, of loving.

This reminded me of 1 Cor. 13:2 where Paul cautions that even if he has "all knowledge" but does not have love, he is "nothing." True discipleship includes more than head knowledge. We must model and teach how to **love** well!

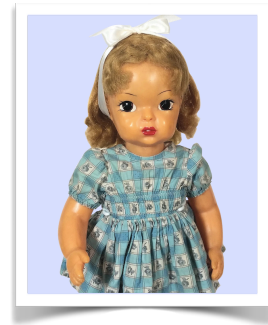
Being God's Inheritance

by David Dennis

Did you ever have an old toy that you loved so much, the wear and tear on it started to show?

Apparently Terry Lee dolls were quite the thing a number of years ago. My wife had one and she absolutely loved it! She had it for a number of years and as the years went by, I'm sure it started to

show its age. Perhaps the ears started to fall off. Maybe the paint started to chip off or the arms became loose. She's not sure where that little prized possession is nowadays.



Now imagine that some antique doll collector found that little doll in a treasure chest one day. He knew that it was worth \$1000, even though it was beat up and "well-loved." Then imagine that he found the original owner, my wife, and was able to buy it and give it back to her. She then could pass it down to her daughter and to her daughter's daughter as an inheritance.

That's kind of a silly story but seems to capture part of what Paul is telling us in Ephesians 1:18 as he prays for the Ephesian believers: "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints." The New Living Translation states it as "I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people **who are his rich and glorious inheritance.**" (cont. on p. 3)

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Goads and Nails

Excerpt from Goads and Nails
Vol. 1, pp 123-125

"People will do with others what you have done with them, not what you ask them to do with others."

Howard Hendricks, retired professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, described it this way. He related that he had stood before his class and told them that they needed to get involved with others in Bible studies. The following year he traveled out to where his seminary students were doing pastoral work in local churches. As he sat in the pew, he heard them tell the congregation that they needed to be involved with others in a Bible study. The students were not involved in any Bible studies themselves, they were simply telling others what they had been told.

I am in the process of learning to view others with a concern, not only as to what they might need, but more importantly, as to what those to whom they minister in the future might need. This requires looking beyond them to succeeding generations who will need a pattern for their lives and ministry as well.

Paul (Phil. 4:9) states, "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice." -Richard Spann

We are looking to be comfortable

by Richard Spann

"We are looking to be comfortable. God is looking for us to be conformed."

— Jerry Bridges

The world around us is perpetually committed to comfort. This includes our home, cars, work environment, hobbies, leisure activities and various personal items of use. All advertisements seem to focus on those products that make our lives easier. The slang expression "take it easy" characterizes our culture. We, as followers of Christ, are exposed to this as well. The world around us is constantly seeking to press us into its mold. (Romans 12:2) This culture which looks to be comfortable may influence our spiritual life as well. Do we select churches, speakers and literature largely based on the premise that we will be comforted by what we hear and read? Are commitments that require effort and discipline largely avoided? Is comfort preferred over sacrifice? Do we desire the benefits of discipleship without its cost? Do we rejoice in His provisions which bring comfort and shirk from the cost which is necessary for us to conform? Our generation is not alone in seeking to be comfortable rather than to be conformed. Simon Peter demonstrates this as well when he joyfully exclaims on the mountain "Lord, it is good for us to be here." (Matthew 17:4) One week earlier his statement was "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" (Matthew 16:22) Glory? Yes! The Cross? No! Comfort? Yes! Conformed? No!

God's desire that we be conformed is clearly stated in Romans 8:29. "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers." It is also stated a little differently in Ephesians 4:11-13. "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Paul describes this as "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21) This conformity of which Paul speaks is dependent upon a process.

What, then, is our responsibility? Someone has defined this as "Our response to His ability." What should our response be? If we desire conformity, if we seek it in our lives, if we pray that His will be accomplished, then we can rest in His ability. We can rest in His promise given to us in Philippians 1:6. "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

This likeness of His Son, expressed in the body of Christ, that is, the Church, will be to His everlasting Glory! "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Ephesians 3:21) KJV It is my prayer that conformity to Christ in your life will be to the ever-increasing glory of the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (Read the entire blog here: <https://kansasnavs.org/2019/03/>)

Being God's Inheritance (continued from page one)

What does Paul mean by "his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance"? In what way are we believers *God's* inheritance?

From bible.org <https://bible.org/seriespage/lesson-10-what-god-wants-you-know-ephesians-118-19>:

New Testament scholar F.F. Bruce writes (The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians [Eerdmans], p. 270), "That God should set such high value on a community of sinners, rescued from perdition and still bearing too many traces of their former state, might well seem incredible were it not made clear that he sees them in Christ, as from the beginning he chose them in Christ." Why did God do this? Bruce adds (p. 271), "Paul prays here that his readers may appreciate the value which God places on them, his plan to accomplish his eternal purpose through them as the first fruits of the reconciled universe of the future, in order that their lives may be in keeping with this high calling and that they may accept in grateful humility the grace and glory thus lavished on them."

Later in Ephesians, Paul likens the husband and wife relationship to Christ and the church: Eph 5:25-27 NKJV - 25 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, 26 that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, 27 that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish." When we place our faith in Christ alone for salvation, we are, at that



moment, cleansed and holy in God's sight. However, (and how well we know it personally!) we are not holy in our daily walk. As we walk in obedience, trusting His loving sovereign plan in our lives, submitting ourselves to Him daily, abiding in Him, we grow in that holiness. It takes 100% God and 100% us to grow in that sanctification. God does His part and we submit and are obedient, doing our part. 2Peter 3:18 NKJV - "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him [be] the glory both now and forever. Amen."

So remember that *you indeed are God's glorious inheritance*. His holy people, Jews and Gentiles, tattered and torn, weak, failing, often lacking confidence in life, are God's glorious inheritance. *You are God's glorious inheritance*. Keep your eyes on Him as He changes you into a beautiful, restored, invaluable inheritance for Him!

Spotlight on Online Resources

♦*Kansas Navigators Media:*

Ray Hoo spoke to the Kansas Navigators on November 7, 2014 on “Words to Live By.” The three messages were “The unmistakable identification of a follower of Christ,” “The key to unlimited resources for life and service,” and “The indispensable for a significant life.” Hear all three messages here: <https://kansasnavs.org/media/2015-fall-conference/>



♦*Kansas Navigators blogs:*

Are you overwhelmed at times, ready to faint or give up? Dr. Spann shares insights from Luke 18:1 “And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” Read this powerful and practical blog here: <https://kansasnavs.org/2019/05/>

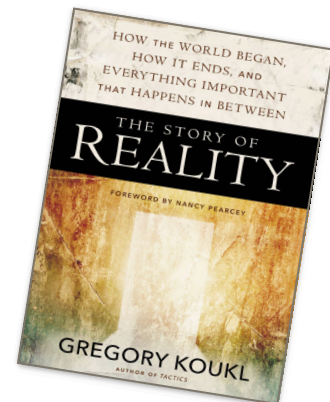
♦*Podcast “Making Disciples Naturally”*

Our 12-15 minute podcasts are published weekly each Saturday morning. How is God our “reward” and how do we walk in step with God? Our current podcast series relates insights from the life of Enoch. Find those podcasts at <https://kansasnavs.org/podcasts> or subscribe via Apple Podcasts, Overcast, Spotify, etc. (On our website you’ll need to place your cursor in the list of podcasts and “slide” them down to find the correct episode number.)

Featured resource: The Story of Reality

Greg Koukl (Stand to Reason: STR.org) is a brilliant, yet very accessible apologist. He has written an excellent book called “The Story of Reality: How the world began, how it ends, and everything important that happens in between.” This was one of the free books we gave away at the recent Men’s Retreat in April.

The book is an easy to read, easy to understand description of the Christian worldview and how it is far superior to other interpretations of reality. It would be excellent for a small group discussion or for someone who is trying to compare Christianity to other approaches. Sean McDowell, Biola University, says the book is “Clarifying and insightful for believers ... eye-opening and thought-provoking for nonbelievers. A book worth reading carefully.”



If you want a good basis for what you believe and how Christianity compares to other worldviews, take a look at this excellent resource!