

**TITLE: "Marks of the Believer's Birthright" (Part 3)**

**PASSAGE: 1 Peter 3:9b**

**THEME: *Partakers of grace give evidence of grace***

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**{Read Passage}**

**In Genesis 25 we are introduced to a man by the name of Esau**

Esau was t/first-born son of Isaac who, in turn was t/son of Abraham. Even tho he was t/first-born physically, he was not so spiritually. His twin brother, Jacob, second to exit t/womb was in reality first in t/plan of God.

**This was indeed God's plan from all eternity**

It was earlier in Gen. 25, that Rebekah, Isaac's childless wife, conceived t/twins (Jacob / Esau). During t/pregnancy t/children wrestled w/i her causing her to ask t/Lord what was happening. God's reply was ==>

**“Two nations are in your womb; And two peoples shall be separated from your body; And one people shall be stronger than the other; And the older shall serve the younger.”**

2 people / nations (Israel & Edom). Israel t/stronger, Edom t/weaker. The older son (Esau - older by mere minutes) would serve t/younger son, Jacob. In t/end, it's Jacob thru whom would come t/Messiah while Esau would prove himself reprobate & t/father of a reprobate nation.

**Those who are reprobate prove their godlessness by their lives**

Esau was no exception. And if we pick up t/story later in Gen. 25, we find that Esau, who is described as a "skillful hunter" (outdoorsman), came home 1 day extremely hungry.

While he was out hunting, unsuccessfully, his brother had cooked up a pot of red lentil stew.

Esau sees it, he smells it, no doubt he's salivating. He says, "Let me have some of that!" To make matters worse, this may have been during a time of famine. Jacob replies: "Sure, I'll trade you something for it." (What? A camel? My thighmaster? My George Foreman grill? What do you want?)

*How about your birthright?*

Sure, I'm about to die anyway (was that sarcasm? was it a reflection on his pessimism regarding a famine). Whatever it was, in the end he agreed & traded his birthright, his right of double-inheritance, to Jacob & thus the writer says, "He despised his birthright."

That same word, "despised" ["treated as worthless, contemptible"] is used 2 other places of "despising Yahweh" (1 Sam. 2:30; 2 Sam. 12:9).

I think that's the underlying issue here. As bad as it was to despise one's birthright, the greater sin is to despise the Lord of the birthright.

One commentator reflecting on this writes==>

"Perhaps the saddest and most godless person in Scripture outside of Judas is Esau. On the surface, their acts against God do not seem as wicked as those of many brutal and heartless pagans. But the Bible strongly condemns them. They had great light. They had every possible opportunity, as much as any person in their times, of knowing and following God. They knew His word, had heard His promises, had seen His miracles, and had had fellowship with His people; yet with determined willfulness they turned their backs on God and the things of God." [John

So Esau demonstrates w/his heart that he never possessed t/birthright from a spiritual perspective.

### As a side note . . .

This story of Jacob & Esau is used 3x as an object lesson in t/NT. In Rom. 9 Paul uses it to address t/question of God's faithfulness to Israel & His sovereign choice of t/elect.

6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; 7 neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named." 8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. 9 For this is a word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." 10 And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; 11 for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, 12 it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." 13 Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." 14 What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! 15 For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

The writer to the Hebrews draws from t/well of this account twice. In 11:20 and 12:16. In that latter passage he warns against t/dangers of a false, empty profession of faith ==>

14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one

will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; 16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

In John MacArthur's commentary on this passage, he writes ==> Esau not only was immoral, but was godless. He had no ethics or faith, no scruples or reverence. He had no regard for the good, the truthful, the divine. He was totally worldly, totally secular, totally profane. Christians are to be vigilant that no persons such as Esau contaminate Christ's Body. . . . Jacob, Esau's brother, was not a model of ethics or integrity, but he genuinely valued the things of God. . . . He basically trusted God and relied on God; his brother disregarded God and trusted only in himself.

What a tragedy to know the doctrines of grace, but not the grace of those doctrines // to come short of that grace & thus prove oneself immoral & godless // to think you own a birthright that you in fact despise.

## I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)

Think about that statement {repeat}. Marks = evidences. Evidences of what? One's birthright (that is, marks of being born again). But, we're not talking about just anyone, of course, we're talking about "believers" - those who are Xns not only in word, but in deed, those who have been called by God & reflect that calling by their conduct. (Marks of the Believer's B.R).

What are some marks/indicators that one is indeed an heir of grace?

### A. The Mark of Love: *How do I Act Toward Friends?* (8)

**Finally, in everything be of one mind, sympathetic, brotherly love, tenderhearted, humble.**

1. Peter's focus is largely on life within the body of Christ

How are we to behave? What demonstrations of grace should flow from lives transformed by grace?

Central focus grammatically is in t/middle of t/verse - "brotherly love." Our passion of worship is to continuously walk in familial love.

### **a. This church is a wonderful demonstration of verse 8**

You don't know how many times I stories of CH after CH where t/members are in constant conflict w/each other. For t/most inane reasons! Personality conflicts; power-plays; carnality - you name it.

#### **(1) It usually comes down to 3 things:**

1) weak / sinful leadership; 2) dearth of sound teaching & preaching resulting in immature believers; 3) A high percentage of tares among t/wheat.

Leadership that's self-serving, corrupt or unqualified.

Little focus on t/purity of t/Gospel & doctrine.

Unsaved people in t/CH, many of whom are in positions of leadership.

These are t/ingredients for disaster.

#### **(2) God has blessed us**

We strive to have leadership that's not self-serving, but servants to t/body.

We unashamedly uphold t/truth of t/Gospel & sound doctrine in an age of compromise.

We have a CH that is largely filled w/genuine Spirit-filled believers.

Partakers of grace give evidence of grace. Graced people are to be gracious people. (when you have people who know that - who indeed are partakers of grace - you will have a CH characterized by grace.

## **B. The Mark of Forgiveness: *How do I Act Toward Foes?* (9a)**

**Not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but on the other hand, giving a blessing . . .**

There's a negative, a positive, and a reason. Don't do this. On t/other hand, do this. Here's t/reason why. Don't return evil for evil. Do bless. Reason why is that you have been called to inherit a blessing.

### **1. Here's the negative:**

**Not returning evil for evil or insult for insult . . .**

Remember ==>

## **B. The Mark of Forgiveness: *How do I Act Toward Foes?* (9a)**

When someone wrongs me, do I respond in kind. "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth." When someone insults me, do I return t/favor?

That's looked upon as an American right. You hurt me, I get even. After all, you deserve it. I didn't do anything to you. I was minding my own business & you slander me // talk about me behind my back // lie about me. You show that you deserve t/same thing. Right? . . . Wrong!

I used to proudly declare that I was man enough to treat people t/same way they treated me. If you're arrogant & rude, I'll give you some of your own medicine. If you try to intimidate others, I'll intimidate you. You push, I'll push back just as hard.

Back in AZ as a young preacher I had a man come along who loved to intimidate others. He was rude, even abusive. I remember getting into shouting matches w/him. After all, I wasn't going to be intimidated. In t/end it ended up being a big disaster.

I thot I was man enough to respond in kind. I wasn't Christ-like enough & a really manly enough to refuse to return evil for evil or insult for insult.

Some 15 yrs. later I've learned much, but I still struggle. I esp. struggle w/my attitudes toward false teachers & apostates. I hate false religion & those who distort & pervert t/Gospel, drawing others to t/pit of hell.

I'm mindful of t/imprecations (anathemas) that such men deserve. That those who preach a false Gospel are to be accursed, according to Gal. 1. That we are to avoid those who hold to a form of godliness, but deny its power (2 Tim 3:5).

That we are to reject a heretical man after a first and second warning, (Titus 3:10).

That those who do not abide in t/teaching of Christ is not to be received or greeted (2 John).

But, as Jude write, we're also to have mercy on those who are doubting; while we save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

We're to have mercy on those who are lost and hellbound while at t/same time hating t/garment of sin & false-teaching that threatens to destroy their souls.

## 2. That's the positive (verse 9):

... but on the other hand, giving a blessing ...

### a. What kind of blessing?

Not t/kind that says, "What you've done is okay" or one that shies away from t/truth. This isn't some sort of ecumenical blessing - "Oh, do your best & follow God in your own way & I'll bless you for doing it."

#### (1) This isn't some indiscriminate blessing

As a child in the RCC I remember times when t/priest would bring out t/holy water & you could bring whatever object you wanted to hold up so that it could be blessed. Here is a small crowd of people standing up at t/front of t/CH holding up jewelry, rosaries, pictures, job applications, trinkets of all kinds - as t/priest stands before them flinging droplets of water into t/air w/o one bit of partiality.

#### (2) No, this is to pray for someone

Even to pray that they repent of their evil. It's to be a peacemaker, not a trouble-maker. It's to share t/Gospel to those that are lost that they may one day "glorify God on the day of visitation" (2:12).

### *B. The Mark of Forgiveness: How do I Act Toward Foes? (9a)*

To forgive doesn't mean that truth isn't truth. It's to recognize that vengeance is God's. He will repay.

20 "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

### *C. The Mark of God's Call: What is my Desire? (9b)*

Second half of verse 9==>

**. . . for you have been called for this purpose: so that you might inherit a blessing.**

**for you have been called for this purpose:** (what purpose?) - to be blessed!

### 1. Note - Calling and Blessing are directly connected

They're directly connected only because of Whom is doing t/calling & blessing here. When we bless someone it's w/a little "b". When God blesses a man it's w/a capital "B" just as His calling is w/a capital "C".

In that regard, to be called is to be blessed & to be blessed by God is to be called by Him.

### 2. Word "called" is rich in theological truth

#### a. We've noted before that there are two kinds of calling in Scripture - both of which are seen in 1 Cor. 1:23-24

23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Verse 23 is t/general call to salvation (that's t/gospel as it goes out to every ear) - {cite v. 23}

Verse 24 is t/inward or effectual call that goes to t/elect. T/Gospel striking fertile ground in specific hearts resulting in salvation (cite v. 24)

What we call in theology, the "Effectual Calling" of God.

When God calls you, that calling is effectual, it's irresistible. In this sense, word "summoned" may be used.

### **b. That call results in faith**

We no longer see t/cross as foolishness, but as the power & wisdom of God! We no longer are blind, now we see!

When I call someone, they don't always answer. Sometimes you call someone on the phone & you're sure they're home, but they screen their calls (know people like that? - it's a pet-peeve of mine! I hate talking into a machine thinking that someone is sitting there listening . . .). They may not take your call.

I think of instances where someone has been lost, in a wilderness for example, and the rescuers call their name, but there's no answer.

When God calls a sinner to repentance, he won't be screening his calls // he won't be o/s of earshot // he will hear and answer w/faith.

**b. This is familiar language for Peter, cf. 1:15; 2:9, 2:21; 5:10 {cite}**

**(1) In each one of these passages the word  $\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\omega$  is used**  
 $\kappa\alpha\lambda\epsilon\omega$  is a/verb which means "to call" (easy to remember).

### **(a) Here in 3:9 it's an Aorist Indicative Passive**

It's passive which means that t/calling comes from an outside source. We don't call ourselves to salvation, God calls us.

## i. Culminative Aorist

Places t/emphasis on the end of the action of t/verb. Much like t/perfect tense. Why it's translated "you have been called" not simply "you were called."

What's t/difference? "You were called" simply states a fact. "You have been called" brings that fact into a present reality.

A parallel would be like saying "I was blessed". When? At a camp meeting 20 years ago? But if I say, "I have been blessed" it takes that past action and brings it into t/present. "I have been blessed & that blessing continues in my life right now."

**... you have been called ...**

As Calvin said, God drew us "out of the labyrinth of ignorance and the abyss of darkness." [Calvin, 76]

Remember t/big idea ==>

*I. Marks of the Believer's Birthright (8-12)*

*C. The Mark of God's Call . . . (9b)*

### 3. We could say that this is the determinative mark

IOW - Those whom God calls, like Jacob, will inherit t/birthright. No, "if's," "ands" or "buts".

Romans 8:28-30: **28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are [what!?] called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-**

born among many brethren; 30 and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Nobody falls off t/wagon; nobody slips through t/cracks; nobody is left behind. Same group that's predestined is foreknown & t/same group that's justified will one day be glorified.

The mark of God's call is determinative. But it's determinative from His perspective. 1 Timothy 2:19 says, "**The Lord knows those who are His.**"

**a. But we must be sure that we know we are the Lord's!**

That's t/making your calling & election sure.

I suppose in a very real and practical way this can be summed up in t/2nd part of t/outline point, t/? part ==>

***C. The Mark of God's Call: What do I Desire? (9b)***

What are your affections? What do you delight in? Does your conduct, what you do & what you really believe, demonstrate t/Mark of God's call & thus t/validity of your birthright as a believer in JC.

**b. We are very much known by the desires of our hearts**

Several years ago, John Piper wrote a book that's sure to be a classic: "Desiring God." Do you desire God?

- \* Is your delight in Him and His Word (Psalm 1)?
- \* Does anything w/i you thirst for the living God (42:2)?
- \* Does anything w/i you desire that He be your exceeding joy (43:4)?
- \* Do you delight to please Him (119:35)?
- \* Do you delight to worship His name (Neh. 1:11)?

1 Peter chapter 1 ==> Can you say, "*Yes, blessed by God who has birthed me to new life by His great mercy and has given me an inheritance that will never perish, one that's reserved in heaven for me. Do I find joy in that, even in t/midst of various trials, knowing that t/proof of my faith which is more precious than gold me be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of JC.*"

This is ==>

### **C. The Mark of God's Call . . . (9b)**

**. . . for you have been called for this purpose: so that you might inherit a blessing.**

It's sort of like the old 4 Spiritual Laws - Law One - "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." That's a true statement in a bad context. BTIM - it's true of believers. ==>

**. . . you have been called for this purpose: so that you might inherit a blessing.**

That's not true of unbelievers, unless they, too, repent. Let me assure you, Moses didn't show up B4 Pharaoh w/a 4 Spirit. Laws tract. God didn't have such a "wonderful plan" for him.

But he does for us . . . So it makes sense that those who are heirs of a blessing would, in turn, bless those who are likewise undeserving.

**Partakers of grace give evidence of grace; graced people are to be gracious people.**

Phrase

**... so that you might inherit a blessing.**

Deserves a closer look . . .

**4. ἵνα εὐλογίον (blessing) - noun form related to the verb we saw in verse 9**

It's used w/the subjunctive κληρονομεῶ (to inherit) and forms what's called a "hina" or "purpose" clause. "Hina" is the Gk. word translated "in order that," or "so that." When it's used w/the subjunctive mood in Gk. it shows purpose or result (that's why it's translated "so that you might" - it's not in doubt, it's simply giving t/reason or purpose that would be in doubt if it weren't for God's call).

**a. This is part of the believer's inheritance . . . or birthright**

**(1) We saw the same thing in chapter 1:3-5 ==>**

**... God ... according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance [that is] incorruptible and undefiled and unfading which is kept in heaven for you who are being guarded by the power of God, through faith ...**

**(2) We are called for a blessing - Turn to Ephesians Chapter One (keep in a finger in 1 Peter 3) {read 1:2-12}**

**(3) Bringing it back to 1 Peter 3:9 ...**

**... you have been called for this purpose: so that you might inherit a blessing.**

## Bring this back to where we began - with Esau

Remember Esau - who sold his birthright. Esau, who demonstrated w/his heart that he was not called by God as was his brother, Jacob.

Remember, we read Hebrews 12:14-16 ==>

14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; 16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

But we didn't read v. 17 ==>

17 For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

That's a profound statement {repeat}. Serves as a contrast to t/genuine believer. Esau desired to inherit t/blessing, but was rejected.

You who are clothed w/the grace of JC ==>

**. . . have been called for this purpose: so that you might inherit a blessing.**

This is grounded in God's call, just as we saw in Romans chapt. 9 -

*. . . . God's purpose according to His choice . . . not because of works, but because of Him who calls, . . . His choice of Jacob, His rejection of Esau, and yet no injustice. "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."*

{Invitation}