

Primogeniture: Sermon for Sunday, July 15, 2018
Psalm 24, 2 Samuel 6:12b-19, Ephesians 1:11-14
Sermon Text: Mark 6:13

13 They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.

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primogeniture (n.) "right of succession of the first-born," c. Latin primogenitus "first-born."

In America during the Great Depression, there was a man named Yates who ran a sheep farm in Texas. He was quickly going under. He finally had to go on welfare just to feed his wife and children. Just about the time he was thinking of walking off his land, a team of geologists contacted him and told him that they thought oil might be under his property.

They said that if he would give them permission to dig, they would give him a percentage of any oil they found. Mr. Yates may have been poor but the man

was not stupid. He knew he had nothing to lose, so he gave them legal permission to dig on his land. They went down 500 feet and no oil; 800 feet and no oil; 1000 feet and no oil. The next day, they started drilling, and when they reached 1100 feet, they found the second largest oil reserve in Texas. Overnight, the family Yates went from being destitute and hungry to being one of the richest families in Texas.

Do you think that before they found the oil, Mr. Yates knew that he was sitting on millions of dollars? Until he had the knowledge of it, it did him no good at all. Ephesians 1:3 tells us Christ has blessed 'us'. Who is 'us'? 'Us' is the faithful in Jesus Christ. We are His sons and daughters. The text says he has blessed us with "spiritual blessing" throughout the cosmos. This means that in Christ we have all the benefits of knowing God—insight, the gifts of the Spirit, power to do God's will and the hope of living forever with

Christ. Primogeniture, our being the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, God's firstborn, means that we have been adopted as his children. Through primogeniture, we have inherited all that God has entrusted to Christ for the creation of a new human reality. We are sitting on ability and power beyond our wildest imagination.

Because we have an intimate relationship with Christ, we can enjoy these blessings now. We are joint heirs to the kingdom of God along with Christ Jesus who sits on the right hand side of God. We have received the right of the First-Born of God, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Are you sitting on a fortune? Are we as a church of Jesus Christ, members of the royal family, approaching the world from the position of what we think we don't have, a position of scarcity, or in confidence of the primogeniture of Jesus Christ, the king of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the One whom God has already

determined to inherit all things before us? Even before his resurrection, the disciples experienced the power of primogeniture, driving out demons, healing the sick and bringing wholeness to others. We can only answer that question by living with the faith our abundance, our riches in Christ through whom we have inherited all things. We through our faith or lack of it, determine whether we will live and grow in accordance with our inheritance as God's progeny in Christ, or as impoverished slaves to a worthless faith. May we respond in faith and cease to sit on our riches, power, wisdom and success in building God's kingdom. Amen.