

Hebrews 9:15, 24-28

15 For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant. ²⁴For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made by human hands, a mere copy of the true one, but he entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵Nor was it to offer himself again and again, as the high priest enters the Holy Place year after year with blood that is not his own; ²⁶for then he would have had to suffer again and again since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to remove sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷And just as it is appointed for mortals to die once, and after that the judgement, ²⁸so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

The “called may receive the promised eternal inheritance”.

When does eternity begin? Is this a philosophical question or a real one? We so often associate eternal life as beginning at death. The truth is we are in eternity now, smack-bang in the middle of it.

The much quoted verse John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life,” is not solely referring to an after death experience but an “in life” one. Eternal life is a quality of life in the present; a quality of life enhanced through knowing the love and purpose of God in daily living. Eternal life is not something to wait for but to live in the now.

The eternal inheritance is something for the now as well as the time to come. God’s love and grace is a gift for the enriching of life in the moment, the current age. God is not one who holds back love and grace as a carrot that we should strive for it and earn it.

The full inheritance is available for Christ has given his life the once and for the only necessary time. Our sins are forgiven, judgement is passed through grace and faith; when God looks at us he sees not a ragged urchin but a redeemed being, created in His own image and clothed in righteousness; the wedding garments we are invited to put on to attend the wedding feast. (Matthew 22:1-14 – Reflection for Sunday 11th October.)

There is still more to come of this inheritance for the gift of God’s Spirit is the deposit for that which is to come. (Eph 1:14)

Through faith in Jesus, believing in him, giving our lives into his hands, something of the “future” can be experienced in the present. We can know the love of God in the now.

Yet, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians in Chapter 13, “we see as in a mirror dimly, but then we shall see face to face’. There is more to come but let us open up ourselves to the gift of the present and live the “Eternal quality life” for which Jesus died now in expectation of the fullness in the future as we are changed from “Glory to Glory” to quote Charles Wesley.