

RESTORE
GOD CAN: HIS SPIRIT

Friday, May 15

Reading: Ephesians 1:13-23

***Ephesians 1:17** I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better. **18** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people*

Paul's words in Philippians 2:12-13 have confused many people. "Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose." Wait a minute! I thought we were saved by grace through faith and not by works (Ephesians 2:8-9)? What is Paul talking about?

We do not work FOR our salvation --- we are to work OUT our salvation. In other words, we are to grow and show that we belong to God in our daily lives. We can do this because God is working in us so that we desire to do what is right ("to will") and this comes out in our actions ("to act"). This is one way the Holy Spirit works in us.

In Ephesians 1:13-14, the Apostle Paul calls the Holy Spirit a "seal" and a "deposit." A seal was an official mark put on a letter or document. This seal provided security as only the intended person could break the seal. It also showed ownership as the seal was affixed by the person who authorized it. The Holy Spirit indwells all believers and is God's seal on His children proving that we belong to Him and that we are secure in our salvation because of His grace.

The word deposit refers to a "Down payment with a guarantee of more to come."¹ The Holy Spirit dwelling in us is a little piece of heaven in our lives that guarantees our full inheritance in one day as God's children in eternity. All this is "to the praise of His glory."

Since these believers have trusted in Christ and received the Holy Spirit, which is shown by their faith and love (1:15), Paul continues with a prayer for them (1:16-23). This prayer helps us understand some of the ways the Holy Spirit works in our lives.

[1] The Spirit gives us wisdom to understand God's Word and reveals Jesus to us. As we listen to the Spirit's voice in our hearts, He helps us know Jesus better (1:17).

[2] The Spirit opens our eyes and hearts to help us understand the great future God has prepared for those who love Him. This is our hope when struggles come (1:18).

[3] The Spirit gives us the power to live for Christ now and proclaim the good news of Jesus' victory over sin and death and the salvation He offers (1:19-23). Before Jesus returned to heaven He told the apostles, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses..." (Acts 1:8).

God can use people, events, and any number of things to help mold us into the image of Christ. But we cannot just sit back and do nothing. We are to "work out our salvation." We are to be actively involved in growing our relationship with the Lord and listening to the Spirit who lives within us.

Has your spiritual life grown stagnant?

Are you not having any victory over the hurts, habits, and hang ups in your life?

What do you need to do to apply the truth – "I Can't, God Can!"

¹ Harold W. Hoehner. "Ephesians" (The Bible Knowledge Commentary – NT), p. 619