

For Good (Part 2) – Eph 1:7-14

Eph 1:7-14; We're in the middle of our Blessed Assurance series, discovering all we *can* about salvation, to solidify our convictions
And having covered Part 1 of this message *last* week, I'm eager for the rest
So follow along with me as I re-read the passage, do a little review, and then dig in

[7] *In him [in Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, [8] which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight [9] making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ [10] as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

[11] *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, [12] so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. [13] In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, [14] who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

We found last week that Paul covers so many aspects of salvation, it's like he wants us to

Remember everything (v7-10)

Like the fact that in Christ – we're redeemed, and forgiven, and lavished with God's grace
And that he brought it all about according to *plan* – *a plan for the fullness of time*
With the ultimate goal of reconciling us to God

Then, in v11-12, he basically says . . .

In Christ eternal life is yours (v11-12)

Yours; For good; A life where we live and move and have our being in the sphere of his provision, protection, and power; That's what it means to be *in him*
And part of that provision or *inheritance* that we have, is a place in heaven; Eternal life
It's ours; Right now; Even though we haven't fully taken possession of it yet

And it comes . . .

• **By God's choosing**

Those who are in Christ have been *predestined* it says – chosen by God for salvation
And he doesn't change his mind; Which is one of the greatest sources of our assurance

It's ours by God's choosing, and . . .

• **According to God's purpose**

Why God chooses those he does, we don't know; But we *do* know that he has a purpose; It wasn't an afterthought
So we trust; We trust that his will is best, and his grip is firm

But the eternal life we have in Christ is not just about us; In fact, it's mostly . . .

• **For God's glory**

We are saved, to live in such a way as to make God look good; And add to the chorus of praise for all his splendor and work
God makes much of *us* in salvation, so that we'll make much of *him*, in life
It's all to the praise of his glory; That was Part 1 and v7-12 (**Summary**)

➤ Which brings us to Part 2 and v13-14; Where Paul is conveying that . . .

In Christ you're safe and secure (v13-14)

V13 – *In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit*
Promised, through prophets like Ezekiel and Joel; And Jesus himself
And sure enough, he showed up at Pentecost; To do exactly what Paul says here – guarantee our inheritance, our eternal life

Which means that in Christ, you're safe and secure; That's the idea of words like *sealed* and *guarantee*; You'll never be released, never be stolen, and never be forsaken; Ever

Jesus said in Jn 6:37 – *whoever comes to me I will never cast out*; Never release
And *no one will snatch them out of my hand* (Jn 10:28); You'll never be stolen
And never forsaken it says in Heb 13:5
It's all part of the Holy Spirit's act on your life, to *seal* you

➤ Like you seal a loaf of bread in a Ziploc storage bag – preserving it for later
Or seal an envelope with your signature over the flap, to mark the contents as yours
Or seal a photograph to protect it from the elements; Like one of our Global Partners used to do in the jungles of Papua New Guinea
The humidity was so intense, and the bacteria so prevalent, they had to *vacuum* seal their pictures, to keep them from rotting

How much more with us? In Christ, the Holy Spirit preserves us, marks us, and protects us
Guaranteed; The vacuum seal is never broken; The signature never fades

➤ And when you get right down to it, that's power; If you can guarantee something for all eternity, you've got the power
So we're not only safe and secure by the *sealing* of the Holy Spirit, but . . .

• **By the power of the Holy Spirit**

Which is the power of God himself; B/c he *is* God; Co-equal with the Father and Son, as part of the *Trinity*; Which means you can rest *assured* in your salvation . . .
B/c the same power that raised Jesus from the dead, is at work in you; And guarantees your deliverance

That's **Rom 8:11** – *If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.*

It's the power of God, through his Spirit, that saves you, keeps you, fuels you, and secures you – for all eternity; It's the Spirit; The *Holy Spirit******

➤ Which makes some people *very* uncomfortable
B/c on the one hand, we live in such a naturalistic, scientific society – that anything intangible or spiritual, is suspect
While on the other hand, there are those who so *obsess* on the Holy Spirit, and *over-*extend his influence, that we throw the baby out with the bathwater
Not wanting to be anything like them
Leaving us with a Trinity consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the
Whatever; Or God the Nothing; It's not our intent; And we'd never say it that way
But that's how we act and think sometimes

➤ When Anna, our youngest daughter was 3 or 4, we were praying with her at bedtime one night, and for some reason she started her prayer saying . . .
“Dear God, Dear Jesus” – and opening one eye, she said “And who de udder guy?”
And after laughing out loud, we were like – “The Holy Spirit”
And she was like – “Oh ya; Dear God, Dear Jesus, and the Holy Spirit; Thank you for Mommy, thank you for Daddy”; And so it went
She knew there was a 3rd party to the Trinity, she just couldn’t remember him

And I think that’s how we are sometimes; He’s either out of sight out of mind, or we’re a bit uncomfortable with him; But you don’t have to be
You don’t have to throw the baby out with the bathwater, just because some people *muddy* theirs
Nor should you be ashamed of believing something you can’t see or touch, but whose impact on your *life* and this world, is obvious
Not to mention the fact that he *guarantees* our lives, by his *power*

Second, we’re safe and secure by the *presence* of the Holy Spirit
The *power* of the Holy Spirit . . .

- **And the presence of the Holy Spirit**

He is the guarantee; V14 – *In him you . . . were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit [14] who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it*
He *is* the guarantee – his personal presence

Confirmed by **2 Cor 1:21-22**; Which says – *It is God . . . who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.*
God has sealed those who are his for all eternity, by giving them his Spirit in their heart and soul, as an unbreakable pledge
His presence, is the down payment or deposit, for a place in heaven w/ your name on it

Like a person who’s buying your home, and gives you *earnest* money, to guarantee that the balance will be forthcoming
Only in this case, the earnest money is God *himself* – his Spirit; His very presence within us

And thank *God* for that; B/c **Rom 8:9** says – *Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him*; Is not *in* Christ; Is not saved
No Holy Spirit, no salvation; No Holy Spirit, no sealing; No Holy Spirit, no power; No Holy Spirit, no guarantee; No Holy Spirit, no nothing*****
But *with* the Spirit? We have it all; All we need to be safe and secure for all eternity

And it starts . . .

- **The moment you are saved**

Which is so important; You don’t have to *wonder* if you’re safe and secure; You don’t have to wait; And you certainly don’t have to fret
V13 says the Holy Spirit sealed you – *when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him*; When you heard and believed
That’s when you were sealed; *That’s* when you received the Holy Spirit

IOW conversion and the Holy Spirit’s indwelling, happened at the same time
Which means you were safe/secure, sealed/guaranteed, the moment you first believed

➤ And one of the blessings of that, is that you no longer have any-*thing* or any-*one*, to fear
You need not fear the *consequences* of your sin; You need not fear the oppression or opposition of *man*; And you need not fear the power and influence of Satan
B/c the Bible says that greater is he who is in you, the Holy Spirit, than he who is in the world, Satan (1 Jn 4:4)
And 1 Jn 5:18 says that the evil one *does not touch* the person born of God
And James 4:7 says – if you *resist* the devil, he will *flee* from you

There’s no mumbo-jumbo necessary; There’s no particular prayers or mantra necessary
There’s no ministry necessary – like those that claim to *release* you from oppressive spirits; Just a simple “no” on your part
Active *resistance* of wrong thoughts and wrong ways, and active *pursuit* of right thoughts and right ways
That’s how you resist the devil; And there’s nothing to fear as you do

It’s one of the many blessings of being safe and secure, the moment you were saved
With no reason to fret, no reason to worry, and no reason to wonder
In Christ, eternal life is yours (**Summary**)

➤ Now, sometimes this sealing and guaranteeing and indwelling of the Holy Spirit, is referred to in the Bible as being *baptized in the Spirit*; Or baptized *with* the Spirit
And the metaphor fits; When we’re saved, we are immersed or brought under the influence of the Spirit’s power and presence . . .
To wash us, save us, seal us, and indwell us; We’re baptized in the Spirit; Absolutely

But some people in our day and age, advocate that it happens *after* we’re saved; And say that speaking in tongues is proof of it
The thinking goes like this – b/c the first believers at *Pentecost* were baptized in the Spirit sometime after their conversion . . .
And b/c there’s 1 other instance in Acts 8 where the *Samaritan* believers experienced a post-conversion outpouring of the Spirit . . .
We should therefore seek/experience what they call a 2nd *baptism* of the Spirit, today

But here’s the thing – that’s neither the biblical *mandate*, nor the biblical teaching; IOW . .

A second baptism of the Spirit is not for us

It’s not normative; It’s not a thing to be pursued; And it’s not an experience to be had, as part of our salvation or walk with Christ; And there are 2 main reasons for that

1. It’s unique to the book of Acts
After Acts there are no other New Testament texts that even *refer* to a separate baptism of the Holy Spirit; Let alone advocate that we should seek one
Which should make us think that something unique was going on in Acts, that’s not intended to be the norm; Not intended for us
2. It would create a two-class Christianity – those who are Spirit-baptized, and those who aren’t; Those who have him, and those who don’t
Which is not only absent from the Scriptures, but totally *contrary* to the Scriptures
We are *one* in Christ, not two; And the ground at the foot of the cross is *level*
There’s no such thing as a two-class Christianity

➤ But that begs the question – What do we make of the Pentecost/Samaritan experiences?
And the answer, is that the first believers were living in a time of *transition* – transition between the Old Covenant and the New . . .
And God wanted to emphasize the awesome new *power* he was bringing to bear
The direct, personal power of his *Spirit*, in the lives of every *one* of his people
Not just some of them *some* of the time, but all of them *all* the time
So he gave them his Spirit *separately* on a few occasions, accompanied by the gift of tongues, to show it; To show the new power of his new covenant

But that's not normative for *us*, because we're not *living* in that transition
We don't first become believers with a weaker *Old* Covenant work of the Spirit, and then wait for his *New* Covenant work to kick in
We come to him 2000 years later, well *into* his New Covenant work, with all *kinds* of spiritual gifts to show for it

So though we're baptized in the Spirit, it happens the moment we're saved, and a second baptism is neither normative nor necessary

- **But being filled with the Spirit is**

That *is* normative; That *is* necessary; That *is* a thing
Filled, as in completely controlled and perfectly led
Eph 5:18 says – *Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery* [unrestrained sin], *but be filled with the Spirit*
Filled, as in be in a state of being continually controlled; That's the form of the verb;
It's an ongoing, active sort of thing

Which means that far from a one-time event, like being baptized in the Spirit at conversion, being *filled* with the Spirit is continuous
Having *received* the Holy Spirit, we're to *surrender* to him; And submit to his influence; And allow him to guide and direct us; Constantly
Just like the drunk surrenders to the influence of alcohol; Don't miss the analogy

Just like the drunk gives up control of his life to *wine*, and is governed by *it* in all he says and does . . .
We are to relinquish control to the *Spirit*, and be governed by *him* in all we say and do
Don't be drunk with wine, be drunk with the Spirit; That's the idea*****

Resulting in a *greater* control of your actions, not less; A greater power to serve; A greater clarity to lead; A greater ability to speak; A greater humility to follow
A greater purity for holiness; A greater insight for discernment; And a greater passion to worship; That's the filling of the Holy Spirit in your life (**Summary**)

And it's all to the praise of God's glory; So that we live and move and have our being in him, for good

Pray (servers and band) – Lord, thank you for the life you've given us; And thank you for the assurance that's ours, by the power and presence of your Spirit, the moment we were saved; Fill us I pray, right now; Anew and afresh; And find us fully surrendered, as we share in **Communion**; To the praise of your glory

As we come to a time of Communion, remember all that God has done for you in Christ, and all that you have b/c of his Spirit
Examine your life; Confess your sin; And treasure his love
God doesn't expect you to come perfect, he expects you to come clean – clean by the power of his Spirit, and the blood of his Son

But if you haven't *embraced* Jesus as your Lord and Savior; If you haven't *confessed* your sin to God and *received* his Spirit – either do so now, or let the bread and the cup pass
Otherwise, by participating you'll be saying something *outwardly* that's not true *inwardly* – that Jesus is yours and you are his
And thereby risk bringing judgment on yourself

So spend some time before the Lord, allow him to soften your heart, and let him knit us together in the bond of peace
And when the time comes, I'll lead us in eating and drinking

Representing the body of Christ – *In him we have obtained an inheritance . . . to the praise of his glory* (Eph 1:11)

And representing the covenant of our salvation – *in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace*

Pray – Lord, we eat and we drink to the praise of your glory; For all that you've done, and all that you're doing – in our lives, in our church, and in our world
And we give now, to that end; Asking that you would use not just our money, but our very *lives*; For the sake of the gospel, and the fame of your name

Close – Harvest Kids Live on Tuesday; Info Meeting for the NYC Outreach Trip (10:30 only); Visitor Bags