

Blessed Assurance – Eph 1:11-14

Eph 1:11-14. For 8 verses now, v3-10, Paul has been laying out the various aspects of our salvation. Including our election, predestination, adoption, redemption . . . Forgiveness, and reconciliation. All aspects of God's grace with which he lavishes us.

But there's two more, that not only add to the blessing, but the assurance. The assurance of our *salvation*. *Blessed* assurance as Fanny Crosby wrote in that old hymn. So follow along as I read, and let's see why. V11.

[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* [might exist to glorify him].

[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.*

The next aspect of our salvation here, providing blessed assurance, is that . . .

In Christ eternal life is ours (v11-12)

It's ours. V11 – *In him we have obtained an inheritance*. An inheritance referring to eternal life in heaven.

But before we get there, let me focus on “*in him*.”

In him we have obtained an inheritance.

In him, referring to Jesus. That's the context of the entire passage.

And it's a phrase used 164 times in NT. 10 of which are right here in v3-14.

So it's a massively important concept.

And it means, in *union* with him. In a *relationship* with him.

By virtue of his grace and our faith, we *live* in his presence. Within his sphere of provision, protection, and power.

He's the soil in which we grow. He's the body in which we thrive. He's the atmosphere in which we breathe. He's the presence in which we live.

- It's like a doctor who's “in residence.” They work within the rule and realm of a particular hospital; and usually a certain doctor. They're under his or her provision, protection, and power.

So that what she says, goes. What she wants, they do. What she teaches, they learn. Where she leads, they go. They are “in residence” for all things medical.

So too, we are *in Christ* for all things spiritual; all things life.

Living and moving and having our being within the realm of *his* leadership; his teaching; his way. We're under his protection and provision.

- And part of that provision, is an inheritance. *In him we have obtained an inheritance*. Just like you desire to leave an inheritance for your kids.

Only this one, is a permanent place in heaven, and eternal life to enjoy it. That's the inheritance we *have obtained* by virtue of our salvation. A permanent place in heaven, and eternal life to enjoy it.

And I'm not just making that up. V14 implies it.

The Holy Spirit it says, *is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it*.

What is it about our salvation that we have yet to take possession of?

A place in heaven with Jesus, forever and ever. Just like he said.

In my Father's house are many rooms . . . [and] I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am you may be also. John 14:3.

Put that together with the eternal life of Jn 3:16, and our *inheritance* is a real place, in real life, with Jesus, forever and ever. Talked about blessed.

- And don't miss the fact that it's assured. Because it's *ours*. Eternal life is ours. Right now. In Christ, we *have obtained an inheritance*. It was given to us the moment we were saved, and we *continue* to own it. That's the implication of the present perfect verb tense here. Eternal life was given to us in the past, and it's ours right now, even though we haven't actually taken possession of it.

It's like a young family whose wealthy grandparents leave them their lake home when they die, with the stipulation that they can't move in . . .

Until their youngest child is at least 10. They don't want it messed up, and they don't want a grandchild drowning in the lake.

But does that make the home any less theirs? No. They *have* obtained it.

They just can't enjoy it yet. All they can do is rent it out and dream.

But they live with the blessed assurance of knowing that when little Jimmy turns 10, they're in. Taking possession once and for all.

If you're in Christ, the inheritance of eternal life is yours. You're living it *now*, and always will. Complete with a place in heaven prepared just for you.

And when you die, you'll take possession of it for all eternity.

In him we have obtained an inheritance. Blessed assurance.

And that inheritance, that life, is a result of God's choosing. Eternal life is ours . . .

• By God's choosing

Paul *started* with the doctrine of election, back in v4-5, and reiterates here.

V11 – *In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined*.

Those who are in Christ have been *predestined* for eternal life. Predestined to receive the inheritance. *Chosen* for such a salvation.

Something we covered at *length* a few weeks ago.

The bottom line being, the inheritance of eternal life is ours by God's choosing.

- Which *reinforces* our assurance, because God doesn't change his mind. (Nu 23:19) When he says, *everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved*, it's certain; assured. Because it shows you were chosen. (Rom 10:13)

And to the extent that you do some kind of interpretive gymnastics to get *around* the fact that God chose you for salvation, you lose the blessed assurance of your eternal life. Because then, it depends only on your fickle nature instead of God's unchanging decision. Not to mention his indomitable will and resolute purpose.

Which brings us to the next point. Eternal life is ours by God's choosing, and ours . . .

- **According to God's purpose**

V11 again – *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.*

We may not know the reasons God chooses us and not others, but we *do* know his purpose: to give us eternal life.

A purpose he brings about by working *all things* according to the direction of his sovereign will. His unthwartable will.

Yet *another* reason we have such blessed assurance. If God has purposed it, God will do it. Rest assured.

His decisions are certain, his will unstoppable, and his purpose inevitable.

In Christ, eternal life is ours by God's choosing, according to God's purpose.

And 3rd here, eternal life is ours . . .

- **For God's glory**

In him we have obtained an inheritance [v12] . . . *so that we who were the first to hope in Christ* [before those who come behind us] *might be to the praise of his glory.*

His glory, referring to the revelation and manifestation of his essence, and power, and majesty, and holiness.

They were saved, and so are *we*, for God's *glory*.

That we would live in such a way as to make him look good; magnify him; exalt him.

And add to the chorus of praise that all of heaven offers.

We've been given an eternal inheritance, an eternal lease on life, *so that*, first words of v12, we would glorify God for all eternity. Praise him forever and ever.

God makes much of us in Christ, so that we will make much of him in life. Including eternal life.

That's the *first* aspect of our salvation we find in these verses.

In Christ, eternal life is ours by God's choosing, according to God's purpose, for God's glory. More blessed assurance.

The second aspect of our salvation and life we find here, is that . . .

In Christ we'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. (Ez 36:26-27; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 1:5,8)

And sure enough, the Holy Spirit showed up. At Pentecost. Acts 2.

So that, when we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit seals us.

In him [v13] . . . *you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.*

Sealed, as in claimed, protected, and preserved. Never to be released, never to be stolen, and never to be forsaken. Ever.

Which means that in Christ, you're safe and secure. That's the idea.

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.

All part of the Holy Spirit's work and presence in your life, to *seal* you.

➤ You might think of it like sealing a loaf of bread in a Ziploc storage bag – preserving it for later.

Or sealing an envelope with your signature over the flap; to mark the contents as yours.

Or sealing 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.

That's us. In Christ. Where the Holy Spirit preserves us, marks us, and protects us for all eternity. Safe and secure.

In Christ, we're safe and secure by the *sealing* of the Holy Spirit.

And . . .

- **By the power of the Holy Spirit**

The same power that confused the languages at the Tower of Babel.

The same power that parted the Red Sea.

The same power that defeated the enemies of ancient Israel.

The same power that brought about the Virgin Birth.

And the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. True.

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.*

The power of God, through his indwelling Spirit, saves us, keeps us, and secures us for all eternity. No Spirit, no power.*****

➤ One of the blessings of that, is that we no longer have any *thing* or any *one* to fear.

We need not fear the consequences of our *sin*. We need not fear the oppression or opposition of *man*. We need not fear the virus of a pandemic.

And we need not fear the power and influence of Satan.

Because 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.

Why? Because the power of the living *God* is backing you. Holy *Spirit* power.

There's no reason to fret and no reason to fear. In Christ, we're safe and secure.

By the *power* of the Holy Spirit, and . . .

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

Safe and secure, because he *guarantees* our salvation. *Guarantees* our eternal life.

In fact, 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.*

Do you see what Paul does there? He connects the concepts of sealing and guaranteeing, with the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. They all go hand in hand.
God has sealed those who are his for all eternity, by giving them his Spirit in their heart and soul, as an unbreakable guarantee. That's the idea.*****

And the idea of *guarantee* (14), is that his presence is the down payment or deposit, for a place in heaven with your name on it.
Like a person who's buying your home gives you *earnest* money; a guarantee that the balance will be forthcoming.
Only in this case, the earnest money is God *himself*, his Spirit. His very presence within us.

Talk about blessed assurance.

In Christ, we are safe and secure by the *power* of the Holy Spirit, and the *presence* of the Holy Spirit.

And it starts . . .

- **The moment we're 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. That's when you were united with Christ. Entered *in*-to Christ.

In other words, conversion and the Holy Spirit's indwelling happen at the same time.

Salvation and the Holy Spirit's presence are simultaneous.

There's no wait. There's no secondary prayer needed. No laying on of hands that's necessary. And no completing what was only *partially* done.

When we hear and believe the Good News of Jesus, we get *all* of the Spirit, for *all* time, right away.

Which means we are safe and secure, sealed and guaranteed, the moment we're saved.

If that's not blessed assurance, I don't know what is. **(Summary)**

And it's all, once again, *to the praise of his glory*. Last phrase of v14.

Leading Fanny J. Crosby to pen the words – “This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior, all the day long.” Make sure it's your story. **(Prayer)**

Prayer – God, thank you for that. Thank you for the life you've given us, and the assurance we have. Blessed assurance. By the power and presence of your Spirit, your choosing, and your purpose. We praise and glorify you.