

Eph. 1:13-14 “Sealed with the Spirit”

For the Children: Have you seen your parents sign some papers when they are buying something expensive – like a house? They make a mark on paper to promise that they will later pay for what they have purchased, even if it takes a while. Well, God has made a mark on us to show that He has purchased us through the work of the Lord Jesus. We belong to Him. That mark is not one you can see on our skin – like a brand-mark or tattoo. It is a mark made by the Holy Spirit living inside us. That mark does lead to other things that can be noticed: how you live for the Lord, how you are able to trust His promises. It promises us that God will finish the work He has begun in us. **Questions:** In what way is the Holy Spirit a “pledge” to us? How does He help us to gain our full inheritance in the next life? How does His work bring glory to God?

Introduction:

First Point: The Sealer

- 1) The Work of the Spirit with the Father and the Son: This part of Eph. 1 is explaining why we should bless the Lord – because He has blessed us so richly, through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Father and Son are also involved, since the Three are One, doing all things together. The focus here is upon the Spirit, though the text weaves the Father’s will and the Son’s work into this theme.
- 2) Given as a Pledge: The Holy Spirit is given to us as a “Pledge” – a “first instalment,” “down-payment” or “deposit.” This language implies that there is something more to come, a guarantee of our future inheritance. See v. 14.
- 3) With a View to Redemption: “With a view to” implies that the purpose of the Father is involved in the sending of the Spirit. The word “given” also implies the sending of the Spirit by the Father and the Son (Jn. 14:16, 16:7). The Spirit has been sent with a view to “redemption” - the completion of the release of the sinner from sin’s bondage, power, guilt and punishment – based on the accomplished work of the Son. We need the Spirit to dwell within us for the faith that joins us to Christ and for our preservation in Him. This redemption is of God’s own possession, His “purchased acquisition.” See v. 11. We have an inheritance because we are God’s heritage. This is true of those Jews who were the “first to hope” (v. 12) and for the Gentile converts (“you also,” v. 13).
- 4) To the Praise of His Glory: This goes back to the main theme of ch. 1, the praise/glory of God (vss. 6, 12 and 14), whose Name we should bless (v. 3). From start to finish, God’s glory is the main thing, not ours. Glorifying God was the main calling of OT Israel (Is. 43:21). It is still “man’s chief end.” The NT church has this calling because she is one with the OT church, Israel.

Second Point: The Sealing

- 1) The Spirit’s Sealing: A seal is a mark e.g., pressed into wax, indicating ownership, security, authenticity, protection and permanence. This is what we have guaranteed when the Spirit dwells within us, having regenerated us. The tense implies it is once-for-all. The Holy Spirit is also called “the Spirit of promise” (v. 13). His outpouring was promised in the OT (Ezk. 36:, Joel 2, Jer. 31) and this was fulfilled in the NT (Jn. 14-16; Acts 1:4, 2:33-39). His Presence within us promises a future inheritance.
- 2) Sealing in Christ: All that is indicated by the Spirit’s indwelling – ownership, security, protection, permanence – is grounded in the work of Christ. Hence the “in Him,” twice in v. 13.
- 3) After Hearing and Believing: This sealing only applies to those who have heard the Gospel and believed. God has predestined all such things, but He uses means – the preaching of the Gospel and the exercise of faith

Conclusion:

