

Our Triune Salvation

Together in Truth

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Well, last night we surveyed the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. This morning we want to see how the nature of the Trinity applies to, how we understand our salvation in light of that great doctrine. I've given the title to this message "Our Triune Salvation," and what we find is that each person of the blessed Trinity played a critical role in the outworking of our salvation and we want to see this because it will help us understand the work of God in saving us better, and it will give us a greater sense of the glory and the majesty of our salvation and also a greater sense of the security of our salvation that Christ purchased for us on the cross.

When we defined the Trinity last night, we said this, we said there is one true God with only one essence who eternally exists in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three persons are each fully and equally God and equally deserve worship and obedience, yet these three persons are only one God. Today we're going to build on what we talked about last night. We saw the deity of the Father, the deity of the Son, the deity of the Spirit, we saw something of the unified essence that they all share in, and today we go further to recognize that our salvation in Christ is a Triune work of God.

That passage that I read just a few moments ago from Ephesians 1:3 to 14, in the original Greek it's one sentence. It is a 202 word sentence of one unit of thought. Now it doesn't appear that way in our English translations because the English translators have broken it down so that it's easier to understand, but as you read it in the original language, you see that it is one colossal unit of thought as the Apostle Paul ascribes praise to the Triune God and speaks to the different aspects of the works that each person of the Trinity did to accomplish our salvation. All three members of the Godhead participate in our redemption and here's what we want to understand as we look at these things separately here this morning, is that there was a unified purpose in the Godhead to save us from sin. There was a unified love in the Godhead that was at work. There was a complete unity of will which is in keeping with what you would expect of one God with one essence, all three persons sharing in the perfections of God in all of his attributes.

They acted in concert to achieve our salvation and what a glorious passage that we have in front of us to be able to consider here this morning, and I would just say by way of preface, I guess, before we go into it, is that we are really approaching some of the holiest

ground in all of Scripture. We're looking deeply into the nature of God, we are looking deeply into the nature of our salvation, we are seeing how the eternal purposes of God were carried out in order to secure redemption for us, and through all of it you should see through everything that we see in what's about to be said, you should see the love of God displayed for his people, his goodness toward his people, his mercy, his kindness, his patience toward his people, all of this being displayed and each member of the Trinity being actively involved in the working out of our salvation. It's a glorious theme and it's no wonder that the recurring refrain throughout this passage is to the praise of the glory of God. We're seeing things that cause our hearts to give praise and glory to God. That's for the people of God and let me just say briefly to those of you that are outside of Christ and you're still lost in your sin, this message functions as a great invitation from Christ to you to enter into these blessings. It's a call from Christ that you may be saved in the same way, that you might enter into these things by faith in him. So the Gospel of Jesus Christ which says behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world, who takes away the sin of the world, we see in this a scriptural mining out of the gems that are there for us to know in God's word. Let's turn there, shall we? We're going to see in this text that the Father saves us, the Son saves us, and the Spirit saves us, all three working and playing their role in the outworking of our redemption.

Point 1 here this morning: God the Father saves us, and you see that right from the start in this opening text. Look at verse 3 with me, Ephesians 1:3 where the Apostle Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." So Paul starts out ascribing praise to God the Father and then he goes on and expands on what the Father did that brings forth our praise. God the Father did something that provokes the praise of his people, that causes them to render glory to his name, to ascribe honor to him, to give thanks to him is all built up and included in that sense of "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." And let me just say one thing here for those of you that have read a bit in Reformed doctrine and studied these things. It is far too common for people to go to this text to find their arguments in support of the doctrines of grace, and surely the doctrines of grace are in full display here but this should not be handled in an argumentative spirit, this should not be handled in a contentious way, the spirit of this entire passage is one of humble praise to God and that's the way that this text should be approached. Remember, it's one long sentence, 202 words in the Greek text, and the purpose of the text is to praise God. Blessed be the God and Father, verse 3. Verse 6, to the praise of the glory of his grace. Verse 12, to the praise of his glory. Verse 14, to the praise of his glory. So for us to understand this text, we must enter into the spirit with which Paul is speaking to us here today and more directly, more vertically, the way that God is speaking to us in this text is calling forth the worship of our hearts. We are responding to the Triune God in this text with the praise and honor of the deepest aspects of our being.

So he starts out, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The aspect that we focus on here this morning is that this praise at this point in the text is ascribed to the Father, to God the Father, the first member of the Triune God, and why are we praising him? Well, he has blessed us. He has graced us. He has given good things to us that we did not deserve in ways that are far beyond anything that we could ask or think.

Look at verses 3 and 4 with me. It says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who," this is what God the Father has done, this is a relative clause that is describing God the Father and here's what he has done, God the Father "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ." How did he bless us? Verse 4, "He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world." Look at it there with me, "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him." And he goes on in verse 5, "In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." Well, that's a mouthful right there and that's only a portion of the sentence but look at what it says there. God the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. He elected us to salvation by his sovereign pleasure based on nothing that was in us or that would ever be in us, not based on a foreseen faith but totally according to his own purpose and his own love and kindness, God chose us in Christ to receive the fullness of salvation that would reverberate to our benefit throughout all of the ages of eternity to come. Do you know what that means? It means that before God created the world, your salvation was secure, it was certain to come to pass if you are a Christian. We look back now at having been saved and Scripture explains to us how we entered into this marvelous position that is ours in Christ. We did not achieve this position by our own good works. It's not because we were wiser or better than someone else. If that were the case, the praise and the credit would go to us but that's not the nature of Christian salvation, of biblical salvation. The praise, the blessing goes to God because God had done something and has done something for us. He elected us. He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Not only that, the text tells us that he adopted us into his family. He adopted us as sons. Whereas before we were in the family of Satan, we belonged to our father, the father of lies, and we were children of Adam having fallen in the garden and sharing in the guilt of Adam's first sin like that. How miserable was our position and yet what God did was he chose us and he adopted us into his family. Though we were strangers and though we were separate from Christ and we were under his wrath and under the dominion of Satan and dead in our trespasses and sins, what this text tells us is that God graciously adopted us, he reached beyond his family, so to speak, and reached to us and brought us into his family and adopted us and made us a child of God. 1 John 3 speaks of that reality, doesn't it, when it says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called children of God and we are." To be a child of the Father, to belong to his family with the full benefits and being a full heir of all of his blessings, that's what we have in Christ and what this text tells us is that the first member of the Trinity, God the Father, did that for us, and what you should see as you look at the text is the attributes of God that were active in bringing this to pass on our behalf. Look at it there at the end of verse 4 when it says that, "In love He predestined us to adoption as sons." It's "according to the kind intention of His will." In verse 6, it's "to the praise of the glory of His grace." We see his love, we see his kindness, we see his grace operating toward us, God having eternally appointed this outcome for us that we might enter into the blessings of being a

part of his family and knowing him and being on the evening end of such immeasurable, exalted kindness not only for this life but for all of the ages to come.

This is what God the Father has done. God the Father saved us before, you could say in a sense before time began. Oh, the salvation needed to be applied to our hearts in real time during our earthly lives but the point here is that God had appointed this and determined all of this to take place before the foundation of time and what this means for us is that God the Father loves us. Jesus said to his disciples in John 16:27, he said, "The Father Himself loves you. The Father Himself has your good in mind. The Father himself is securing what is in your best interest." So we marvel at the fact that God the Father has loved us like this, that he has blessed us like this and we see as we peer back, as it were, into the pre-temporal aspects of God's existence, we realize that there was this abiding eternal purpose of God to bestow blessing on us in Christ and that's what he has done, and we pause to let that sink in just a bit, to let that truth reverberate in our hearts, and we look at that and we say, "Well, if that's true, then all I can do is give praise and honor to Him. He was good to me when I had no claim on Him." Do you understand that, my Christian friend? Do you understand that we had no claim on God? That the creature had no claim on the Creator? That the sinner had no claim on the Holy One? That the one under judgment had no claim on the Judge for pardon? And yet God graciously did this for us, he chose us, he adopted us, and this coming from the hand of God the Father securing our good when we were undeserving.

And I want you to understand and I want to emphasize a point here, that what Scripture teaches here in this passage and in many other places as well, is that the electing work of God did something. It did not simply make salvation possible for us, it guaranteed our salvation. When the world history was unfolding, when you were born into the world having been chosen by God before the foundation of the world, there was no possibility that the outcome of your spiritual situation would have been anything other than the complete salvation of God that he had chosen you for before the beginning of time. And so when God elected us before the foundation of the world, he made our salvation certain to occur and now having been on the receiving end of the saving work of the Holy Spirit, we are now secure in him, the purpose of God has been carried out in our lives, and there are greater purposes yet to unfold but God's love for us, the Father's love for us was so great that he chose us before time began, he made certain our salvation for those of us that are in Christ so that there was no possibility that we would ever be anything other than saved in the end; that the only possible destination for our soul would be the eternal glories of heaven. That depends not on us but it is the outworking of the purpose of God who causes all things to work according to the counsel of his will, and it was God's will, my Christian friend, it was God's will, God the Father's will to save you because he loved you and had kindness upon you and showed grace to you even before the beginning of time. Those are magnificent truths, aren't they, and what we see here is that we see this first member of the Trinity, God the Father having exercised that saving purpose toward us so that we can rightly say God the Father saves us and our salvation is an outworking of his purpose for us.

One thing maybe that I should just draw out one implication of it, sometimes people will think about, "Well, Christ loves us but the Father was reluctant for our salvation," and so there's a greater love from Christ for us than there was from the Father. No, that's not true. The love of the Father is equal to the love of the Son. They are operating in perfect harmony of purpose. God the Father himself loves you. That should quiet your soul. That should give you confidence in the intentions of God and the attitude of God toward you as a believer in Jesus Christ, to enter into this sense where you have a sigh of relief and say "Oh, God the Father Himself loves me. Christ Himself said so. And God the Father chose me and adopted me into His family." Then there is this pervasive sense of peace and rest that comes to us as we realize the goodness of God toward us expressed in God the Father.

Now you see this also expressed, the fullness of this expressed over in Romans 8, if you want to turn there. Romans 8, beginning in verse 28. We often quote that verse in isolation and it's okay that we do but that verse goes on and explains things that are pertinent for us here today. In Romans 8:28, we see this, it says, "we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew," those that he loved before the beginning of time, it's a relational term, "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified." God loved us and exercised this saving purpose toward us and it was a comprehensive purpose that we would be called by the Holy Spirit to salvation in Christ. God predestined us for that. He called us and he justified us, and one day he will glorify us, and these things are all so certain that even the future aspect of our salvation can be spoken of as though it were a past tense reality. He glorified us in the sense that he made certain that we would receive the heavenly glory, the heavenly inheritance in the end. This is the purpose of God toward those who love us and this means, beloved, that he causes all things to work together for good to those who love him, to those that belong to Christ. It is the purpose of God that everything that you go through in this life will work toward your final salvation, will work to shape and conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. It was his purpose before time began, it is the purpose that he is working out now, it is the purpose that will certainly be climaxed in the end when we are in heaven around the throne of Jesus Christ. These things are revealed certainties. This is the purpose of God the Father toward you and nothing can hinder his purpose, nothing can cause it to fail.

In fact, that's what Paul goes on to say in this text as you look at verse 31. He says, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?" If God has determined to give this blessing to us, he chose us for it before the beginning of time, he's working it out now and it's certain to occur in the future, then what does it matter that earthly circumstances sometimes work against us from one perspective? What does it matter that there is a devil accusing us and trying to mislead us? What does it matter that the forces of hell are arrayed against us? What does it matter if all of those subordinate things are against us if the greater purpose of the highest God and the only God is at work

to secure your salvation? If God is for us everything else falls to the wayside as he works out his purpose for you in Christ. It can have no other outcome, beloved, and so these things are designed to draw us into a great sense of security, a great sense of love and honor to God, and a recognition that the purposes of God will most certainly be carried out in your life no matter how faint it may seem at the time, no matter how wavering your own experience of faith is and how it is intermingled with doubt and intermingled with sin, understand that there is a greater purpose of God at work in you, my Christian brother, my Christian sister, understand that the purpose of God is at work and his power is what determines the outcome for us so that Paul could say at the end of Romans 8 in verse 38, he said, "I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Not much left to be said after that, is there? God the Father has set his love upon us in Christ. He chose us for that. This is an aspect of the outworking of the Triune God to secure blessing for the people that God the Father gave to his Son to redeem.

The glorious purpose of God the Father was that you would most certainly be saved, my Christian friend, and to that end he gave us as a people to Christ before time began. That's what Jesus himself said in John 17:24. Listen as I read that verse, John 17:24. Jesus is praying to the Father and he says, "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world." Jesus as he's praying to the Father reminds the Father that, "You have given Me this people." And so the Father gave the elect to Christ before the foundation of the world. The loving desire of the Father would be carried out and Christ says that it is his desire as he's praying, he wants us, he wants his people, he wants the elect to see him glorified, to see his glory manifested, and the splendor of that, the majesty of that is what is going to be the ultimate destination for all that believe in Christ, it's going to be the outcome of all of our salvation. I start to lose the vocabulary to give adequate description of what this means, but the outcome of our salvation which God the Father appointed us for, is to be in heaven and to see the unveiled majesty and glory of our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you think God the Father answers the prayers of God the Son? I do, and God the Son, Jesus Christ said, "Father, I want them to see Me in glory in heaven and for glory which I shared with You before the foundation of the world."

Well, that's going to happen and it was a loving, kind, gracious purpose of God that you would enter into that kind of immeasurable blessing for all of eternity. God the Father chose you for that before the beginning of time and here as we close this first point here, Scripture also teaches us that God the Father is keeping us for that even as we speak. In John 10:29 Jesus said this, he said, "My Father, who has given them to Me," speaking of the people that Christ would save, "My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." Jesus says, "The Father is holding the elect, He is keeping them so that they will certainly enter into the inheritance that He had appointed for them before the beginning of time." God the Father is keeping us in his hand. He is holding us in his omnipotence to make sure that there would be that

final outcome, there would be the final culmination of the purpose that he intended for us in eternity past. Then Jesus goes on to say, he says, "My Father is greater than all," then he immediately says, "I and the Father are one." Jesus putting himself on the same level, expressing that he and the Father have the same essence, the same purpose, Jesus making the statement therefore that he and the Father are greater than all and that no one can contradict their purpose. Your salvation is secure because of the work of God the Father. It's a marvelous aspect of the Triune nature of our salvation.

Well, let's go back Ephesians 1 and see that there is a second aspect of this, this wonderful Triune work of our salvation, and it's the work of God the Son, that God the Son saves us, the Lord Jesus Christ saves us. And turning back to Ephesians 1 in verse 7, you see the Apostle Paul transition from talking specifically and directly about God the Father to speaking about the Son, the S-o-n, Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's pick it up at verse 6 as Paul wraps up his discussion about God the Father, he says, "to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." The Beloved being a term for Christ, and now here in verse 7, he starts to expound upon, he starts to expand his praise as it pertains the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf. In verse 7 it says, "In Him we have redemption through His blood." Through his blood tells us and is an indication to us that he is now talking about the second member of the Trinity, he's talking about God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ because it was the Lord Jesus Christ who shed his blood on the cross for our salvation. It was not God the Father who became flesh. It was not God the Spirit who became flesh. It was God the Son who became flesh on our behalf and it was God the Son who offered up his life on the cross for us. So what we see here is that God the Son has saved us through his blood.

Look again at verse 7, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." And he goes on to say that all things everywhere will find their final culmination, the outworking of their purpose in the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 9 and 10 it says, "He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him," that is, in Christ, "with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him," that is, in Christ, "also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory."

So you see the focus on Christ in this section of this chapter and we considered Christ's redemptive work just a few messages ago, Christ's work for us. We said that in his life Jesus Christ rendered perfect obedience to God's law, in his death he paid the full price of sin on our behalf, so that in Christ we have a Savior who has accomplished everything necessary to reconcile us to a holy God. He rendered full obedience to the law of God which we never could have done. We were fallen, we have sinned, and to break one commandment is to break them all because of the unified nature of the law of God. And so we were hopelessly lost and lost in sin and under the judgment of the law of God, having not kept it as God requires for Matthew 5:48 says, "You are to be perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect." We therefore lack the obedience to his law that's

necessary to enter into heaven. Christ came and lived a perfect life of obedience to that law and now those who believe in Christ receive the benefit of that. He represented us in his obedience and that obedience is imputed to us when we believe in Christ so that God accepts us for the sake of his Son when we come to Christ in faith. That obedience is credited to our account. In like manner, in his death he paid the curse of the law. He satisfied the curse. He became a curse for us, Galatians says. He bore our sins in his body on the cross, 1 Peter 2 says, and so that we see that in Christ we have the second member of the Trinity in human flesh living out on earth the full obedience to the law as a man, offering up his perfect life as a sacrifice to God to pay for our sins, and we see the glory of the Trinity on display, that Jesus Christ secured our redemption in his blood and in his obedient life. What a wonder that is. This is what God the Son has done for us.

R. B. Kuiper says this. It's a rather extended quote but it's worth hearing in full as he speaks about the Lord Jesus Christ, the second member of the Trinity. He says this, he said, "Christ paid the penalty of our sins not in part but the whole. All of us are hell-deserving sinners but in our stead He endured the agony of hell in the garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. When Christ was hanging on the cross, darkness enveloped the whole land and Him too. God was hiding His face from Him. Aware of that fact, Christ cried out with a loud voice, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?' That cry was one of hellish agony. When Christ uttered it, all the waves and the billows of the divine wrath against sin rolled over His head and crushed His soul. He was at the very bottom of the bottomless pit and only thus could He atone in full for the sins of His people."

So we look back at the first four verses of our text, verses 3 through 6, and we see that God the Father chose us and adopted us and we marvel and we praise him for the glory of his grace for doing that for us. We look at verses 7 through 12 and we see that we have redemption in Christ, redemption through his blood. That brief phrase "through His blood" is a shorthand reference from what our brother R. B. Kuiper was explaining in fuller depth, that in the shedding of his blood on the cross, the second person of the Trinity accomplished what was necessary at the pain of great self-sacrifice, at the pain of the wrath that you and I deserve, enduring it as our substitute he accomplished a full atonement for us that satisfied the righteous wrath of God against sinners like you and me. This is what Christ did for us in his blood. In that great act of self-sacrifice, in those hellish hours on the cross where the Father turned his face away and the full fury of infinite judgment was poured out upon his infinite soul, we see what God the Son has done for us. God the Father chose us before the beginning of time. Wow, the wonder of that just causes us to burst forth in praise. Look at what God the Son did and you burst forth in another aspect, another dimension of praise to the Triune God directed specifically to that second member of the Trinity who did this for us.

So Jesus Christ, God the Son is the head of our salvation, he represented us, he did for us in our place what we could not have done ourselves, and it was in the Lord Jesus Christ that God chose us. He saw us, he determined that the benefit of everything that Christ did would apply to us, and so all the benefits of salvation are received through the Lord Jesus Christ and when you receive Christ by faith, all of that wonder of who he is is graciously

applied to your account and God accepts you in the Beloved, God accepts you in Christ, God forgives all of your sins for the sake of the sufferings of his Son, God receives you into heaven based on the perfection of his Son and that's the benefit that we have in Christ. You see, my friends, you see why there could be no boasting by anyone, by any true Christian, why God gets all of the glory. God chose us for this before we had done anything good or bad. Christ did this for us and did this for us 2,000 years ago before we had done anything good or bad. Christ was carrying this out so that the purpose of God was at play, the redemption, the accomplished redemption of Christ on the cross was in play before you had even been born, before your parents had been born, your grandparents. Go back multiple multiple generations and you realize how certain the purposes of God were, how the outworking of human history as it applies to you could only have had one destination because it was the purpose of God the Father and God the Son that you would be saved to the praise of the glory of his grace. Amen?

These are the wonderful aspects of our salvation but I want to remind you of something. We're getting lost in wonder, love and praise in response to these things. As you follow through everything that Scripture says about these things, you realize that the majesty of the Triune work of God in our salvation simply cannot be exhausted. We can describe things, we can point to the Scriptures that describe it but the implications of it and the fullness of it is far beyond anything that we could express in a 60 minute message like this. We'll spend all of eternity growing in our understanding and in the depth of appreciation and praise of the majesty of all of these things that mean for us, but my point here for this particular moment is to make this point, that while Christ accomplished our redemption at the cross and made it certain by his shed blood, it is for you to understand that he is still working to save us in a sense, and what we mean by that is that Christ now represents us at the right hand of God having ascended into heaven where he represents us before God and intercedes for us on an ongoing basis to secure the ongoing continuance of our salvation. He has not left us to our own devices. It's not that he paid for our sins and then left us to work it out alone by ourselves. No, we have a brother in heaven, as I like to say, the Lord Jesus Christ is our brother, we are sons of God and he is our elder brother, and our elder brother who loves us, who represents us, whom we are united with, our elder brother is in heaven now representing us and securing the continuance of our salvation on our behalf before his Father's throne.

Again quoting from R. B. Kuiper, he said and I quote, "Let no one think that when Jesus breathed His last on the cross, He ceased from His work as Savior. It must be said emphatically that He did nothing of the kind," meaning that in no way did Christ cease his work for us. Continuing the quote now, "The resurrected and ascended Christ continues His saving work and will continue it until all the redeemed shall have entered through the gates into the celestial city."

Magnificent work of Christ, magnificent Savior, and as you start to plumb the depths of what this means, it just means so much, beloved, it means that our earthly lives are just a small insignificant token of the greater purpose for which we were created. We will be in heaven forever and this 70 year window of time, give or take, that we experience here on earth is merely preparatory for the outcome of our salvation which God planned for us

before the beginning of time, and that 70 year window of time is just a sliver of the purposes for which Christ saved us and the outcome in the celestial city that we will experience with him; ages upon ages and eons of eons going forward, and when we've been there 10,000 years, we'll have no less time to praise him than when we first began. You see, beloved, do you see how that changes our perspective on our earthly lives and on our earthly trials? These are passing momentary light afflictions, 2 Corinthians 4 says, that is preparing us for a greater weight of eternal glory that far surpasses it all by comparison. That's the significance of this for us in our earthly lives, and the significance for us as we contemplate God in his Triune glory is we see God the Father has saved us, God the Son has saved us, and therefore we are and we will be a people for the praise of his glory.

Well, what about the Holy Spirit, then? That brings us to our third point for this morning. God the Holy Spirit saves us. God the Father saves us, we saw that, Ephesians 1:3 through 6. God the Son saves us, Ephesians 1:7 through 12. And now in the final two verses of our text, we see the work of the Holy Spirit in saving us as well, and what the Holy Spirit uniquely did was he applied redemption to our hearts. The work of redemption was accomplished by Jesus Christ, now in time during the course of our lives, the Holy Spirit applies it to our hearts to ensure that we enter into the benefits of everything that Christ purchased for us at the cross.

Look at verses 13 and 14 with me. In verse 13 it says, "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory." The Holy Spirit brought the Gospel with power to your heart and opened your blinded eyes. He unstopped your deaf ears. He loosened your mute tongue. The Holy Spirit came and opened your eyes and gave you understanding so that you would be able to believe in Christ. This was a prior work of the Holy Spirit and now the Spirit of God, this passage teaches us and 1 Corinthians 12:3 and other places, Romans 8, teaching us that the Spirit of God now indwells us, the Spirit of God indwells us and has made us a new creation, and the Spirit of God is dwelling within us and has taken possession of our souls. What this text here in Ephesians 1:13 and 14 is saying when it says that the Spirit is a pledge of our inheritance, it says that the Spirit has come to us and indwells us, and this is like a down payment from God that the salvation that he has started in us will certainly be brought to completion and the Spirit of God within us is the guarantee of the purpose of God that this will certainly take place.

It reminds us of Philippians 1:6. Let's turn there as it's just a chapter or two to the right in your Bible. In chapter 1, verse 6 of Philippians, the writer says, the Apostle Paul says, "I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus." The fact that the Holy Spirit has come to us is a promise from God that he will complete that work. The Spirit will not abandon us. The Spirit, as it were, will bear us like on his wings to bring us to the final destination of heaven that God chose us for before the beginning of time.

So the Spirit of God regenerated us, John 3. You know, the Spirit blows where he wishes. You must be born again. You do not have the power to bring yourself to life. The Spirit of God is the one who brings us to life. The Spirit of God is the one who unites us to Christ by faith, and the Spirit of God is the one who applies all of these benefits of salvation to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. And friend, you need to understand this, that without that work of the Spirit, you never would have believed in Christ. Jesus said in John 5:40, you're unwilling to believe. The Spirit of God has to come and make us willing, has to change our hearts, has to take away that heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh, and all of that is beyond human power to accomplish. Well, in the course of life, in the course and the window and the span of our time, somewhere in time the Spirit of God does that and works that out in believers so that they are fully united to Christ, enter into that redemptive work on the cross in fulfillment of the purpose of God which he established before the foundation of the world, and that's the work of the Spirit in our salvation. So we see this Triune work of God, this Triune work of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, and now the Spirit of God is at work in us conforming us to Christ.

Look at Romans 8 as we reach near the end of our time here this morning together. Let's look at Romans 8:9 and 11 and it kind of summarizes the other things that I've been saying in the past few minutes. Naturally, let's just keep going back and back. At this rate I'm going to be back in like Exodus, but we'll just go back a few verses further. In Romans 8:7 it says, "the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God." Here saying that the unsaved man in his natural ability is so hostile to God that he would not be saved, and that he is so spiritually lost that he is not able to submit himself to the word of God. There is an indication here of the total depravity of man, totally unable to save himself. This is where the Spirit of God comes in and the Spirit of God accomplishes for us that which we are not able to do on our own. Romans 8:9 says, "However," by way of contrast, "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness." Verse 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 Spirit of God dwells in us, he works to conform us to the image of Christ, he influences our desires, he illumines our mind to understand Scripture, and he works and shapes us and provokes in us attitudes and desires that conform us increasingly over time to the image of the one who loved us and gave himself up for us.

That's the work of the Spirit of God powerfully working in the heart of you who are Christians. It may seem by your perception at times that it's a very weak and uncertain work as you go through times of indifference, you go through times of doubt, you go through times of disobedience. You see, from a human perspective your own weakness, this is where it's so important for us to remember the nature of the Triune work of God in our salvation, that even though you and I stumble along the way, God is powerfully at work carrying out the purpose of God the Father for which Christ Jesus himself died and rose again to attain and that the Spirit of God is working. He lets us feel our infirmities.

He lets us stumble for a time so that we would see our weakness and learn to depend upon him more; that we would have less confidence in self and more confidence in Christ. The point here for this morning is this, is that the Holy Spirit is powerfully working out the salvation for which Christ died for you. He is powerfully at work even if you do not see it. He is powerfully at work even if you do not feel it. He is a silent Shepherd carrying you safely to the destination that God appointed for you in his electing work on your behalf.

So my friend, our salvation is certain because of the work of the Triune God, and I just invite you to step back and to consider what we've said here from God's word this morning to see the dazzling stupendous nature of the work of God in your salvation. The Father chose us in Christ before time began. The Son came into the world and redeemed us at the cross and now continues representing us before the Father in heaven. The Spirit of God applied this work of Christ to our hearts and brought new life to us where death had reigned beforehand and he applied that redemption to us. So the Father loved us and sent his Son. The Son loved us and gave himself for us. The Spirit loved us and applied redemption to our hearts. The work of the Trinity in your salvation. We say with the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 9:15, "Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift."

My friend, if you're not in Christ, I would just remind you that Christ calls you to come, that you see that in Christ there has been, God has appointed a completely sufficient Redeemer for sinners like you; that Christ has accomplished a full atonement and that he calls you to himself. You need no other argument, you need no other Savior, you need no other works, you simply need to come to Christ who accomplished this great salvation for sinners just like you, and if you would receive Christ, all of these things of which I've been speaking here this morning can belong to you. Christ is willing to save you right now. God in his Triune majesty, God in his Triune glory has appointed a salvation like this for everyone who would come humbly to his Son and that salvation can be yours if you would believe in Christ. Why would you delay? Why would you turn away? Why would you be indifferent to such royal majesties as these? Oh, my friend, in light of the great Triune work of God, I call you, Christ calls you to come to himself with the promise that, "The one who comes to Me," Christ says, he will certainly never cast away. Glory to God, to the praise of the glory of his grace we say these things and commend them by the Holy Spirit to the outworking of them in your heart today.

Let's pray together, shall we?

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three in one, we give You praise for the riches that we inherit, heart and soul and voice we raise. We praise You, our Father, for our salvation. We praise You, Lord Jesus, for our salvation. We praise You, indwelling Spirit, for our salvation. We thank You that we see how unconquerable Your work must be, how certain the outcome of our salvation must be if each member of the Trinity in a unified purpose and in a unified essence has worked to do this on our behalf. We can't plumb the depths of these things, Father, we simply receive them from Your word, we thank You for them, and ask You to seal them to our hearts, that You would find in us a people that is most responsive to praise You for the glory of Your grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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