Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to the book of Ephesians 1

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this letter that the Apostle Paul writes to the church in Ephesus and to us today about understanding who and what we are by virtue of our faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Paul wants our eyes to be opened to who we are in Christ and to the spiritual blessings that we have in Christ – right now – by grace.

The saint – the individual who has placed their faith and trust in the life of Jesus and in the finished work of Jesus upon the cross –

God, Himself, has set us apart –

Paul wants the believers in Ephesus and us today – to go deeper in both our knowledge of God and of who we are “In Christ”

Because faith in Christ does not only result in His indwelling in us by the Hoy Spirit

It also means that we are “in Him”

Blessed with every spiritual blessing

Chosen

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Adopted

Accepted

Predestined

Redeemed

Forgiven

Given an inheritance

And so Paul – under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is reminding us of all the spiritual blessings that God has done for us.

All according to the riches of His grace

Father, Son, Holy Spirit – they all play a role in the mystery of His will.

They have all contributed equally to our salvation

The Godhead planned, purchased and preserve the believer

So – in our text this morning, we are going to be looking at the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

And Paul is going to tell us how we are saved, sealed and secured in Him.

Let's pray…

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Once again, I must remind everyone that the from 3-14

This is one complete sentence –

It actually is a song of praise -

Where Paul reveals to the saint, God's master plan, His blueprint -

of our past, present and our future, in Christ.

Our election, our redemption and our inheritance in Christ –

So I am going to read the sentence and then we will look more in depth into our text.

Read Text

In our study last week –

We looked at the work of Jesus on the cross

Our redemption

Our forgiveness

Jesus paid our price

Jesus shed His blood

His blood had to be poured out on the cross –

That was the only way – without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin

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That was the purchase price

That was the cost that God demanded

And when we as believers puts our faith and trust in Jesus, that payment is put on our account.

We are accepting Jesus' payment as our own

And when we do that, God honors it -

We trust in Jesus Christ

[Eph 1:12 NKJV] 12 <u>that we who first trusted in Christ</u> should be to the praise of His glory.

This is how we are redeemed, this is how we are saved, this is how we are forgiven

It is not of good works

It is not by following a list of do's and donts

It is a gift

And for those who receive the gift, God gives eternal security

God gives us assurance

His assurance is based on His Word – His promises

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His assurance is based on His character

Yet, the walk of many believers is one of insecurity.

They have a sense of insecurity in their relationship with God

They will begin to think -

“I really blew it this time – I don’t know if I am still saved or if I ever was saved?”

“Has God forsaken me?”

They think that God is looking for a reason to abandon the relationship –

They are insecure - so they turn to religion or they distance themselves from God thinking that they will never be good enough.

And the problem with this insecurity is that it robs the believer of joy and hope in Christ.

Turn with me to John 14 –

Here in John 14

Jesus is with His disciples –

They are in the upperroom

We are hours away from Jesus being betrayed and arrested and nailed to the cross.

And Jesus addresses His disciples who are struggling with insecurity –

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The disciples are sad

Jesus has told them that He is going to be leaving them

Jesus has told them already that they are all going to abandon Him

Look at verse 16

[Jhn 14:16-18 NKJV] 16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-- 17 "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Jesus promises His disciples –

That He was not going to abandon them

That another of the same kind -

Is going to come inside of you

The promise of the Holy Spirit

Who will empower us to do what God has called each of us to do

It is the Holy Spirit who will help us bring to remembrance God's Word

Who will lead us in the path that God has set for us

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It is the Holy Spirit who transforms the sinner

And it is the Holy Spirit who plays a critical role in our salvation –

Let's look at our text -

[Eph 1:13-14 NKJV] 13 In Him you also [trusted], after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Here in verse 13 –

Paul tells us how a sinner becomes a saint.

First, he or she hears the gospel of your salvation

Turn to Romans 10

[Rom 10:13-17 NKJV] 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved." 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" 17 So then faith [comes] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

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In October 1991

My boss, Ed Pena, he made arrangements for me to go to talk to one of the pastors at Calvary Chapel of West Covina

I agreed to go to – just to get him off my back

My thought was – I am going to go listen – he told me it was going to be no longer than half hour and then he will leave me alone.

I heard the gospel – heard how we all fall short of the glory of God, heard much Jesus loves me, heard how and why Jesus died for me.

I heard about the forgiveness and the hope that is found in Jesus

But it wasn't simply hearing the words that saved me –

it was responding to the work that the Holy Spirit was doing in me.

It was believing and trusting

And when I did – my sins were forgiven

I was redeemed by the blood of the lamb

I was given eternal life and the Holy Spirit came to live inside of me.

There are people who hear, but they never believe.

They even come through those doors.

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They hear, but it’s not accompanied by faith.

They understand in the mind even, but they do not embrace it in the heart.

But we’re told in Romans 10:9 that we must believe with the heart unto salvation.

We must come to rest all our hope and relate all our life to the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must believe the gospel, not historically or intellectually, but personally.

This is a role of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus speaking to Nicodemus -

[Jhn 3:5-7 NKJV] 5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Again, this is a work of the Holy Spirit

This new birth happens when a person is drawn by the Holy Spirit

Remember, God Iis the initiator

He chose us

He reaches out to us

We are convicted by the Holy Spirit

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And it is the Holy Spirit who helps us understand the Word

And we are born again by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This means that no matter what I say from this pulpit

There will be people who will be unconvinced

Because this work is a work of the Spirit

[Jhn 1:12-13 NKJV] 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

This born-again experience can only come from the Holy Spirit

And so – we receive the Holy Spirit, after we hear, when we believe

[Gal 4:6 NKJV] 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

The moment when we hear and we respond – we possess the Holy Spirit

He lives inside of us

[1Co 3:16 NKJV] 16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in you?

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Keep in mind – that the believers in Corinth had a lot of issues that they were going through

So – as a believer, even if I mess up the Holy Spirit still dwells in me? Yes

The Christians in Corinth had a lot of problems

The Christians in Nogales and Rio Rico – and surrounding areas – they too, have problems.

Yet, Paul reminds them and us – that the Holy Spirit lives in them.

Look at the last part of verse 13 again.

in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

The Holy Spirit seals us

You and I were sealed with the Holy Spirit

This is His contribution to our salvation

That the moment that we trusted in Jesus

He personally came to you and me and sealed us.

He marks that person – as owned by Christ

The Holy Spirit Himself is the seal.

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And the seal remains unbroken as a token of safety.

God is not going to break the seal

God is not going to renege on the deal

God is not going to have buyer's remorse

[Eph 4:30 NKJV] 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

The sealing of the Holy Spirit is for the believer – once and for all.

It is a one time act – that gives the believer an ongoing assurance that we are God's children

Entitled to the blessings of the Father

Entitled to the benefits of the Son

The seal implies a finished transaction.

It implies ownership.

It implies assurance

It implies authenticity.

The presence of the Holy Spirit, in the life of the believer – authenticates that we are not a make believer.

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[Rom 8:9 NKJV] 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

It's not what church one goes to that makes them a Christian

It is the seal of the Holy Spirit that authenticates one as a Christian.

Paul employs a word picture here with which the Ephesians would have been well acquainted

Now – keep in mind the context

Paul is writing to those in Ephesus

Ephesus is a port city

Merchants and buyers from all over the Mediterranean would come to Ephesus to visit the markets and make purchases.

They would crate up their goods and find a ship which would take them to their hometowns around the Roman Empire.

To mark a crate as belonging to them, they would affix their personal seal on it.

Then they would go home – and await the ship that had their stuff

They would go to the dock and show the dockmaster their seal.

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You and I have been redeemed by Christ, He has paid our ransom.

Now, we belong to Him

And He has set His seal of ownership on us - that seal is the Holy Spirit

One day He will come and take possession of what He has purchased with His blood

14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

In verse 13 – we see that the Holy Spirit seals us in His role of salvation

And here in verse 14 – we see another blessing –

And that is that Holy Spirit guarantees us

And the word guarantee here – it actually means, that the Holy Spirit is the down payment

The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance

God wants the believer to be certain of His intentions of our redemption.

Paul is saying that the Lord is going to see our relationship through to the end.

The Holy Spirit is the pledge to us – that we will be in heaven

Nothing can undo or cancel this out

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The Holy Spirit is our down payment –

But there is another significance to the word, “guarantee”

Because the Greek word for guarantee is where we get our word and concept for “engagement ring”

The pledge, the promise and the guarantee of marriage

Think about this

God has purchased us

We have been redeemed through Jesus Christ

He has sealed us

He has put His mark of ownership on us

He has authenticated who we are in Christ

And we know – that one day He will take us home

And we will have glorified bodies – delivered from the presence of sin altogether

We know that one day we will be wedded to Christ

I asked you to make a note of the phrase – to be praise of His glory

And if you go back to verse 6

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Verse 12

We find the exact same phrase –

Paul is this sentence – is offering praise

To God the Father

God the Son

And the Holy Spirit

For their role in our salvation.

[Jhn 14:1-4 NKJV] 1 “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if [it were] not [so], I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, [there] you may be also. 4 “And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

Jesus is coming again –

To lay claim to that for which He died.

His inheritance

The question we must ask ourselves – Are we ready for Him?

I want to end with this –

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There was a woman – she served faithfully in her fellowship for many years – and she was diagnosed with cancer – the doctors couldn't do anything anymore.

So, they told her she had about three months to live and they advised her to get all her affairs in order.

So one of the things she did was that she contacted her pastor and had him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes.

She told him which songs she wanted sung at her Celebration of Life service,

She told him what scriptures she would like read, and what she wanted to be wearing.

She wanted to have an open casket.

She also wanted to be buried with her favorite bible by her side.

And then she tells the pastor –

There is one more thing, I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand.

And then she proceeded to tell the pastor why -

The woman explained. "In all my years of attending church potlucks and functions; my favorite part was when my fellow brothers or sisters would offer to clear away my dish – they would always lean over and remind me to hold onto my fork.

It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming.

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You see, she loved desserts

She knew that there was some type of a fruit pie or delicious cake that she was going to get to enjoy

So she told the pastor -

“So I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder ‘What’s with the fork?’

Then I want you to tell them, “Something better is coming so keep your fork too.”

You see loved ones –

The Holy Spirit is a little like that fork.

He is a reminder that there’s more up ahead.

Better things

All because of who we are in Christ

AMEN

Let’s pray…

To Receive Christ do the following:

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Admit, “I am a sinner.”

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

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Loved ones – the best is yet to come –

God has blessed us has with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

And in every sense of the word – we are saved right now – forever!

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

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