
The Summation of All Things in Christ

Studies in Ephesians with a Local Church Emphasis

LESSON X : OPENING EULOGY PART THREE: THE SEALING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (1 : 13-14)

Greeting

¹ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

God the Father

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ *to the praise of the glory of His grace*, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

God the Son

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth — in Him. ¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be *to the praise of His glory*.

God the Holy Spirit

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

The Seal of the Holy Spirit (1:13-14)

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. (KJV)

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory. (NIV)

in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth — the good news of your salvation — in whom also having believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, to the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory. (Young's Literal Translation)

“The Father’s plan to adopt people into his family was accomplished through Jesus Christ and made a reality in them by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Having stated the Father’s plan and the Son’s provision for that plan, Paul now discusses the Holy Spirit’s ministry to make it a reality in those who believe. *As good as the plan and provision may be, it is useless unless it can be appropriated by individuals by means of the Holy Spirit.* In this discussion of the work of the Holy Spirit, Paul shows the Spirit’s activity of sealing, the duration of the sealing, and finally, offers praise to God for his work.” [Hoehner, 234]

v. 13 — in whom you also — ἐν ᾧ καὶ ὑμεῖς [en hō kai humeis] literally ‘in him you also...’ and should be completed by ‘were sealed’ at the end of v 13, therefore this is an anacoluthon (according to Lincoln). Wuest agrees: “We have in the Greek what is called an interrupted construction.” [Wuest, 48] The “in him / whom” refers back to Christ.

WHO IS “YOU”? (NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH “WHO’S ON FIRST, WHAT’S ON SECOND”) — Paul had been speaking in first person throughout vv 3-12 (“we, us”) but now switches to the second person (“you”). Why? Some believe Paul is making a distinction between the Jewish readers (vv 3-12) and the Gentile Christians (vv 13, 14; e.g. O’Brien, Wuest, Bruce, Fee). Without question Paul does make this distinction as he progresses in his argument (2:11-22); however it is unlikely to have that sense here. “On the basis of the words ‘we, those having previously hoped in Christ’ (verse 12) as contrasted with ‘you ... having also believed in him’ (verse 13), many have endorsed the position that two ethnic groups are indicated here; namely, in verse 12

Jewish Christians; in verse 13 believers from the Gentiles. Objections:

(1) This is a very unnatural interpretation, for in the preceding verses ‘we’ and ‘us’ always refer to Paul and all those addressed (see verses 11, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3). By far the most of those addressed were believers from the Gentiles, not from the Jews. Why, then, the sudden change of meaning in verse 12?

(2) [‘Having already hoped’] ... does not necessarily mean ‘having hoped before others did’ or ‘having hoped before Christ arrived.’ It may equally well mean ‘having hoped before having fully attained.’ With ‘we had previously hoped’ compare ‘you have previously heard’ (Col. 1:5). In the latter passage, too, no contrast is implied between two groups of believers of different national origins.

(3) Finally, if such a contrast in origin must be maintained here in 1:12, 13, it would almost seem as if the apostle were writing, ‘We Jewish Christians, we alone, are destined for the praise of his glory,’ and ‘You believers from the Gentiles, you alone, were sealed with the promised Spirit.’ The apostle obviously would never have taught this.

The only element of value I can see in the theory which I reject is this, that when Paul, who in verses 3-12 has been referring constantly to himself and the addressed as one group (‘we,’ ‘us’), now in verse 13 (and see also 1:15-18; 2:1, 2, 8) begins to substitute the second person plural for the first person plural — *meaning, however, ‘you as well as all believers —, he is gradually preparing the hearers for the clear-cut distinction between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians which begins at 2:11.*” [Hendriksen, 89f]

having heard the word of truth — ἀκούσαντες τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθείας, [akousantes ton logon tēs alētheias] is “*the word of which the truth is the very substance and essence, the word or message is one of truth.*”

truth = ἀληθείας [alētheias] has the basic idea of *that which is in contrast to a lie, that which is reality as opposed to that which is false.* “When speaking of God, it refers to one who is faithful and thus ‘in whose word and work one can place complete confidence.’ ... [I]t is also used ‘of the content of Christianity as the absolute truth’ and this is how it is used in the present context and in 6:14. *Hence, it has the idea of reality in contrast to the falsehood of other religions.*” [Hoehner, 236] “The terms in v. 13, ‘hear, believe, word, truth, gospel, salvation’, are those of Christian mission. The gospel is preached, people hear, respond and are sealed with the Spirit. *‘The word of truth’ means the word whose content is truth and not ‘the truthful word’.... Unlike pagan philosophy or religion, Christianity is true and its ‘truth’ in the final issue is Christ himself (Jn 14.6; cf Gal 5.7; 2 Th 2.12).*” [Best, 148f]

the gospel (good news) of your salvation — τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς σωτηρίας ὑμῶν [to euangelion tēs sōtērias humōn] further explains “the word of truth.” “In Christ is found salvation and so ‘the word of truth’ is redefined as ‘the gospel of your salvation’, i.e. *the gospel which brings or reveals salvation, not the gospel which is salvation, for gospel and salvation are not terms of the same type.*” [Best, 149] **Gospel** [εὐαγγέλιον, euangelion] originally meant a “reward for good news” but later came to refer to the message itself, the “good news.” **Salvation** [σωτηρίας, sōtērias] indicates rescue or deliverance. It is used later in verb form to refer to the sinner who is dead in trespasses and is saved or delivered by grace (2:5). “*The truth of the message is the good news of deliverance of people from their bondage to sin. Many different messages proclaimed by the world as deliverance are false and bring people into greater bondage. Those messages contain falsehood and deception, whereas here Paul is showing the message of truth — the good news of deliverance.*” [Hoehner, 237]

in whom having also believed you were sealed — ἐν ᾧ καὶ πιστεύσαντες ἐσφραγίσθητε [en hō kai pisteusantes esphragisthēte] This second “in whom” is a resumption of the first one and also refers back to “in Christ.” Note the emphasis upon believing: *it is not only the hearing of the gospel but the believing that is necessary for the sealing of the Holy Spirit.*

BELIEVING AND SEALING OCCURS AT THE SAME MOMENT IN TIME — The sealing here is best understood as being contemporaneous to the believing, i.e., “when you heard and believed, you were sealed.” Lincoln goes into great detail with the grammar, almost all of which would go over the heads of all of us with very few exceptions. Cutting through the technical jargon, Lincoln states “having believed” (aorist participle) references an action which coincides in time with that of the main verb “were sealed” (aorist passive). “*As regards acceptance of the Christian gospel, believing can be seen to be the vital link between hearing the word and receiving the Spirit. When they believed, the readers of this epistle were sealed with the Spirit.*” [Lincoln, 39]

ARE WE SAVED THE FIRST TIME WE “HEAR” THE GOSPEL? — There are those who state a sinner is saved the first time they hear the gospel. Hoehner does see that implication in Paul’s words:

“The moment one hears and believes the gospel of salvation, he or she is sealed. The AV gives the idea that sometime after they heard and believed, they were sealed. Rather, *the picture is that when they heard, they believed and hence were sealed. This negates the idea that they heard the gospel over a period of time and then finally believed. On the contrary it should be regarded that the hearing was the hearing of faith (Rom 10:14-17) and, thus, it was at that point in time that they ‘also’ believed. It may be true that they heard the gospel superficially many times, but at one point in time they really heard and at that time they believed. This becomes the obedience of faith (Rom 1:5).*” [Hoehner, 237f]

Hendriksen makes the opposite emphasis:

“Of course, it makes a difference *how* men hear. Some hear and become gospel-hardened. As men may become deaf because of a constant pounding noise, so also hearers of the gospel may become completely immune to the preaching of

the truth. ('And I heard him a bumming away like a buzzard clock over my head.'). Moreover, to some the proclamation of the gospel is like a love-song sung beautifully and played well (Ezek. 33:32). They hear but do not take to heart (Mark 4:24; 13:1-9, 18-23). Christ, however, also stressed that men should give heed *what* they heard." [Hendriksen, 90]

Does the sinner get saved the first time he "hears" the gospel? That is a question of semantics. Those who answer that question "yes" would not deny that sinners may sit under the sound of the gospel many times prior to salvation. In like manner many (maybe not all) who answer the question "no" would not deny the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit in the opening of the sinner's heart to receive the gospel message. But is this a proof-text of that fact? — I think to force that interpretation from this verse is to read into the text rather than allowing the text to speak for itself.

you were sealed = ἐσφραγίσθητε [esphragisthēte] was used in classical literature with four basic points of emphasis in its meaning. It is used 21x in the LXX and 15x in the NT, each with essentially the same meanings:

- to close with a seal to denote **SECURITY**, preventing tampering (Deut 32:34; Job 14:17; Dan 6:17; Matt 27:66; Rom 15:28; Eph 4:30; Rev 5:1; 20:3) *Note the seal is so sure that rather than threaten the Ephesians with the loss of it, Paul incites them to holiness because of the sureness of it.*
- to mark with a seal to **AUTHENTICATE** (1 Kings 21:8; Esth 8:10; Jer 32:10-11; John 6:27)
- to certify **GENUINENESS** (Esth 8:8, 10; John 3:33; 1 John 3:24). It could be used of a document (Esth 3:12) or figuratively of a person (1 Cor 9:2). *"In the letter to Timothy we find an account of the signet pressed on the seal. That signet had two inscriptions, one on each side. On one side this: 'The Lord knoweth them that are his.' We may not know; we may make a mistake about it. The devil may make a mistake about it, but the Lord knows. On the other side: 'Let him that taketh the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.' The seal of the Holy Spirit makes distinct impressions that God will always recognize."* [Carroll, 82]
- to denote **IDENTIFICATION OF OWNERSHIP** (Neh 10:2; Esth 3:10; Song of Sol 8:6; Jer 32:11, 12; 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 4:30; 2 Tim 2:19; Rev 7:3-5, 8). *"The lumber camps furnish an illustration. Many parties cut down the pine trees and roll the logs into the river. In the succeeding freshet they all come down to the boom together. How do they determine separate ownership? Each log has its distinguishing mark. So the mark or seal of the Spirit given unto us declares God's ownership and guarantees that we will reach our destination — the day of redemption."* [Carroll, 83]

In this verse the emphasis is probably upon ownership, although the other references would not be denied. "The papyri afford the following examples of its use: 'If the fruit is *sealed*, then everything is in order: the sealing is the last thing that must be done prior to delivering;' 'let him *seal* a sample,' obviously to present the corn from being tampered with during its transit; 'I gave the letter *sealed* (to the messenger)'; 'send the ass to be *branded*.'" [Wuest, 49] *"Cattle and slaves were branded with their owner's seal, and so the seal was a mark of ownership and of preservation as the owner's property. In the OT God can be said to set a sign on his elect to distinguish them as his own and protect them from destruction (cf. Ezek 9:4-6). The seal also has this significance in 4 Ezra 6:5 and Rev 7:1-8; 9:4. So believers' reception of the Spirit is the sign that they belong to God in a special sense and have been stamped with the character of their owner. They belong to him now, but they are also protected until he takes complete possession of them (cf. v 14)."* [Lincoln, 39]

with the Holy Spirit of promise — τῷ πνεύματι τῆς ἐπαγγελίας τῷ ἁγίῳ [tō pneumati tēs epangelias tō hagiō] This could be translated "by or with the Holy Spirit." Note the word "holy" is placed at the end to emphasize the personal righteous character of the Spirit, literally, "with the Spirit of promise, the holy."

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SEAL — It is important to note that the Holy Spirit does not *give* us a seal or *place* a mark (seal) upon believers; rather the Holy Spirit Himself *is* the seal. *"This is important to notice because some have attempted to teach that we are sealed by the work of the Spirit rather than by the presence of His person.... The presence of the Spirit in an individual is proof that he belongs to God."* [Ron Crisp, *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, 36] "The Scofield Bible footnote is helpful: *'The Holy Spirit is Himself the seal.'* ... Thus, God places the Holy Spirit in us permanently ('*The Spirit who has been caused to take up His permanent residence in us, has a passionate desire to the point of envy*' – Jas. 4:5), indicating that the great transaction in which God the Son paid for sin, thus satisfying the just demand of God's holy law, is finished; that we saints belong to Him as His heritage, and that we are eternally secure." [Wuest, 49]

promise = some (e.g., Calvin) understand this in an active sense: "the Spirit confirms the promise of salvation." Hoehner (among many others) argue however *it is best to understand this in the passive sense: "the Spirit which was promised."* Greek scholar H. C. G. Moule understands it in the same manner and translates it as "the promised Holy Spirit." "The Spirit by whom believers are sealed is called, literally, 'the Holy Spirit of promise.' This could mean, in line with v 14, that he is the Spirit who is full of the promise of things to come. *It is more likely, however, to be a Semitism designating the Spirit as the Spirit promised in the Scriptures* (cf. Gal 3:14 where the Spirit is seen as the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, also Acts 2:17 which takes up the promise of Joel 2:28-32). This constitutes the first explicit mention of the Spirit in the letter. Being sealed by the Spirit is a specific blessing for which God is to be blessed, yet at the same time, as v 3 has indicated, there is a sense in which all the blessings of the eulogy can be attributed to the Spirit, since they are 'spiritual' blessings." [Lincoln, 40] "Chrysostom claims that the Spirit was promised by the prophets (see esp. Joel 2:28-29) and by Christ. The former seems to speak of the Spirit promised when the new covenant was to be initiated (Ezek 36:26-27; 37:14; cf. also 39:29) and the latter specifically refers to Christ's promise to his disciples that he would send the Spirit (Luke 24:49; John 14:16-17; 15:26; Acts 2:33; Gal 3:14; cf. also John 16:13; Acts 1:5; 10:47)." [Hoehner, 240]

NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE OTHER MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT — *The sealing and indwelling of the Holy Spirit must not be confused with His other ministries. Note there is no place in scripture where believers are told to seek the Holy Spirit to be sealed and indwelt since these are integral parts of our salvation. But note as well that believers are exhorted to be repeatedly filled with the Holy Spirit, where the believer surrenders more and more of himself to the control of the Spirit. These are important differences.* “Those who teach that the believer is sealed by a special work of the Spirit make the sealing experimental (capable of being experienced). They confuse the ‘sealing with the Spirit’ with His work in sanctification and giving of Christian assurance. The Bible on the other hand never describes sealing as an experience. The Spirit may work to produce Christian experiences, but it is His presence which is the seal. The sealing with the Spirit is not then to be viewed as a special experience.” [Ron Crisp, *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, 36]

v. 14 — who is the initial installment of our inheritance — ὅς ἐστιν ἀρράβων τῆς κληρονομίας ἡμῶν [hos estin arrabōn tēs klēronomias hēmōn] **Earnest, guarantee** [ἀρράβων, arrabōn] is variously translated as *guarantee* (ESV, NKJV, RSV); *earnest* (KJV, YLT); *deposit guaranteeing our inheritance* (NIV); *pledge* (Vulgate, NASB, NEB, JB, NJB, NRSV). It is used of *earnest money or caution money, referring to a down payment that was forfeited if the purchase was not completed; the first installment with a guarantee that the rest would follow.* An example is found in Greek literature of a woman selling a cow received 1000 drachmas of arrabōn. The word used here denotes “a portion of the whole payment, a part of the whole.” Bauer (BAGD) states it “is a payment which obligates the contracting party to make further payments.” In modern Greek a form of this word means “an engagement ring.” “In a down payment, that which is given is part of a greater whole, is of the same kind as that whole, and functions as a guarantee that the whole payment will be forthcoming. The Spirit then is the first installment and guarantee of the salvation of the age to come with its mode of existence totally determined by the Spirit.... The use of the metaphor by the writer to the Ephesians indicates a maintenance of the Pauline ‘already / not yet’ eschatological tension. The Spirit is seen as the power of the age to come given ahead of time in history, but as still only the beginning and guarantee of the full salvation of that age which is yet to come.” [Lincoln, 40f] “In business the ‘earnest’ gives a person security and peace of mind. Let us enjoy this in regard to our inheritance. God is not holding us in suspense but rather gives us every assurance that our inheritance is ‘reserved in heaven.’” [Ron Crisp, *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, 37] Wuest: ‘a part given in advance of what will be bestowed fully afterwards.’ “The bestowal of the Holy Spirit is God’s part payment in the salvation He gives the believing sinner, that part payment guaranteeing the full delivery of all parts of the salvation given. *Salvation is in three parts: justification, the removal of the guilt and penalty of sin and the bestowal of a positive righteousness, Jesus Christ, is given at the moment the sinner puts his faith in the Lord Jesus as Saviour; sanctification, a progressive work of the Spirit in the life of the believer, is a present possession in which He eliminates sin from the experience of the believer and produces His own fruit; glorification, the act of God transforming the present bodies of believers into perfect, sinless, deathless bodies. The believer has the first two now. The Holy Spirit, indwelling the believer, is God’s earnest money, guaranteeing to him the future glorification of his body.*” [Wuest, 49f]

IS “PLEDGE” A PROPER RENDERING? — While this word is sometimes translated “pledge,” some consider this to be inaccurate because (they argue) a pledge is returned when full payment is made (cf. Gen 38:17-20 when Jacob leaves his seal and his staff with Tamar until he returned with his payment). Dictionary: “Something given or held as security to guarantee payment of a debt or fulfillment of an obligation; Delivery of goods or personal property as security for a debt or obligation: a loan requiring a pledge of property.” *Whether it is an improper translation or not, it is important to realize that the Holy Spirit has been given to every believer at the moment of their salvation as an “earnest, a part of the whole and guarantee of what is to come” and will never be taken from that one who is saved.*

inheritance = [κληρονομίας, klēronomias] is a compound word “land received by lot, allotment” + “to dispense, distribute;” thus the sense is “a portion that is given, inheritance, property, possession.” “In the present context it refers to the believers’ eternal inheritance, their gain of heaven because of the Father’s election, the Son’s redemption, and the Spirit’s sealing.... Because we have been adopted into God’s family with all the privileges, we have an inheritance from God. This inheritance qualifies believers to live eternally in heaven in the presence of God. We have a little bit of heaven in us, namely, the Holy Spirit’s presence, and a guarantee of a lot more to come in the future.” [Hoehner, 243]

until the redemption of the purchased possession — εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως [eis apolutrōsin tēs peripoiēseōs] literally, “for redemption of the possession.” It could refer to purpose, “believers were sealed with the Holy Spirit for the purpose of the redemption of the possession” (NASB, JB, NJB). But it makes better sense to be taken to indicate time, “believers were sealed with the Holy Spirit until the redemption of the possession” (AV, RSV, NEB, NIV, NRSV). This coincides with the only other usage in Eph 4:30 where believers are sealed “until the day of redemption.” Note the two redemptions (or more accurately, two phases of our redemption): the first in v. 7 our redemption is from the penalty of sin while the second is here in v. 14 when Christ comes for His own to deliver us from the presence of sin. “The Spirit functions as the guarantee of believers’ inheritance, looking toward or vouching for God’s full redemption of that for which he has made this down payment. Final deliverance by God means his taking full and complete possession of those who have already become his.” [Lincoln, 42]

Redemption is the same word as in v. 7, meaning “to release or set free on the basis of a ransom paid,” in this case, the ransom paid to God by the death of Christ.

possession = [περιποιήσεως, peripoiēseōs] in classical literature meant both “to preserve, to keep safe” as well as “to acquire, to gain possession.” It is only used 3x in the LXX as both “preservation” (2 Chron 14:13) and “possession” (Hag 2:9; Mal 3:17). The word is used 5x in the NT, again in both senses. It is used here in the sense of “possession.” “The word originally means ‘a

making to remain over and above'; hence 'preservation; preservation for one's self; acquisition; the thing acquired,' or 'a possession.'" [Vincent *Word Studies*, 3:369] This word expresses the general idea of 'preserving, acquiring, gaining for one's self, without specific reference to a price.' "It refers to the saints as God's heritage which He preserves for Himself. The final redemption of this possession is glorification, when the physical body will be the recipient of the work of salvation. The soul and the spirit are now the recipients of God's saving grace. The body will experience that work at the Rapture when the first resurrection takes place." [Wuest, 50] ***"In the present context the believers are considered God's possession by the very fact that he has chosen, redeemed, and adopted them. Hence, in this context ... [this word would have the sense of] the setting free of God's own possession. A parallel idea is given in Rom 8:23 where believers who have been adopted into God's family (Rom 8:15; Eph 1:5) have the firstfruits of the Spirit and are now eagerly waiting for Christ's return to fully realize their adoption, the redemption of their bodies."*** [Hoehner, 244]

to the praise of his glory — this is the third time this phrase is used (cf. vv. 6, 12) which occurs each time the work of the person of the Trinity is extolled.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED? — *We speak well of, we eulogize, we bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as one deserving appreciation, honor and praise, because He has provided at this present time every supernatural benefit necessary for the spiritual well-being of his children, those benefits having their source in the Holy Spirit. We believers therefore are those who presently live in two realms, united to this physical material world by virtue of being human yet also united to the age to come by virtue of our spiritual new birth and union with Christ.*

We praise God because in His infinite wisdom and love He singled-out, He picked out, He selected for Himself individuals from fallen humanity who were as undeserving of His love as all the rest of mankind. We had no legal claim on God for Him to choose us nor was He obligated to choose anyone, yet He did so for reasons known only to Himself. This was done with great personal interest and love towards the recipients of His choosing before anything was ever created, in connection with or through Christ's work of redemption. The purpose of having been chosen was to develop the character of His children into one without blame or blemish, separated unto God as His possession, righteous yet loving in His presence, the reflection of their Father in Heaven.

God determined beforehand, He marked out beforehand His chosen ones to sonship. This bringing into sonship was when God took we who were not His children but were under the authority of Satan, He released us from that relationship and brought us unto Himself where He has absolute control over us. We who have been adopted into sonship acquired new status, privilege and property. These great gains were made possible through the agency of our Lord Jesus Christ and was done with great pleasure according to the perfect plan of God.

Therefore we as believers give our approval, we praise, we applaud the magnificence and splendor of who God is, for God's essential being, His glory as He has chosen to reveal Himself to us in this plan of redemption.

Moving from the eternal past to present reality: we who have been chosen by God are liberated, we are released by the payment of a price, that price being the bloody sacrificial death of Christ. Our conscious and willful errors, our deliberate false steps were forgiven, released and permanently cancelled according to the abundance, riches, and wealth of His grace. This grace was given in superabundance, overflowing, not only providing our freedom but also providing every kind of insight, wisdom, and understanding necessary to live wisely according to His will.

God revealed to all His children that which was hidden in the past ages and could not have been discovered by human ingenuity but could only have been made known by God Himself. This revelation is given with great pleasure by God and pertains to God's overall plan, His will for creation. Specifically His plan is this: God will administer and manage through Christ all of the epochs and ages until they reach their ultimate fulfillment, at which point God will "sum up" as one summarizes a speech or totals up a column of numbers, all things in Christ. This "summing up of the cosmos" has already begun with the crucifixion and exaltation of Christ but will have a fuller and final fulfillment in the future. This involves both realms: the heavenlies with its powers and spiritual beings, and the earthly which involves all the fallen creation.

In Christ either (a) we are made heritage of God, as Israel was in the OT: "For the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance"; or (b) we have obtained an inheritance from the Lord: our adoption, forgiveness, and sealing with the Holy Spirit, all the spiritual benefits having their source in the Holy Spirit. This is sure to come to pass since it was determined beforehand according to the purpose and decision of the One who works all events according to the standard of His will. In human terms, God deliberated intelligently, carefully thinking out His purpose, and then His will proceeds out from that deliberation. God does not act capriciously and has unconditional freedom to fulfill His purpose. Therefore we who have already hoped in Christ are for the praise of His glory.

In Christ we believers were sealed with the Holy Spirit who was promised to come in the OT scripture. This "sealing" with the Holy Spirit happened because we heard and believed the good news which brings or reveals salvation, that good news being the truth as opposed to a lie, reality as opposed to the falsehood of other religions. The moment we believed the good news about salvation in Christ, we were given the Holy Spirit, denoting that we are authentic and genuine believers in Christ, that we are owned by God and that we are secured in that faith by God Himself. This sealing with the Holy Spirit was not sought after nor will it ever be removed or repeated, rather it occurred the moment we put our faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the promised part of a whole, the guarantee that we will receive the inheritance promised by the Lord until we actually do take possession of it, giving us peace and assurance of our future in the age to come. All of this again was done to the praise of His glory.

The Work of the Holy Spirit

“in whom [Christ] having also believed you were sealed ...”

“SEALED” =

- SECURITY
- AUTHENTICATE
- GENUINENESS
- IDENTIFICATION OF OWNERSHIP

BELIEVING AND SEALING OCCURS AT THE SAME MOMENT IN TIME

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SEAL

NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH THE OTHER MINISTRIES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“who is the initial installment of our inheritance ...”

EARNEST, GUARANTEE [arrabōn] = *guarantee* (ESV, NKJV, RSV); *earnest* (KJV, YLT); *deposit guaranteeing* our inheritance (NIV); *pledge* (Vulgate, NASB, NEB, JB, NJB, NRSV).

used of:

- *earnest money or caution money*
- *a down payment that was forfeited if the purchase was not completed*
- *the first installment with a guarantee that the rest would follow*
- *a portion of the whole payment, a part of the whole*
- *a form of this word is used in modern Greek meaning “engagement ring.”*

“In a down payment, that which is given is part of a greater whole, is of the same kind as that whole, and functions as a guarantee that the whole payment will be forthcoming. The Spirit then is the first installment and guarantee of the salvation of the age to come with its mode of existence totally determined by the Spirit.... The use of the metaphor by the writer to the Ephesians indicates a maintenance of the Pauline ‘already / not yet’ eschatological tension. The Spirit is seen as the power of the age to come given ahead of time in history, but as still only the beginning and guarantee of the full salvation of that age which is yet to come.” [Lincoln, 40f]

*“In business the ‘earnest’ gives a person security and peace of mind. Let us enjoy this in regard to our inheritance. God is not holding us in suspense but rather gives us every assurance that our inheritance is ‘reserved in heaven.’” [Ron Crisp, *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*, 37]*

Lord, fill preachers and preaching with Thy power.
How long dare we go on without tears; without moral
passions, hatred and love? Not long, I pray, Lord
Jesus, not long...

Oct 28 - One of the great blessings of Heaven is the
appreciation of heaven on earth - Ephesian truth.

* He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain
that which he cannot lose. Lu 16:9 "that when it shall fail, they
may receive you into everlasting habitations"

Scripture leaves so many stories untold. Think of the
calloused heart of the priest who stooped over, squinting in the
dimness of the sanctuary, looking for the 30 pes. of silver Judas cast
their - pausing to see if he had found all 30. Too legal to put the
money in the treasury since it was blood-money, they were very philanthropic
and buy with it a field to bury strangers in. How cold the heart of man!
How feelingless and obdurate!