

## The Benefit of the Gospel

Ephesians 1: 13-14

Last week we began a series entitled: *A Gospel Centered Life*. As I began to prepare this series I realized if one is to live a Gospel centered life, one must first understand and embrace the Gospel. We looked at the foundational principles of the Gospel, found in [1 Cor.15:3-4 – For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; <sup>\[4\]</sup> And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.](#) Paul summed up the Gospel in one simple statement – Christ died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again. That is the basis of the Gospel.

Among us today are two classes of people – those who have believed the Gospel unto salvation, and those who have not. Many who have yet to receive the Gospel often wonder about the real benefit of salvation. Why do I need salvation? What do I receive in salvation? What are the consequences if I reject salvation? All of these are valid questions that must be answered. I also realize that some who have received the Gospel, being saved by grace, have yet to fully grasp the enormity of their gift. Many believers have the attitude that the Gospel is reserved solely for those who have yet to believe in Christ unto salvation.

While this passage does not completely encompass every benefit received through salvation, it does reveal enough to encourage our acceptance of the Gospel and create an awareness regarding the significance of the Gospel, even in the lives of believers. The Gospel is not something we receive at salvation and then live out our lives without further benefit. There are many benefits that believers enjoy each day through the Gospel. As we discuss the [principles](#) revealed in the text, I want us to consider: [The Benefit of the Gospel](#).

**I. An Immediate Transformation** (13a) – [In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.](#) This first chapter to the Ephesian church is a rich discourse in the standing believers have with God through Christ. Following a detailed description of that standing, Paul reminded the Ephesian believers that they too had trusted in Christ, and received the same standing. Paul returned to the basis of the Gospel in this passage – faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ to provide our salvation. Such faith in Christ leads to an immediate transformation in the life of the believer. Notice:

**A. The Process** (13a) – [In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.](#) It is important to consider the precise wording Paul used as he spoke to the Ephesians regarding their salvation. This process mirrors the passage we considered in our last study, written to the Corinthian church. Paul knew this process was the same for everyone,

regardless of their background, religious affiliation, or ethnicity. They first had to hear the Gospel presented, being made aware of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Upon hearing the Gospel, they were obligated to respond by faith.

- This fundamental truth hasn't changed, and it never will. All who have received salvation in Christ, have heard the Gospel and responded by faith. That is why it is so important to teach, preach, and share the Gospel of Christ. We cannot receive the Gospel until it is presented. Once we have heard a clear presentation of the Gospel, we are obligated to respond. [Eph.2:8 – For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.](#) [Rom.10:17 – So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.](#)

**B. The Possession** (13a) – [In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.](#) Paul emphasized the personal nature of the Gospel to the Ephesians. Like him, and countless others who had responded to the Gospel by faith, they too had received salvation. The Gospel was not just good news that others had heard, but it was good news for them as well, resulting in their personal salvation. I am thankful our Lord provided a universal Gospel, for all who come to Him by faith; and I am also thankful it is a personal Gospel. Had it not been offered unto me, I would yet be in sin, separated from God and without hope!

- I cannot consider the saving grace of our Lord through the Gospel without also thinking of the power in the Gospel. Once someone responds to the Gospel by faith, they experience an immediate transformation. We are at that instant, resurrected a new creature in Christ. We are justified in the eyes of a holy God, literally declared righteous. Through His abundant grace, God removes our sin and condemnation, while replacing it with the righteousness of His Son. The saved by grace are no longer viewed as sinners worthy of eternal punishment, but as children, adopted into the family with all rights of a child. [Eph.1:5-6 – Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,](#) <sup>[6]</sup> [To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.](#) That is good news for those who have yet to receive Christ, and it remains good news for those in Christ! The Gospel remains relevant for all.

**II. A Continual Preservation** (13b) – [in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.](#) Along with our immediate transformation, the saved by grace are promised continual preservation in Christ our Lord. This too happens the instant we receive Christ by faith. This is accomplished through the sealing of the Spirit. Now, I will admit this is much deeper than I can possibly fathom, but I do want to share a few principles about this preservation. Consider:

**A. The Identification** (13b) – When we are saved by grace through faith, we are immediately sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. This has many implications, and one of which is our identification with the Lord. Throughout the Old Testament, and continuing in Paul’s day, a royal seal was used to mark a document as belonging to, and originating from the king. When this seal was recognized, the recipient immediately knew they had received an official document of the king, literally the property and possession of the king.

- At the moment of our salvation, the Spirit takes up residence within us. Through the seal of the Spirit, we are identified with our Lord and Savior. The Spirit bears witness that we are now the purchase possession of Christ the Lord. We are marked as property of the King; we now belong to Him. He purchased our redemption on the cross, paying our ransom, and we are eternally His.

**B. The Provision** (13b) – While Paul did not specifically say as he wrote to the Ephesians, the seal bore great significance. Being familiar with the use of an official seal, they would have immediately known the abiding principles associated with the seal. Consider the thoughts of Warren Wiersbe on this passage:

“What is the significance of this sealing of the Holy Spirit? For one thing, it speaks of a *finished transaction*. Even today, when important legal documents are processed, they are stamped with the official seal to signify the completion of the transaction. This sealing also implies *ownership*: God has put his seal on us because He has purchased us to be His own (1 Cor.6:19–20). It also means *security and protection*. The Roman seal on the tomb of Jesus carried this meaning (Matt. 27:62–66). So, the believer belongs to God, and is safe and protected because he is a part of a finished transaction. According to John 14:16–17, the Holy Spirit abides with the believer forever. It is possible for us to grieve the Spirit and thereby lose the blessings of His ministry (Eph. 4:30). But He doesn’t leave us.

Another use for the seal is as a mark of *authenticity*. Just as a signature on a letter attests to the genuineness of the document, so the presence of the Spirit proves the believer is genuine. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9). It is not simply our lip profession, our religious activity, or our good works, but the witness of the Spirit that makes our profession authentic.”<sup>i</sup> Would you not agree that we received much as we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise?

**III. An Eternal Destination** (14) – [Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.](#) As we conclude our study on the benefit of the Gospel, we find Paul offers a word of eternal significance. Consider:

**A. The Pledge** (14) – **Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.** Paul speaks of the earnest of our inheritance, referring to our eternal future with the Lord. This is an interesting term. The word earnest speaks of “*earnest money; a down payment; a pledge, or guarantee.*” This does not imply that Christ only secured partial payment as He died on the cross for our sin. We know that He fully and eternally satisfied the righteous demands of God, fully atoning for our sin. This speaks of the Spirit abiding with us until the Lord calls us home. The Spirit serves as the down payment, the guarantee of eternity with Christ. He serves as the assurance that the Lord will fulfill His promise to gather us unto Himself. **John 14:1-3 – Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>[2]</sup> 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. <sup>[3]</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.**

**B. The Promise** (14) – **Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.** Paul knew the struggles associated with walking by faith and living for the Lord among the world. The Ephesians would face adversity while serving the Lord. They had received a down payment through the Spirit, with the promise of full redemption of the Lord's purchase possession. They were not saved and abandoned in the journey. The Lord fully intended to return for the church, taking the possession He purchased with His own blood to live throughout eternity with Him!

- The world would have us believe our faith is in vain, and that there is no hope for eternity. They may believe that, but I know in whom I have believed. I know that the Spirit abides within, guiding and guarding my life. I cannot fully comprehend all we shall receive, but I am resting in the promise of my Lord and Savior! **2 Tim.1:12 – For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.**

**C. The Praise** (14) – **Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.** Finally we discover an often overlooked benefit of our salvation through the Gospel – the praise of God's glory. Many seek salvation basically for fire insurance; they want to avoid the eternal lake of fire. Others focus primarily on eternal life, and the splendors of heaven. While these are certainly worthy of our rejoicing, I wonder how many focus on the glory of God through our salvation. In Christ we are privileged to worship and glorify God. Our obedient faith in salvation results in God's glory. I have nothing to offer God. He is self-existent. He doesn't need us to fulfill His sovereign will. However, through salvation we can offer something He takes pleasure in – our worship and praise. Our salvation brings glory to God. Surely you will agree that is a glorious benefit of the Gospel.

**Conclusion:** Whether you are saved by grace through faith or not, I hope you have discovered the benefit of the Gospel. The Lord provided the means for our salvation; He sent the Holy Spirit to seal us until the day of redemption; and we are promised eternal life in Him. Through salvation we have the opportunity to glorify God, our gracious Creator.

Have you responded to the Gospel by faith? If not, I would urge you to do so as the Lord leads. He alone provided for our salvation; there is no other way. Following salvation you will enjoy the guidance and provision of the Spirit. There is great benefit in the Gospel. Believer, I hope you have been reminded of what you have received as well. I pray that we will be mindful of the Gospel, and the tremendous impact it has on our daily lives. Come to the Lord for the needs in your life!

---

<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, Warren W., The BE Series Bundle: Paul's Letters

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/the-be-series-bundle-pauls-letters/id1070438812?mt=11>