

The Preserving work of God Ephesians 1: 11-14

Over the past couple weeks, we have been discussing the role of the Trinity regarding our salvation. We have considered the sovereign work of God the Father and the redeeming work of Christ the Son. As we conclude this powerful passage, we will examine the preserving work of the Holy Spirit.

One could say the Father had a significant role in the past aspect of our salvation. Christ the Lord had the prominent role in our present salvation, and the Holy Spirit holds the primary role in the future aspect of our salvation – sealing and preserving believers. This is a precious biblical doctrine and a Baptist distinctive. As Baptist, we affirm the preservation of the saints through the power of the Spirit. We can rest knowing our salvation is secure through the gracious provision of our Lord. Along with the assurance of salvation, we also will discover the eternal benefits afforded the redeemed in Christ. As we discuss the [certainties](#) revealed in the text, I want to consider: [The Preserving work of God](#).

I. The Position of the Redeemed (11) – [In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will](#). Here Paul reveals the gracious position the redeemed enjoy through the provision of God. Notice:

A. The Provider – [In whom we have obtained an inheritance](#). Paul again reminds the believer of the provision Christ made for us as He redeemed us unto Himself. Verse eleven cannot be separated from the previous verse. As we consider the varied aspects of our salvation, we must remember that it centers in Christ and His atoning sacrifice on the cross. God the Father had a plan to redeem us that included the sacrifice of His only begotten Son to atone for our sin. His plan included the preserving work of the Spirit. However, had Christ not been willing to obediently pay our sin debt in the sacrifice of His body, God's plan would never have been fulfilled; there would be no salvation available for the Spirit to preserve. Christ is central to our salvation!

B. The Possession – [In whom we have obtained an inheritance](#). Here we discover another amazing aspect of our salvation. Had the Lord provided a means of escape from eternal death, that would have been more than any of us deserve. Had He been willing to pardon our sin and allow us to die without being accountable and having to spend eternity in hell, that would have been gracious. However, God's plan did not simply include forgiveness of sin. It included reconciliation unto Himself and along with that restored relationship, the promise of an eternal inheritance.

- We cannot possibly fathom what waits for us in eternity. Paul declares we have obtained an inheritance in Christ. Spiros Zodhiates, the Greek scholar, defined our inheritance this way – *Christians have become heirs of God due to the fact that God predestined them according to His purpose.* Those who were sinful and undeserving have received unmerited favor. God willfully chose to make us His heirs, promising not only forgiveness and reconciliation, but eternal life that includes an inheritance in heaven. We are blessed beyond measure in Christ! [Rom.8:16-17 – The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ^{\[17\]} And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.](#)

C. The Purpose (11b) – [In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.](#) Such an inheritance is possible because the Lord declared it to be so. This was in the plan and will of God since before the foundation of the world. In His grace and mercy, God chose to redeem us unto Himself and make us heirs with Christ. God has appointed an eternal inheritance for each and every one of the redeemed. Isn't that a wonderful blessing? We may not be well known in this life. We may struggle financially and socially, feeling as if life has been difficult and unfair. That may be the reality here, but child of God, there is a better day coming for the redeemed. We have been chosen by the Lord. He loved us enough to die in our place; He is preparing us a mansion in glory. We will be in heaven, in His glorious presence, at His invitation, according to His provision, to receive the inheritance He purposed to provide. What a blessing!

II. The Praise of the Redeemed (12) – [That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.](#) Paul goes on to discuss the praise the redeemed will offer in heaven. Consider:

A. The Glory – [That we should be to the praise of his glory.](#) The praise of the redeemed will resound throughout the endless age around the throne in heaven. [Rev.5:11-13 – And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; ^{\[12\]} Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. ^{\[13\]} And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.](#) As the redeemed of God gather around the throne in heaven, our praise will be a testimony to the grace and provision of the Savior who willingly took our place on the cross, bearing our sin and judgment, in order to provide our salvation. The praise of the redeemed will bring glory to the Lamb who was slain!

B. The Grace (12b) – *That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.* This praise will be offered by those who trusted in Christ for salvation. We will sing a song the angels cannot sing. We will sing of our Savior, Redeemer and Lord. We will sing of His grace that redeemed us from the condemnation and death of sin. We will glory in Christ for the gracious provision we have received. Our faith will have ended in sight; the cares and struggles of life will be no more; the former things will have passed away. We will sing a new stanza of Amazing Grace, a stanza that we previously could not have comprehended nor sung. The heavens will be filled with the worship and praise of those who have received His marvelous grace!

III. The Preservation of the Redeemed (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,* ^[14] *Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* Finally, Paul addressed the preserving work of the Holy Spirit in regard to the salvation of the redeemed. Consider:

A. Our Salvation (13a) – *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.* Paul discussed the way God saves sinners, the miraculous transformation in salvation. We discover the process of salvation in this simple statement. When one hears the word of truth, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and trusts in His finished work on the cross to provide redemption from sin and reconciliation to God, the result is salvation of the believer.

- The sacrifice our Lord made was very significant, but there is no need to over-complicate the salvation experience. One must hear and understand the Gospel. This will result in the conviction of sin and awareness of the need for a Savior. As one believes the Gospel, fully trusting in Christ to provide what we are unable to secure ourselves, salvation is provided. I am thankful the Lord made a way for those undeserving to have forgiveness of sin, with salvation and eternal life in Him. We are saved by grace through faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

B. Our Seal (13b) – *in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.* Paul went on to reveal a beautiful and comforting aspect of salvation. As we believe unto salvation, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. This pictures a practice that was very common in ancient times. A document or letter was sealed in wax with the insignia of the one who sent the document. Kings wore signet rings which were often used for this purpose. When a letter was received with the king's signet in the wax, the recipient knew the letter had all the backing and authority of the king.

- As we are saved by grace, we are sealed with the full authority of our King through the Holy Spirit. We are marked as His possession, belonging to the King with the backing of the King. We are secure in Christ, sealed unto the day of redemption. He has purchased our salvation with the blood He shed on Calvary and we stand as His purchased possession. We enjoy the security and assurance of our King, bearing His seal following salvation. Satan may rage, but he cannot remove the seal of the Spirit, nor can he remove us from the Lord's possession. [1 Peter 1:5 – Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.](#)

C. Our Security (14) – [Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.](#) The seal of the Holy Spirit stands as the earnest of our inheritance until we are called to eternally stand in the presence of our Lord. This too is an interesting and beautiful aspect of the Spirit's work in our salvation. The earnest of the Spirit speaks of *"a down payment that assures the balance will be paid in full."* If you have purchased a vehicle or financed a home, you have dealt with the practice of providing earnest money. You provided a down payment that went towards the full purchase price to reveal your commitment to paying the debt.

- Christ fully paid our sin debt on the cross – there is nothing left to pay. The balance has been paid in full. However, the Spirit sealing and indwelling us stands as the promise that the Lord will one day call for His possession. This is the promise that the saved by grace belong to Him. He has declared ownership, and will one day gather all His possession unto Himself. While we enjoy all we need to live victorious Christian lives, the lives we live in this body of flesh is but a foretaste of the glory that will be revealed in us.

Conclusion: This has been an enjoyable and encouraging study. If you have been saved by grace, you have received far more than you can possibly comprehend. The saved have received unmerited favor and are sealed and secure in Christ. His provision for us ought to compel every believer to commit their lives in service to Him. He is worthy of our obedience and praise.

If by chance you are yet unsaved, you have heard the Gospel today. You cannot argue that you never had the opportunity to respond to the Gospel. If you are unsaved, respond to the leading of the Spirit, repent of your sin, confess your need for Christ as Savior, believe the Gospel and be saved today!