

Revival - Part 9

by Doc Greenway

Doc Greenway's sermon emphasizes the multifaceted ministry of the Holy Spirit and the importance of understanding and applying His work in the believer's life.

Duration: 1:11:58

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the witness of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers. He emphasizes that through the Holy Spirit, we are born again and have a personal relationship with God. The preacher also highlights the sealing of the Holy Spirit as a mark of the new covenant between God and Jesus, signifying a finished transaction. He uses the analogy of a father legally declaring his sons as heirs to illustrate the significance of the sealing by the Spirit. The preacher encourages the audience to not only understand the teaching but also to apply it in their lives, becoming doers of the Word.

Transcript

The variety in the emblems of the Holy Spirit suggests the multiplicity of his ministry and his functions in the Church and in the world. Just as each of the nine gifts of the Spirit, of which we are familiar, expresses a certain special aspect of his ministry, so does each emblem of the Holy Spirit lay the emphasis on a particular phase of the presence and purpose of the Spirit of God in the midst of God's people. And I think it is ought to be learned the special significance of these emblems, the figures of speech under which the Holy Spirit is presented to us, that our understanding of the person of the Spirit enlarges and deepens and expands.

And this, I think, is as it should be. Again, it is to be expected that there will be, perhaps, in some emblems of the Spirit, a larger area of teaching than in others. I think we have noticed this already.

For instance, we have seen that in the Holy Spirit as the water, it opens up a tremendously large area of truth, doesn't it? Because there are so many aspects to this. But the Holy Spirit of clothing, endued with the Spirit, well, now, this limits the field considerably compared with the other emblem that we mentioned a moment ago. I think the important thing for us to remember is that each of these emblems has something to teach us concerning the Spirit of God, if our ears are open and if our hearts are ready for what the Spirit of the Lord would say to us.

Each one of these emblems of the Spirit has a special significance, that each one has a function to fulfill, and that we should never think of any one of these emblems as isolated from the others, because we require a full-orbed vision if we are going to know the truth about the Spirit of God. Because all truth is interrelated and interdependent. So you see, you can run away with ideas that the Holy Spirit is the fire from heaven.

If you become so concerned about this, you forget, as we said some time ago, He is also the dove of God. And that both these emblems, although they are so divergent in their application, are important in the sight of God. And so we need to learn something about these emblems, about these figures of speech, and to learn in such a way that it is not simply head knowledge, but heart knowledge, something that we possess as an experience.

I would hate to think that we come up here Tuesday by Tuesday, although the journey is not so long, as far as I'm concerned, by now. You were saying on the way up, how short the journey seems to be by now. But I would hate to feel that we came Tuesday by Tuesday simply to expound the Word of God, that you understood something of the teaching that is being given, and then did nothing about it.

That, I think, would be tragic. Because if we do not know the person of the Spirit through the teaching of the Word, then I think we are hearers and not doers of the Word. And this, I'm sure, would be a very bad thing.

Doers of the Word. Did I ever tell you about the Scottish elder who was speaking on a Sunday morning about being doers of the Word? Now he said, You all know what a doer is, it's one of those things that swings on hinges. Well, that was his interpretation.

But we need so very much simply to comprehend, first of all, mentally, to grasp the significance of the emblem under which the Spirit of God is presented, and then by faith to lay hold of the principles of truth, and by the grace of God to apply these principles in our own life and experience. And I'm sure that this is our purpose, our real purpose, in gathering together week by week in this time. I know, too, that we began with a great vision of revival and revival in our time.

I can only say from my heart that the Spirit of God has led me in the way that He has. I'm sure about this. And if we seem to be majoring now on the Holy Spirit as a person and on the Holy Spirit in its function and ministry, then I'm sure it is not by accident.

There are no afterthoughts with God. There are no emergency acts with God. And I can honestly say that I waited upon God, not for hours but for days, in preparation for these meetings.

I can say that in God's presence, and He knows it is true. And therefore, if I've sought for guidance and for illumination after the purpose and the plan of God in what we are doing, then surely it must be all right. I've got that much comfort anywhere, and I trust that you feel the same about it.

Now, as I said, it's no use taking one isolated emblem and making that the criterion of your spiritual life. You know, it requires to be studied comprehensively, this work and ministry of the Holy Spirit, if we are to understand it. And this is true of any subject in the book we call the Bible.

Take, for example, walking in the Spirit. The moment you mention walking in the Spirit, well, people think about Galatians 5, 16 and 17. You know, where the apostle talks about walk in the Spirit, and he cannot fulfill the lust of the flesh, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and he's a

contrary one to the other, and so on.

And there it is. But it isn't just there. That is only one very small facet of the truth.

To get a grip of what it means to walk in the Spirit, for instance, we've got to consider a scripture like Romans 8 and verse 4, which talks about the righteousness of the law that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. That is, to walk in the Spirit means a righteousness fulfilled in the believer. But you don't hear too much about that, sadly.

Filled with the Spirit, that's the thing for the day. Get filled. Yes, but what about this? That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

So the spiritual life is a righteous life. Not simply a life of excessive glory, but a righteous life. The Holy Spirit does not therefore compromise with iniquity or with carnality if this is a righteous life.

We learn, then, that if we walk in the Spirit, the resultant life from God's standpoint and from God's intention should be that we will be honest. There will be truthfulness that will characterize our beliefs. There will be sincerity that will govern all our service for God.

For righteousness, right-wiseness, purely implies all this. But it will not be our own life that will be coming to us, but the life of the Spirit lived in us. For it does not say that the righteousness which is of the law might be fulfilled by us.

That's what our heavenly Adventist friends would have us be. Not by us, but in us. By the Holy Spirit.

So it isn't we who are doing this. It's the Spirit of God who is doing this in us. And so the righteousness which is of the law is fulfilled in us if we walk in the Spirit.

That's one answer. But then again, according to Galatians 6, 7, and 8, walking in the Spirit means that life is imparted to the believer. See Scripture.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth with the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth with the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

The life of God. Not imputed, but imparted. So that to walk in the Spirit means that the Spirit is a holy life.

It's the life of God. Imparted. What a tremendous thing this is.

And in sowing to the Spirit, certain things are going to result. There is, for instance, to be a preparation of the ground. You don't just take a young confidant and say, now what you need, brother, is to be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

You need to be filled with the Spirit. Now come along, let's get at it. Show him something else.

There's a sowing in the Spirit. See? A sowing of seeds. There's a breaking up of the fallow ground within, as we have said.

We mentioned this on a former occasion about break up your fallow ground, and we saw that it can be broken up by conviction of sin brought by the Spirit. By confession for sin, because it is dealing to us. By confession of sin, because God brings us to this place and experience.

And by a wholehearted consecration of ourselves to him. A giving of ourselves completely over to him, spirit, soul, and body, that he may possess all that is of us. There is this too, in the breaking up of the fallow ground within us.

If there is to be a life imparted by the Holy Spirit. Oh, I do want you to see this. I think it's of vital importance.

Then you see, not only will there be a breaking up of the ground, a preparation of the ground within, but there has to be a distribution of the seeds. You sow a seed that is carnal, and you'll get a carnal crop. But you sow a seed that is spiritual, and you will reap life everlasting.

The life of God is imparted to you, if you sow to the Spirit. What does it mean? It means that you are sowing peace instead of dissension. Faith instead of doubt.

Hope instead of frustration. Confidence instead of suspicion. Truth instead of error.

Humility instead of arrogance. And sacrifice instead of selfishness. These are the seeds you sow, if you want to reap the life of the Spirit.

So it's not just a question of saying, work in the Spirit, brother, and you're going to have victory every inch of the way. There's something more to it than this. There's a sowing.

And in the sowing to the Spirit, there is also the cultivation of the crop, removing all the weeds. Envy, jealousy, malice, pride, bitterness, these things that creep into the life and that seem to grow so strongly. You neglect your garden and you'll get tremendous growth, won't you? You neglect the garden of your Spirit and you'll get tremendous growth too.

But not of the right kind, unfortunately. So you see that there is to be a nurturing of the plants as well, depending on the nutriment of the written word. How important this is in the Christian's life.

Drawing on the supply of the Spirit, seeking the strength that comes from fellowship, and so nurturing these plants that they may grow. And there's a watering of the soil, in waiting on God, in worshiping God, in giving yourself in devotion to Him, in spending time in His presence. It's a kind of watering of the soil as the seeds of the Spirit may grow.

Is this a new concept to you? It's scriptural, it's in the Bible, it's New Testament, but you don't hear a great deal about it. It's important. So, the work in the Spirit then, what does it mean? It means that life, the life of God is imparted.

And then you see, having looked at the teaching in these passages, you are now ready to look at Galatians 5, 16 and 17, and to see that the third mark of walking in the Spirit is a life of victory. Don't you see then, I'm not going to enlarge on that because I've often spoken about this, Galatians 5, 16 and 17, but don't you see this? Paul tells the Galatians that when they determine to say no to the flesh and yes to the Spirit, then they are prepared to turn their backs upon walking in the flesh and are going in the direction of the Holy Spirit where He is guiding and leading them. As a result, there will be liberty in their life.

But it is a liberty that has to be interpreted in the light of the other passages which bear upon the subject. And so when we talk about liberty in the Spirit, we just don't mean that you can stand up and shout

hallelujah and you've got it all. No, there's a sowing of the Spirit.

There's the interpretation of life by the Spirit. There's a righteousness by the Spirit that is part of the Christian's experience. And all this is involved in the liberty about which Paul speaks here.

Now, this is known as contextual interpretation, if you want the theological term. And I'm sure that this is the best possible method of exposition, taking into account the various references that bear upon the subject and allowing the Bible to interpret itself for the Bible itself interprets it. And it's impossible ever to reach the limit of new discovery where this book of God is concerned.

This is the amazing thing because it belongs on a superhuman, supernatural level. And therefore, you see, if you come down to exposition of this type, you've got something which is basic, something fundamental, something that will outlast time. For heaven and earth will pass away, but God's Word will never, never pass away.

So then, after that, we consider the Holy Spirit again. And this time under the emblem of the seal. As Graham would say, not the seal that floats in the water, but the seal that is like a stamp, you know.

This is the emblem under which the Holy Spirit appears in the New Testament. And it is about this emblem of the Holy Spirit as a seal that I would like to speak tonight. Now, the Holy Spirit as a seal teaches us that believers who have been bought by the blood of Christ are marked out by God as his very own.

What the Holy Spirit takes up is a bold in these believers and bears witness to their position in Christ. And in this way, he becomes the seal of God, God's hallmark upon the believer, setting him apart from the rest of the world. And from the use of the seal or signet, which means the same thing in the Old Testament, we can learn other lessons, it seems to me, that can help us in our own position as believers.

Now, who does the sealing? God the Father. It is he who sealed the Lord Jesus Christ according to the personal testimony of Jesus himself. John 6, 27, Him hath God the Father sealed.

This was according, as I say, to what Jesus himself testified. And again, it is God our Father who seals us as Christians. 2 Corinthians 1, 21 and 22, Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us with God, who hath also sealed us, so the believers are sealed by the same God the Father.

The seal is the Holy Spirit himself. It is the living presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. This is the seal of God.

And according to the record of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ was sealed at the time of his baptism. John Bear Record we read, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. The Word of God assures us that in exactly the same way, in such a positive way, we also are sealed with the Spirit.

Take a passage like Romans 8, 15 and 16. We have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. And the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

A lovely thing, isn't it, to know that we have received the Spirit of adoption. We are pieces. We are the sons, pieces of placings, the son placings.

Or if you like, the charter of sons. I was talking about this the other Thursday night, I think it was. In Travonga.

This son placing. What a marvelous experience and privilege it is. I was saying that in the days of the New Testament, you know, when the Romans and the Greeks were very much in power, they were very brave men.

They had more than one wife at one time. And the occasion arose when they had to decide, these fathers, as to who would be their legal son. They would bring them into the public place, usually a marketplace where the judge and the magistrates and the scribes seated.

Then the father would mention each of these boys by name, by different mothers, of course, by each of his sons by name. And he would say, this my son, this my son, this my son, my legal heir, one after the other. And then the magistrates would hand, not to the father, but to the sons, the charter of sonship.

Sophiastesia, this is the word. And it was in their possession. They were born as children into the family of God, but now they were placed as mature sons in God's family, and they were therefore in the place of heredity, or of inheritance.

And so you see the Spirit of God as the seal of God bears witness that this is so, bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and so we cry Abba, which is the child's cry for father. Abba, father, father, my own dear precious father. This is what the Spirit of God is crying out in company with our spirit when we know this son-placing that the apostle is talking about.

The Holy Spirit bears forewitnesses to us, or at least forewitnesses in relation to the Christian. I'm sure you know this. In Hebrews, it's his witness to us.

And then in 1 John, his witness in us. Here in Romans 8, his witness with us. In Acts, of course, it's his witness through us.

So here you have it. His witness to us in the gospel. His witness in us because we are born again of the same Holy Spirit.

His witness with us, causing us to cry with him, Abba, father. And his witness through us as those who have been filled with his Spirit and therefore have become channels of God. What a marvelous privilege, isn't it? Hallelujah.

Praise the Lord. Even the thought of being in this position, in the hand and purpose of God, what a tremendous thing it is. Just a channel.

Open to God above, open to the world beneath. There's nothing between. That God can flow.

Isn't it wonderful? What a glorious arrangement. And this is God's intention. All right.

Now, to consider some of the teaching concerning the Holy Spirit as the seal. Let us think first of all of the implications in the typology which is used. What does the seal imply? First of all, a seal implies possession.

Whatever was sealed signified ownership. On the human level, it meant a transaction had been entered into, had been finalized, had been witnessed to, and had been signed and duly sealed. It spoke of a definite, finished transaction between two parties.

This was the idea. And it's illustrated in the book of Jeremiah by the purchase of a field, Jeremiah 32, 10, verified by witnesses and then sealed in a book. The seal therefore implied possession.

And because a definite transaction was entered into by our Father in Heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, our redemption has become a fact. Jesus humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, he could speak of the redeemed as those whom thou hast given me, part of the new covenant, if you like, of the new construction, part of the new sealing by the Spirit of God.

For just as positively you know as God made a covenant with Abraham and gave him the seal of the right of circumcision, so the mark of the new covenant between God and his Son as a finished transaction is the sealing by the Spirit of God in the lives of God's people. When Jesus cried on Calvary, It is finished! One word in the Greek, as you no doubt know, etelesta. When the artist had achieved his purpose and he saw before him his masterpiece, this was what he cried, etelesta.

Finished! Perfect! You can't add anything to it. When the sculptor had wrought upon marble that which satisfied his inner instinct, he looked upon it and he cried this word, etelesta. Finished! Perfect! When the shepherd, looking for a sheep that he could take to the priest, found at last one without spot or blemish, he lifted it up and he cried, etelesta.

Finished! Perfect! And he could bring it to the priest as his offering and sacrifice. And when Jesus stretched his hands upon Calvary, when he was nailed as our Redeemer, he could cry, etelesta. Finished! Perfect! Nothing to be added to it.

That was finished. His sufferings were finished, praise God. No one could touch him again so far as physical suffering was concerned.

His sufferings were finished. The whole Levitical system was finished. The sacrificial law was finished.

There remains now no more sacrifice for sin. What else was finished? I believe that Satan's kingdom was finished and that he is a defeated foe. But most of all, your redemption and my redemption was finished on Calvary.

Then Jesus cried, etelesta. Finished! Perfect! Done once and for all. Never to be added to.

Absolutely what God requires. Because this is so. God has sealed this transaction in your life and mine by the blessed person of the Holy Spirit.

And the seal implies possession. Never forget this. I think this is why the apostle could challenge the Corinthians with this question.

What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, that ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. It is as though he had said, What? Don't you understand that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in your body is the seal of divine ownership where you are concerned? Don't you understand that God designed your body for himself? That sin has defecated it, but that now the indwelling Holy Spirit would rededicate it to the service of the living God.

Don't you understand this? So what shall it be? A sanctuary or a slum? This is his question. A sanctuary or a slum? A sanctuary in which the indwelling Spirit can mediate Christ, magnify Christ, minister Christ? A sanctuary in which there is only one light known to shine, the shining of God's Chicana glory? Only one voice heard to speak, the voice of the living priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. And only one Lord to magnify at all times, in all situations.

If it is to be a sanctuary, if your body is given over to be the place of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the word which is used is not the word for the outer course, it's the word for the inner shrine, the now, the inmost shrine of the Spirit. But know you not that your body is the inner shrine of the Holy Spirit and that therefore God's mark of ownership is upon you? Shall it be a sanctuary or are you going to allow it to become a slum dwelling where fleshliness, carnality and selfishness belies the fact of a divine ownership where you are concerned? One thing is positive. Whatever our answer may be to the question deep in our hearts, whatever we may decide in the light of all that is involved and all that is implied, one thing remains absolutely positive.

You are not your own. You are bought with a price. The word of God tells us this.

And the seal of the Spirit proves this divine ownership to be a fact. The price that has been paid is a price of infinite cost. The blood, the sweat, the agony, the tears, the body bruised and scurred and scarred, the visage, the hands, the feet, the side, the back opened, the price that Jesus paid is so infinite in its cost we never can understand it.

We can never hope to comprehend it. Do you think that sin is a light thing in the eyes of Almighty God? Did it cost His Son this sort of suffering in order to redeem your soul and mine? Sin is no light thing in God's eyes. Did it cost Jesus so much to redeem us from its power? And therefore don't you see that the presence of the Holy Spirit as the seal implies a divine possession? Our hands belong to Him.

Our feet, our tongues, our eyes, our very being belong to Him. You are not your own. You are bought with a price.

A seal implies possession. And this is signified further, it seems, in the sealing of the High Priest in the Old Testament days. Recalling, as we did a moment ago, that the word signet and seal mean the same thing in essence, you remember that the priest was sealed on the shoulders.

And the shoulders imply authority or strength. And so it signified that all His authority and all His strength belonged to Jehovah. They were not His.

His authority was divinely imparted because its source was personally acknowledged. It came from Jehovah in the first place. And therefore it was truly God's possession.

So His shoulders were sealed as a sign of this divine ownership. Remember how the centurion spoke in the Gospels, I am a man under authority. And I say to this man, go and he goes.

To this man, come and he comes. And to this man, do this and he does it. A man under authority? It is only the man who is under authority that has authority.

For, you know, underlying what we have in the Orthodox version there is something quite terrific. I am a man under absolute authority. So I say to this man, go and he's gone.

I say to this man, come and he's here. I say to this man, do this, it's done. No questioning.

No hesitation. No argument. This is the kind of authority which is implied here.

And so you see, with the shoulders sealed with a signet, it shows that this man is under divine authority. This was the sealing of the high priest. He was God's representative to the people before ever he became the people's representative to God.

He was God's man first. And the shoulders sealed signified it to all and sundry. And he was sealed on the forehead.

His intelligence belonged to the Lord. And it had to be used in the service of God and in the interest of God's kingdom. His thoughts were intended to be directed Godward.

And this is important too. That our thought life might be directed toward God and toward God's own kingdom authority. So a thought and you reap an act.

So an act and you reap a habit. So a habit and you reap a conduct. So a conduct and you reap a character.

So a character and you reap a life. So a life and you reap a destiny. But it all begins there.

So this man's forehead was anointed. I think that Paul had the right idea when he wrote as he did to the Christians at Philippi, I remember. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Give your attention to them. Give your thought life to them. For these things are productive of what is good and beneficial.

And the high priest was sealed on the breastplate. This signified that his affections were sealed unto Jehovah. It meant he was to love the Lord, his God, with all his heart, his soul, his mind, and his strength.

With all the intensity of his being, the breastplate seal was a sign that his affections, his heart, love, and devotion belonged to God. And I think that this is the final test of discipleship for every one of us, is it not? As it was in the case of Simon, the son of John. Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than thee.

He? What does he mean? He sings? Surely not. He's others. Simon, you've said more than they've ever said because you've always been the one to voice anything on behalf of the others.

Simon, you've done more than they've ever done. Simon, your pledge of loyalty has always been stronger than theirs. I will never fail you.

I will go with you to prison and to death. I will do this, that, and the other thing. Now what about it? Simon, son of Jonas, do you understand the dispensation of the end of the ages? Do you understand who's in the body or who's in the bride? Simon, son of John, do you understand these apocalyptic images that are presented? Not at all.

Simon, son of John, do you love me more than thee? Do you love me, as we know, with a love that prizes me? A love that is really divine, divinely given and divinely expressed? Do you love me with a love like

this? And I believe it in the end. This is what it comes down. You can have your heads filled with the light of the knowledge of the Scripture and your heart as empty as last year's nest when it comes to loving God.

It is the heart that makes the theology. It is the love life of the Christian toward God that really matters. And I'm sure that sooner or later we discover this to be true in experience.

And so the breastplate was sealed with a signet. And Jesus said to Peter, Love is thou me more than thee. What else? A seal implied protection.

Whatever was sealed was intended to be preserved and protected. Documents were sealed for that purpose as were many other things such as doors and even tombs sealed for protection. So it is not by chance that we are closed for your life is hid with Christ in God.

Think of it. Your life is hid with Christ in God. A triple security.

Nothing and no one can ever touch the source of your spiritual life. They can't get at it. They can do lots of things with the outflowing life.

They can do lots of things against you as Christians. And they can interfere very often with the kind of life you would like to live if only you could. They can do this.

But the source of that life is protected. Your life is hid with Christ in God. And nothing can ever touch the source of it.

Nothing can get near it. And I suppose we shouldn't be surprised then to hear Paul say as he does in the 8th of Romans when he comes to the end of that chapter Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Not what, but who. Things can't do it.

Who then will do it? Not that a long list of possibilities he concludes so triumphantly. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created being shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. So positive is he that the seal implies protection.

Not simply in Old Testament days, but thank God in our days too, as believers. And I've got a sort of suspicion that it not only applies exclusively to the very source of our spiritual life, but it does apply in many, many senses to our life as we live it amongst men. Protection is there for us even in our daily living.

I had an evangelist friend in the old country, Welshman of course. His name was James Jones. He was a marvelous evangelist.

He was an outdoor evangelist, you know. He would have about 17 or 18 open air services a day on his own. Absolutely alone.

That's the kind of man he was. And you know, he used to irritate some people. I remember on one occasion he was in a certain village and he was preaching in his usual style out in the open air.

And the people were a bit incensed and they got the priest to tell him to move on. So he said, yes, certainly I'll move on. So James Jones moved on and he moved around and around in a circle.

Round and around he went, making the circle ever bigger. So at last the policeman said, look here, he said, I'll run you in. He said, if you don't behave yourself.

He said, are you going to take me to prison? Yes, he said, I'll take you to jail and laying his hand on it. Whoa, he said. Did you ever read what happened, he said, when Paul and Silas were in prison? And before they finally got very far, you know, he was preaching the gospel to him for all he was worth.

Well, this incensed the people even more and it didn't do very much to help the policeman. But the result was that they took hold of James Jones and they pushed him into a shed and locked the door and they said, forget Bill Bennett. He was the village pugilist and he'll beat you up.

And they got Bill Bennett and he was all raring to go. And they let him into the shed where James Jones was. And he wasn't a very big man, James Jones, not big at all.

This huge, towering, hulking fellow, you know. In he went. And everybody's expecting to hear the bangs going on.

But you know, there was dead silence. And in ten minutes, he came to the door, this great big bully of a man. He said, I can't get near him, he said.

I don't know what's wrong. I can't get anywhere near him. And James Jones was there on his knees and just, you know, with his hands together, just thanking the Lord for his wonderful goodness and his protecting power, keeping on praying.

And here was this pugilist. He couldn't get near him. There's something wrong here, he said.

I can't get anywhere near him at all. And he went back in. And before the night was out, James Jones led him to Jesus Christ.

What a marvelous night that was in that village, I tell you, because this man was quite notorious. But there it was. Not simply a protection for the source of spiritual life, but a protection in this sense too, where this man was concerned.

And I am sure there are many who can testify in the same way. The seal implies protection. Now, the application of this seal.

You have this in Ephesians 1, 13 and 14. In whom he also trusted, says the apostle, after that he heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that he believed, he was sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession and to the praise of his glory. Now, the whole of this first chapter, which precedes these verses, is a revelation of God's loving concern for us as his people.

And at the very commencement, Paul, as you know, blesses God for his goodness to his people. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. For the source and the standard of these blessings are underlined here.

Blessed, God himself has done this. With what? With all material blessings in earthly places? No. With all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

And having said this, then he begins to unveil some of these blessings, which are ours in Christ. Verse 4. Chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Picked us out, literally.

Picked us out in Christ. To think that before time began, you were part of his plan, according to this. Verse 6. Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Not acceptable, but accepted. Which is a different thing altogether. And this word accepted is engraved.

Pursued by grace. Inserted by grace. Enveloped by grace.

Overwhelmed by grace. There is a thought behind this word accepted. There is certain.

In whom we have redemption through his blood. The forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. Where is the place we find this? In him.

What is the price of our redemption? Through his blood. And what is the power of it? The forgiveness of sins. The full forgiveness of sins.

The giving forth of sins. As upon the head of a scapegoat, the priest pronounced the sins of Israel, and he was driven forth into an isolated place there to linger, to languish, and eventually to die. Giving forth our sins.

And here is the plenitude of redemption. According to the riches of his grace. Verse 11.

In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. Literally. In whom we were designated a heritage.

For sure it is what God possesses in his people that is in view. Until this end, we were picked out in accordance with his purpose. All these were acts of God moving in love toward us.

And now in verses 13 and 14, we are shown the reality of a divine assurance that all these blessings are truly ours. This assurance comes to us in three ways. First, it comes through the gospel of salvation.

In whom he also trusted. After that he heard the word of truth. The gospel of your salvation.

In whom he also, that's the Gentile believers. After that he heard, literally, having heard. For this is how saving faith comes.

Faith cometh by hearing and hearing the word of God. And here is how the gospel is defined here. The word of truth.

An apt designation of the gospel. Because the good news is not merely love emotionally expressed. But it is also righteousness fully exemplified.

So it is the word of truth. It is the word of truth because it speaks of Christ who is the truth. And is applied by the Holy Spirit who is called the spirit of truth.

And it declares the truth about sin's malady and God's remedy. And no other gospel can ever do this. It is the gospel of your salvation, says Paul.

Because it is personal in its application, praise the Lord. And it is radical in its transformation. So it's your gospel.

And it's the gospel of your salvation. The word salvation is one of the most interesting and one of the loveliest words in the New Testament. It's a word of very full meaning.

You know, in the gospels, particularly, it has so many shades of meaning. It is the soldier's word. To him it means rescue.

That's what salvation is. A rescue. It's the physician's word.

To him it means recovery. It is the priest's word. To him it means reconciliation.

And it is the Savior's word. And to him it means regeneration. And it's a lovely word, isn't it, this word salvation? When Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of pluriform, was once asked by a newspaper reporter if he would comment on his greatest discovery, the reporter was there already with his pencil and notebook, waiting to take down what the great man was going to say, and he heard Sir James Simpson say, the greatest discovery I've ever made in my life is that Jesus Christ is my personal Savior and that He has delivered me from my sins.

Well, that was some surprise to the reporter, as you may well imagine. And I'm sure it is the greatest discovery anyone can ever make, that Jesus Christ is his or her Savior and that there is deliverance from the penalty and the power of sin. So it comes, disassurance first, through the gospel of salvation.

It comes on the ground of confirmation, the assurance of God's love toward us in His loving acts. Listen, in whom, after that He believed, He was sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. Or, having believed, then at that moment you were sealed.

This sealing by the Spirit is not an experience that takes place sometime afterward, sometime later, after you've given your heart to the Lord. It may be some months later you are sealed with the Spirit. No, at the time you receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, at that moment you are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

So every person who is born again of the Spirit is at that moment sealed with the Spirit. This means to say that what Paul told the Roman Christians is here confirmed, Romans 8, 9. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. The Spirit of Christ is a title of the Holy Spirit, one of twenty-seven titles.

He is none of his. What is he saying? He is not saying, well, he's a Christian but he's not making a good job of it. No.

He says he's not a Christian at all. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not a Christian at all. He is none of Christ's.

He doesn't belong to it. Nothing could surely be plainer than this. But isn't it possible you'd say that the moment a person is born of the Spirit and thus is sealed with the Spirit that he can then be filled with the Spirit? Isn't it possible? Well, with God all things are possible.

Of course it's possible. I've seen it happen. A young man was sitting next to me in a prayer meeting.

We were having a discussion. I know it says watch and pray, so I was watching him while I was praying because I knew that God was dealing with him. And I felt that this was very important.

I said to him quietly, Harold, isn't it about time you gave your life to the Lord? His father was a minister, but he was a non-Christian. He looked at me and he said, you know, I've been thinking about this for a long time. Well, look, Harold, there's no time better than the present.

Here you are sitting in a prayer meeting. I know you're here because your father made you come. But anyhow, here you are.

What about it? Will you give your heart to the Lord? He looked at me and he said, how long since you gave your heart to Christ? And I told him how many years it had been. What's it been like? And I testified what the Lord meant to me. So I said, Harold, will you accept the Lord as your Savior? Yes, I will, he said.

He got on his knees and he said, Lord Jesus, I accept you as my Savior. And the Spirit of God fell upon him, and here he was with his hands up in the air, praising the Lord in other tongues and giving God the glory just in a moment of time. I still think sometimes that God must have his favorites.

I know it says there is no respect of persons with God, but when you see this kind of thing happening, you know it makes you think, doesn't it? It really does. But I mean, it's possible. When a person is born again in the Spirit and sealed with the Spirit, that he can also be filled with the Spirit.

But although it's possible, I'd say it's rather unusual. But remember, if a person is born of the Spirit, he is sealed with the Spirit. That's God's mark of ownership upon him.

And don't think in terms of a long space in between, as though this sealing were some separate experience that the Christian must have after he has given his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. It's part and parcel of the same transaction. So it comes then on the ground of confirmation, and this truly is true confirmation.

This then is the function of the Spirit, to mark us out as owned by God. The third way in which assurance is divinely given that we are the inheritors of all spiritual blessings in Christ, it's by the guarantee of final redemption, verse 14, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possessions and to the praise of His Word. The earnest, arabon, this too is emblematic of the Spirit, and it means a deposit on account.

The earnest, or arabon, pledges the security of the inheritance. It also pledges the identity of the inheritance. It pledges to the continuity of the inheritance, that it endures.

In fact, the betrothal ring, or as we would say today, the engagement ring, was called hei harabone. It's the same word, the earnest of that which is to come. So the Holy Spirit is therefore the earnest or the guarantee of what awaits us as our inheritance.

Now, if it's the same in identity, then the bulk must be spiritual because the earnest, the deposit, is spiritual. Don't you see this is another way in which God shows us that what He promises in Christ as our inheritance, He fulfills in a very definite way in this marvelous manner, both by the seal and by the earnest, both types, of course, of which reveal something of the function and ministry of the Holy Spirit. And I think it's a great privilege, you know, to be in this dispensation of the Spirit, don't you? There's a verse, I forget where it is, which reads, Unto us upon whom the ends of the world have come.

And one day I was reading this and I had a look to see what it really meant. And I found to my amazement that the word ends is really tolle. It means toll.

You know, paying toll, going over the harbor bridge? Well, this is what it means. Unto us to whom the ages past have paid their toll. Isn't it lovely? Every bit of truth and revelation that the unfolding ages has revealed has come to us in this age.

But along with this, we are the earnest of what is to come. We have, in other words, tasted of the powers of the age to come. So here we are in this age of grace.

We are reaping a harvest of time. And we are tasting an earnest of future blessings. What a position in which to be.

And yet God in his mercy and grace has placed us within this dispensation of the Spirit where we reap from the past and where we taste of the future. I'm not saying that the millennium is here yet. If it is, there's something gone sadly wrong somewhere.

But I do know that it's possible to have millennial blessings if you know the kingship of Jesus, sure and now, in all its spiritual impulse and meaning. Isn't it? Now, the next word that you have here is redemption. And redemption here is *apolutrosin*.

It means to take away that for which the fixed price was paid. The reference is to final redemption, the glorification of the body. And if I had time, I'd like to enlarge on that, but I haven't.

You know, Paul has mentioned the fixed price already in this chapter. The fixed price for our redemption is the precious blood of Jesus. *Apolutrosin* then, which is redemption, is to take away that for which the fixed price has been made.

The reference here is to our bodies being glorified. So if this kind of redemption means that he is going to take away that for which the fixed price has been paid, then the fixed price must have been paid for our bodies as well as for our souls. Otherwise, this word *apolutrosin* has no meaning and certainly no application in this setting at all.

Is this clear to you or will I go over it? You know, you can have the word redemption as *lutrosin*, a price paid. You can have the word redemption as *apolutrosin*, to take away that for which the price has been paid. If the taking away of that for which the price has been paid is the word used here, and it is, and the reference here is to final redemption, which is the redemption of our bodies, then surely that for which the fixed price has been paid is as much our bodies as our souls.

Hallelu, and this is what the apostle is driving at. You know, salvation, if you like, is in three stages. I think if you can see this, you'll get a glimpse of the New Testament concept of what salvation means for the believer.

First, there is justification, which deals with the penalty of sin and cancels out the condemnation. We have all known that haven't we? There is therefore now no condemnation. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God.

That's justification. The second step is sanctification, which deals with the power of indwelling sin. Not sins now, but the power of indwelling sin, the sin principle, and controls the tendency to sin.

Sanctification, which deals with the power of indwelling sin and controls the tendency to sin. And the third step is glorification, which deals with the presence of sin and changes our bodies like unto His glorious

body. So the redemption of our bodies is the final act in full redemption.

And the Holy Spirit is the earnest of this, just as He is the seal of our position in Christ. That's why Paul says in Romans 8.11, It is true that these dead bodies, if the Lord doesn't come, are going to be quickened. We know this.

But this is something for the present. This is the promise in Romans 8. And all this is done to the praise of His glory with a view to extolling the glory of God. The objective then in all spiritual blessings in heavenly places is that God may be extolled, exalted and magnified, because all is of grace and of grace alone.

One thing more before I close. The obligation in this teaching. Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 30.

Now I well know on a former occasion we spoke about the sin of grieving the Holy Spirit, pointed out one or two ways in which this may be done by the Christians. We spoke about the grief of offended righteousness, the grief of thwarted purpose, the grief of slighted love. But from the context we can see that the way we speak, our very conversation, can become a source of grief to the Spirit who is the seal of God.

Verse 29. So in relation to conversation, let no speech that may pollute your lips ever pass. The word corrupt is used of rotting fruit and stinking fish.

This is the same word that is used. And so you can understand that this speech is unbecoming to the Christian. A Christian who uses suggestive speech, the speech of double meaning, this is a grief to the Holy Spirit.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth. But the opposite, but that which is good to the use of edifying, words that shall help in the building up of others in their spiritual life. That it may minister grace to the hearers, promoting progress and bestowing blessing on those who listen to what you have to say.

Gracious words are not artificial, gushing, used for effect, but winsome, attractive speech. If our prayer would only be continually, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord. Then we should never grieve the Holy Spirit of God in this area of life.

Still having regard for the context, look at verse 31. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice. Why? Because if you don't, you are going to grieve the Spirit of God, the one who has sealed you past God's possession.

Bitterness, vitriol, that's the word. A resentful, harsh spirit. The severity of harshness that springs from a root of bitterness.

Wrath, zeumos, the habitual readiness to be inflamed, to erupt like a volcano. And anger, the other word is orge, forbidden because it is uncontrolled human passion. And clamor, krauge, the undisciplined assertion of a grievance.

Not simply having a difference of opinion with someone, but shouting about it. This is the idea behind the word. Making a big thing out of it.

And evil speaking, blasphemy, injurious speech, derogatory speech. What about this? Be put away from you, and here it is very strong. Lift it clean out of your life, leaving not a single shred behind.

Lift it clean out of your life. With all malice, the other word is karkia. It means the wretched soil in which these growths can flourish.

What a picture it presents, doesn't it? This kind of thing, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking. Lift it clean out of your lives, every bit of it. Leaving not a single shred of it behind, and all the wretched soil that goes with it.

This malice. And in the place of this, so as not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you are sealed. Listen to verse 32.

And be kind one to another. The other word is christos. Very much like the word christos, isn't it? Gracious to one another, winsome to one another, benevolent concerning each other.

Here's the word kind. Tenderhearted, that is, compassionate. That which springs from deep-seated sympathy and understanding.

Forgiving one another. Not the usual word apiemi. Not that.

But, which means the dismissing of sin, and which is a divine prerogative. But the word charizoma. Treating the offender with the utmost consideration.

That's what it means. Such mutual action, as is called for here, is utterly impossible in the ordinary run of things. To the ordinary human being, as we are in our natural life.

It's quite impossible to act in this way. For understanding this, he knows there is a divine motive. Thank God, an enabling power.

So he links it with the highest and noblest expression of forgiving grace that you can find anywhere. He goes on to say, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. Exactly like this.

Letting the Christ of the cross prevail in thee. So it isn't you who is doing it at all. But the Christ of the cross rules thee.

And I believe this is the only way in which it can ever be done. Because we don't have this ability. We do not have this power at all in ourselves.

Then the Lord Jesus Christ takes his rightful place as the Lord of glory in our lives. When we understand him as the Christ of Calvary, what a difference that makes. You know, you'll never really be broken until he himself breaks you.

Not really. There's a brokenness which comes because of the presence of the indwelling Lord Jesus. It doesn't come in any other way at all.

When it does come, it's at that point you become a victor. Because you can't break brokenness. You can't defeat defeat.

You can't conquer conquest. You can't kill death. That's why Calvary is so triumphant.

It's the sign of defeat, of course. It's the sign of death, naturally. But it's the sign of glorious victory, too.

Because he is led as a lamb to the slaughter. As a sheep before a shearer is done, he openeth not his mouth. And yet as we saw last Tuesday night, who is this that cometh from Eden with dyed garments from Bosnia? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength.

I that speak in righteousness mightily say, Oh, he is the mighty conqueror because he is the suffering Savior. And we have to learn this lesson, too. The purpose of all this is that by so doing we will not be guilty of grieving the Holy Spirit of God by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Now this, as I see it, is practical holiness. This is not innocence, it is conquest. And that is practical holiness.

This is not a state into which we enter. It's a standing by faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. This is not absolute holiness.

This is relative holiness. The only kind we can ever know as believers. It's the only brand of holiness that deals effectively with the corruption of canality which embitters the spirit.

Remember, if you are concerned about living a life, you will not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, the seal of God. God's open hand is waiting only for your open heart. That's all.

A nation can grieve the Spirit, Israel did. A family can grieve the Spirit, Ananias and Sapphira did. A church can grieve the Spirit, even the Ephesian church did.

And an individual can grieve the Spirit. But if we see what the seal of God is intended to do, if we see the typology of it first, the implication in its typology, if we see the application of the principles of truth it enunciates in the New Testament, and if we see our obligation in the light of what it teaches, then I believe God in His marvelous grace will enable us so to live that nothing we say or do will ever grieve the precious Holy Spirit of God. Who was deigned to come and to indwell your life and mine.

What condescension, what humility, that He should deign to come and live in you and me, just as we are, knowing all about us and loving us just as He is. May God bless His Word. Let us pray.

Eternal God, as our hearts go out to Thee again this night in prayer and supplication, in thanksgiving and in praise, we are again conscious of Thy nearness, Thy presence, the brooding of Thy Spirit upon this gathering. O God, we know that the Spirit of God, as the seal of God, sets the mark of ownership upon us. And we would acknowledge that divine ownership in every avenue of life, in every area of experience.

We do want Thee to possess all there is of us, spirit, soul and body, because such an infinite price has been paid for our redemption. Grant, O God, that as we move amongst men, men who do not know Thee and have no time or thought for Thee, that there may be something about our lives that will bring conviction to bear upon them, and that in some way they may be led to see Jesus, the altogether lovely One, interpreted not by human ideas and concepts, but by the living Spirit of God, who has come to indwell us as those who love Thy name. Cure us for Jesus' sake.

Amen.

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