

# (Ephesians) Sealed and Secured by the Holy Spirit

by Jeff Noblit

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being sealed by the Holy Spirit, which gives us security and assurance of our salvation, and explores the prerequisites and role of the Holy Spirit in this process.*

**Duration:** 1:19:57

**Scripture:** Ephesians 1:3-13

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher uses the analogy of a signet ring to explain how God seals believers with the Holy Spirit. He emphasizes that repentance and faith are necessary for salvation, but it is the regenerating work of God that enables individuals to have the capacity to repent and believe. The preacher also highlights the importance of God-called preachers in communicating the Gospel and emphasizes the role of personal witnessing in spreading the message. Additionally, he mentions the practice of timber companies using rivers and streams to transport logs, drawing a parallel to how believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit.

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## Transcript

You ever wonder, well, why did God save us and leave us here? He wants to bring some glory to Himself through us. That's it. He has a purpose for you and I to be in on the process, now listen, of Him unveiling, manifesting, and revealing before creation all that He is.

And one of the glorious and grand aspects of who God is is grace. Grace is an attribute that God and God alone possesses. And it is only right for God to have that grace seen and for God to be glorified and magnified for being the God of grace that He is.

So in His sovereign purposes He saves for Himself a church, all in grace, completely by grace, so that He will get praise and glory for doing such a wonderful thing. Have I reminded you lately this whole thing is about God and not about us? And we want to endeavor to mature as a church so that it becomes natural to be God-centered, not man-centered in our viewpoints. It's so easy and it's so prone, it's so natural, at least to the flesh, the old man, to be man-centered.

But God wants us to be supernaturally natural. God wants our norm to be what the Holy Spirit inspires us to think or the viewpoint the Holy Spirit would give us in our hearts and minds. Well, that's not my introduction but I had it on my heart.

Ephesians chapter 1 verses 13 and 14. While you're looking at that, let me share with you that there is a practice among timber companies that has been in practice for at least 2,000 years. And that is that when these great timber companies would cut down the trees and shave off the limbs, they would use the rivers and the streams to transport their logs downstream to either the mill or to someone who's agreed to purchase them or maybe a storage area that they had downstream.

It's particularly true among the great timber companies of the northern areas of the United States. Those great northern forests would have many timber companies and they would cut down the trees and trim off the limbs, put the logs in the rivers and streams and let them flow downriver to the mill or to the purchaser. And they tell me that you can go to some of these bridges over some of these rivers certain times of the year and they're just jammed with logs from several different timber companies.

Someone asked the question one day, well how in the world would each company know which logs are theirs? Well it's easy. The timber companies all had a unique mark or seal and they would put that seal or that mark on their logs. And so when they got downstream to the mill or to the purchaser, it would be easy.

You would look for the mark on the log and you would know who the owner was and where the destination was to be. So the mark or the seal on the logs spoke of security. It secured that log as to showing who the owner was and where the destination was to be for that log.

Well it's the same thing, by the way, this was practiced in biblical times. And that's the same Greek word that's used in our text where the Bible says, past tense, we were sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God has done a work in those that are God's.

Now listen to how I'm wording this. The Holy Spirit of God does a work in those that belong to God and in that work He marks them, seals them or marks them. And when that mark is in your life, it gives you security.

It lets you know, I know who my owner is and I know where my destination is. Amen. And that's what Paul brings out when we get to verses 13 and 14 of Ephesians chapter 1. Look at it there with me.

As Paul is continuing in this possibly the richest chapter of scripture in the Word of God, he says this to those Christians at Ephesians and to us today. In Him you also, after listening to the message of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession. There it is again, to the praise of His glory.

To the praise of His glory. Now what two words do we have in the beginning of verse 13 that's been repetitive throughout this whole section? In Him. Sometimes it's in Christ Jesus or in the Lord Jesus Christ.

But we see that over and over and over again in the New Testament and we see it repeated numerous times throughout verses 1 through 13. Here's what Paul is saying. Paul is saying you have to understand something.

All that you have of the blessings of God, including all the blessings of salvation, they are yours rather because you are in Him. And he goes all the way through this text saying that over and over again. What is his point? His point is our salvation is in Christ.

Now listen, therefore our salvation is outside of us. He didn't say in yourself. He didn't say in your faith.

He didn't say in your decision. He didn't say in your works. He said no, in Him all this is true about you.

Calvin worded it this way. Calvin said, in short, the name of Christ excludes all merit and everything which men have of themselves. For when he says we are chosen in Christ, verse 4, it follows that in ourselves we are unworthy.

So all that is involved in our salvation, Paul is saying to us, is a result of being in Christ. It's not a result of our works, our merit, our worth. It is His work, not our work.

Now let's review this for a moment. The 12 verses before you get to verse 13 to see all these things Paul has already told us that we have, all these blessings we have in Christ. First of all, in verse 1, as he's writing to the church at Ephesus, he tells them the last part there, they are faithful in Christ Jesus.

So he goes forward to the Christian lifestyle and he says, even your faithfulness to serve and honor Christ after conversion is a result of being in Him. In other words, he supplies what you need to be faithful. You don't do that.

God does it in you and through you. And then in verse 3, he says that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Now that's a summarizing, composite statement, if you will, of all the abundant blessings that heaven has toward all of God's children are all ours because we're in Christ.

And then in verse 4, He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. Now, how were we picked out, if you will, chosen? There's no other way you can make that word chosen mean anything else other than that, picked out or chosen. How are we chosen? You were chosen because you were in Him.

God did not look ahead and say, now that's a fine guy and that's a fine lady and that's a unique person. That person has unique gifts and talents. I think I'll choose them.

Absolutely not. It is unmerited favor. But even though there's mystery here, we cannot comprehend it.

Though we do it to some extent apprehend it, it is still true. We are chosen in Him from the foundation of the world. Then we go to verse 5. He says, He predestined us to adoption as sons through Christ Jesus.

The same concept of saying in Him. Predestined means you were picked out or marked out beforehand. How did God do that? He did that because you were one of those who were in Him.

Because of any worth or merit that you might have. Because you don't have any in God's sight. In verse 7, in Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of grace.

Redemption, which means being purchased from the slave market of sin, self, and Satan and released to God's domain, to God's family, never to be enslaved again. That was done for us because we are in Him, are in the merit of Christ, in the work of Christ, not in us. We're forgiven of our sins.

All of our sins are removed as far as God holding our sins against us for punishment. Now isn't that good news? God does not hold your sin against you for punishment if you're in Him. Well, and then he goes on to verses 8 through 10.

I'll not read that, but he talks about how we have new wisdom, new insight. We understand mysteries. That is, we understand things that were hidden from former generations.

But now in the church age, which has gone on for 2,000 years, we understand God's man, Jesus, and God's way of salvation through Christ. We have wisdom and understanding the former ages did not understand. We all have that because we are in Him, not because there's something special in us.

It's all the work of God. Now we get to verse 13. Now don't lose the flow in verse 13.

Don't go from God-centered to man-centered in verse 13. Let verse 13 flow with the context of verses 1 through 12. What does he say? In Him you also, after listening to the message of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.

So he says, now that our listening and believing happened because we are in Him, just like all the other things happened because we are in Him. In other words, God does it all. He does every bit of it.

He gets the credit for all of it. He is responsible for all of it. That is the message of Ephesians 1, 1 through 14.

Now three phrases that you need to get down in your mind, and that is, in Him, we've looked at that. That means everything that's done for us to save us is His work, not ours. That's why He didn't say, in you, or in your work, or in your faith, or in your decision, or anything else.

He said it's in Him. And the next phrase is, to the praise of the glory of His grace. That occurs three times in these verses.

To the praise of the glory. Why did God do it this way? Choosing, predestined, gave us new wisdom and understanding, all the way through. Believing it's all in Him.

God's in charge of all of it. Why does He do it this way? Three times. Paul repeats it to make sure badness can understand it.

To the praise of the glory of His grace. To show how wonderful He is. How glorious He is.

Well, I don't think I agree with that, or I don't think that coincides with everything I've been taught, or the logical conclusions I had about God all of my life. This sort of messes me up, and it makes me uncomfortable. It sort of strips all my pride away.

I'm not real comfortable with this. Why did God do it this way? A third phrase occurs three times. A third phrase, it was His will to do it.

According to the kind intention of His will. He is God. He chose to do it this way.

Period. So those are three key phrases. In Him, it's all the meritorious work of Christ.

It's nothing to do with our work, effort, anything else. He did it all to the ultimate end of Him being glorified for being such a God that would save unworthy sinners like us. That's grace that does that.

And did it all because it was just the kind intention of His will to do it. That is what Paul is telling us. Now, I want to move forward.

I want to leave that and move forward to this idea of being sealed in Him. The last part of verse 13, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise. What does that mean? What does it mean that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise? Well, first of all, this is an aorist tense verb.

Sealed. The aorist tense means finished action in past time, but continuing results. It's like being married.

I was married on a certain day in past time, but I remain married, continuing the results. You were sealed at one time. There was a point that it initiated, but now listen.

The sealing, in a sense, progresses as you mature in Christ and will have its ultimate fulfillment one day when you get to heaven. But there was a point when you were sealed. It's finished work, past time, but continuing and even growing results.

Alright? Let me give you the outline and hope to clarify and explain things as we go along. Number one, the purpose of being sealed is security. The purpose of being sealed is security.

Now think about where Paul's come from. He's writing to these believers at Ephesus. He says, you were chosen before the foundation of the world.

You were predestined or marked out beforehand. You've been given new understanding and new wisdom by being in him. You have redemption and forgiveness because you're God's child.

But I can imagine the individual believer saying, well, how do I know if I'm really in on that? How do I know if I'm really one of those? And it's as if Paul says, okay, I'm going to answer that in verse 13. Here's how you know. Have you experienced being sealed by the Holy Spirit? Because it's that mark on the log, remember? That security.

That mark on the log says this log has this owner and it has this destination downstream. You're sealing when the Holy Spirit seals you. It gives you security whereby you can with confidence know I am owned by God and my destination is with God in heaven.

So Paul, in effect, is coming down out of, now you see for so long here, we were looking at this from a Godward perspective. Here's how God planned and initiated and carried out our salvation. And then it's as if Paul turns around and says, now you subjectively must have experienced something.

And in this experience, you were in fact being sealed by the Holy Spirit, which therefore gives you security. That is letting you know who your true owner is, God, and what your true destination is, that's heaven. All right, let's talk about ownership for just a moment as we look there at verse 14, the last part.

It's the first sub point here. He says in verse 14, who is given as a pledge of our our inheritance with a view to the redemption of God's own possession. Now that's an interesting phrase.

The Holy Spirit came into your life and He was given as a pledge as an earnest payment, if you will. You know, if you give earnest money, it means the rest is coming. The Holy Spirit came in to say, you're God's and everything else you're going to get because you're God's is yet coming, but you already got some now.

You've got the whole Holy Spirit in you right now. By the way, He's a person, not a thing. You can't chop a person up.

You didn't get the arm and the leg of the Holy Spirit. You got Him when you were sealed. So He's given as a pledge.

Now listen what He says there, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession. It's as if God is saying this, you are mine before the foundation of the world. I chose you and predestined you.

But at a certain point and time in history, I put the Holy Spirit in you to let you know and realize that you're mine because you're my own possession. I am redeeming you because I chose you before the foundation of the world. Now folks, I know this doctrine is troubling to a lot of Baptists.

I know it hadn't been preached from Baptist pulpits and for that all I can say is I'm very sorry. It should have been. It should have been.

I'm just telling you brothers and sisters, I have no use for a man of God that skips the truth of the Word of God, fearful of what man may think. You just can't do that and be honest and be a faithful under-shepherd to God. Well pastor, people won't be evangelistic.

I can almost guarantee you I have witnessed more in the last month to lost people urging them to come to Christ than 99% of you have and I believe this stronger than any of you. If it bothers your evangelism, you've got a flesh problem. You ought to glory in these truths and go out there and win some more.

Amen? Well, ownership. Let's look at some cross references. Revelation chapter 7. You don't have to turn there.

But in Revelation chapter 7, the Bible says God seals 144,000 on their forehead. Now folks, the church age has ended. The great tribulation has begun and God in His sovereignty chooses 144,000 Jews, marks them out as His own.

He literally is going to put a mark on their foreheads. And what does that mark say? That mark says, I'm secure. There's certain things that can't touch me during this tribulation because I'm marked by God.

Security. That's what the seal does. It gives security.

And then we see in Romans chapter 4 verse 11 something where Paul says there, For he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith. Now he's talking about Abraham and when Abraham and then all of Abraham's descendants received the seal, if you will, of circumcision. And when a little Jewish boy was born and on the eighth day after he was born, they removed the foreskin, circumcised that little boy.

What were they doing? They were giving security. You are in the covenant. You're in God's household.

It was a seal, a mark of ownership and security. Now secondly, not only ownership, but let's talk about destination. That's something else that was true of all those logs that the timber company would mark and put their mark on them.

And not only meant I own this log, it means I've sold it to the mill downstream. That's its destination. So when God marks us, seals us by the Holy Spirit, it marks us as being owned by him, but it also marks our

destination.

And that's what he means in verse 14 with a view to the redemption of God's own possession. In other words, listen, what God began in eternity past when he chose and predestined you, he's going to bring about to fruition to the final and full redemption when you're glorified with him in heaven and you'll be with him for all eternity. God has marked out your destination.

Are you listening to me? God marked out your destination before the world began. Our Paul's a liar and Jesus is a liar. Now you can go through and do your hop, skip and junk exposition and skip the things if you want to, but you'll answer to God for it one day.

This is what the scripture teaches. Look over to Ephesians chapter 4 verse 30 as we continue thinking about this destination aspect. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 30.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. You know what that means? That means after you're saved, you can choose to walk in the flesh and not by the leadership of the Spirit and you grieve him. He's a person.

You grieve him. You break his heart. He said, don't grieve that Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

God marked you. That mark was on you when you believed in Jesus Christ and that secured your final destination. Boy, what a great doctrine that reinforces the perseverance of the or once saved, always saved.

So it gives us assurance. It gives us security that we are indeed God's child ownership and destination. Now let's go to our second major point here.

I want to talk now just for the sake of giving us a full orb ed understanding about the prerequisites of being sealed by the Holy Spirit. What are the prerequisites? What I mean by this, what are the indispensable components? There are some absolute essential things that must take place if any of us are going to have this sealing of the Holy Spirit. If any of us are going to have that security of knowing I'm owned by God, my destination is secured and settled forever.

Well, what are some of those prerequisites? Well, according to the Bible, I want to give you three biblical terms. These are not Jeff Knoblet terms. These are not John Calvin terms.

These are Bible terms. And these are prerequisites. They're mysterious in a way, but if they didn't take place, you won't get sealed.

Number one, chosen. Number two, predestined. Number three, foreknown.

Bible terms, look them up in your concordance. Chosen, predestined, foreknown. We've talked about those quite a bit, so I'll leave that.

Because now I want to go to the direct role of the Holy Spirit in time. Those three things I just mentioned happened back there in the heart and mind of God before the world began. God let us in on some of that, but we can't completely comprehend it, though we can apprehend it.

Chosen, predestined, foreknown. Now Paul takes us down into time, and he says, now in time as men live on planet earth, these are the things the Holy Spirit does as prerequisites. Indispensable components,

things that must happen before the sealing takes place.

That is in time. Well, what is that? Well, number one, the Holy Spirit gives Scripture. Before you could be sealed, there had to be the Word of God.

There had to be Scripture, because the Scripture contains the Gospel. And apart from the Word of God, which contains the Gospel, we would never know the truth in order to be saved. But now, how did we get the Scripture? Did any of you have anything to do with the Bible? Did any of us have anything to do with writing or putting together or developing the canon of Scripture? No, it was completely a grace gift, was it not? In the Bible, a grace gift.

It was given by God. God superintended men to write the very words that He wanted as divine Scripture. 2 Peter chapter 1 verses 20 and 21 tell us very clearly, but know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will. Did you see that? Humans had no part in this, not an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. So this thing of having the Scriptures, the Word of God, which contains the Gospel that saves, was a gift of God, completely by grace.

It was the ministry of the Holy Spirit. 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16. All Scripture is inspired by God.

It's God-breathed. It's of God and from God as if God were standing there and breathing or speaking to you. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.

So I just want to establish that prerequisite. The Holy Spirit had to give Scripture or you and I would never have been saved. Was that not a grace gift? Did we have anything to do with that whatsoever? It's God's work.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit calls and gifts preachers. Now you understand God could have written the gospel in the stars or in the clouds. God could have written the gospel on the sides of mountains, but God so decided in His sovereign and perfect will to design that the chief mechanism, the chief vehicle of proclaiming His truth would be God-called, God-gifted preachers.

And by the way, can I ask you a question? Have you ever called anyone to preach? And by the way, people have done that. And that's one of the problems in the church today. We've got man-called preachers.

And they say the things that please the people instead of the things that honor God. But we know true preachers are God-called and God-gifted and we had nothing to do with it. We are to recognize them when we hear them and see them and therefore as a church we call certain men to be our pastor teachers or the pastors of the church because we recognize God's call and gifts, but we don't make that calling or gifting happen in any way, shape or fashion.

Romans 10, 14 through 17. How then shall they call upon Him in whom they've not believed? And how shall they believe in Him in whom they've not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? I want to say something right here. We'll just pause right there.

I'm not saying that God didn't use the personal witnessing of all of us. Certainly He does. But His foundation stone of communicating the gospel and every personal witness is dependent upon a God-called preacher.

That's the way God's designed it. It's just His way. And then verse 15.

And how shall they preach unless they are sent? In other words, if God hadn't called them and sent them, how are they going to have anything to say? Just as it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things. However, they did not all heed the glad tidings. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our report? Now look at this.

So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ or the word about Christ. How do people come to faith and be saved? Hearing the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ, chiefly and foundationally from God-called, God-gifted preachers. Ephesians 4, 11 and 12.

And He gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as pastor teachers. In the Greek, it's one office. A pastor whose job is teaching.

For the equipping of the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ. So God gives gifted men to the church. That was what it means in Ephesians 4, 11.

God gives. God gave some as apostles, no longer in effect. Prophets, the gift of prophecy is still in effect, but the office of prophet is no longer in effect.

Evangelists, I believe God still calls men in evangelism. And then pastor teachers of local churches. My point to you is this.

You and I would have never come to have known Christ in salvation if the Holy Spirit didn't give us scripture. And God did all of that. It's grace.

You and I would have never come to know Christ if God did not call and gift men to preach the Word of God. Because even if we came to Christ as the personal witness of a layman, they were impacted and affected and matured and nurtured and equipped to the preaching of a God-called preacher. My point is this.

It's all grace, isn't it? All the way up to this point, it's all grace. It's all the Holy Spirit's work. Something we individual believers had no part in.

God did all of this. Now let's go to our third main point. The ingredients of the sealing.

We've talked about the purpose of being sealed. That is so that we might have security. So that we might say, yes, I'm owned by God and yes, my destination is sure.

Ownership destination. We talked about the prerequisites to being sealed. There must have been the Word of God.

And there must be a preacher to bring the Word of God or men wouldn't be saved and be sealed. But now thirdly, let's talk about the ingredients of the sealing. Pastor, just what is the sealing of the Spirit? Just what happens? How do I know it's happened in my life? Now, I may have studied 20 competent scholars in studying for this message.

And I don't know how to say this and I don't in any way mean this in an elitist spirit. But not a one of them really elaborated on this. And I think it is so obvious in the text.

Look at it there with me. Look at verse 13 of Ephesians chapter 1. You have the key ingredient of the sealing work of the Holy Spirit in one phrase. And it should be worded.

It's a participial phrase. It's not a past tense phrase. It's sort of a continuing action phrase.

And that is in the middle of verse 13 in the New American Standard he words it this way, having also believed. Having also believed. Now, one thing the Greek scholars seem to be very clear on is you should not take verse 13 and make chronological steps out of it.

This happens, this happens, then this happens. Really you should take verse 13 and see it as one package, one whole simultaneously happening. You are listening and while listening you believed and while believing you're sealed.

Are you hearing me? That's the way God pictures it. That's what God is showing us. You hear the preaching, teaching, sharing the gospel.

While hearing it, belief is birthed in your heart. And while the listening and believing is birthing, also the sealing is taking place in your heart. It's one package.

It's one whole. Now, it's very important that we understand what the word believe means. Believed here is not shallow intellectual assent of gospel facts.

Belief here doesn't mean, well intellectually I do hold Jesus died. He was a historical figure. He died.

Intellectually I do hold that he died on a cross for my sins. Intellectually I do hold that he rose from the dead. You know, James says the demons believe, but there isn't a saving belief.

No, belief here means something's happened both in your mind, you know the facts, in your emotions you feel deeply the truth of the gospel, and in your will you commit or you place full confidence and trust in the gospel. Belief wraps up all of those. Technically the word believe means to trust or to hope in.

If I'm hoping in something, maybe you come on hard times and you don't know whether or not you're going to make it financially, but somebody's promised you a job next year. You're living in hope. You have a continual abiding confidence that that's going to take place.

Well, that's what belief means here. There's a point in time when you become a believer, and from that moment on you have placed confidence in Jesus Christ. Confidence that what he says about your sin problem is true, and that you are wretched and depraved, and you can't save yourself.

Confidence in what he says about how you are forgiven. His death on the cross pays for your sins. Confidence in him as the only Lord God boss of your life.

All of that's wrapped up in belief. So, when that happens, when belief happens, and you could break belief down into two other biblical phrases, repentance toward God, faith in Jesus Christ. All that's in belief.

From the initial point where something has happened in your heart and you turn from trusting in self or any of the philosophies or viewpoints or teachings or ideologies, you reject all of that and realize you're a

sinner in your loss. You turn, that's repentance, and you embrace Jesus Christ to forgive you and save you and be the new Lord God of your life. From the infant stages of your understanding, when that happens, you're sealed.

And what Paul is saying here is, when you have had that experience, you must know God the Holy Spirit brought that about. It is a work of God testifying that you are God's child owned by Him and your destination is sure. That's your sealing of the Holy Spirit.

Now, there are those who would like to teach a chronological order here. Well, the belief happens, you do all that by yourself. By the way, if he wanted to emphasize that you do that by yourself and it doesn't take the convincing, convicting work of the Holy Spirit to bring you to faith and belief, if he wanted to emphasize that man just does that by himself, he would have never used those first two words of verse 13.

What are they? In Him. In Him. He just said, in you, you believed.

Are you hearing me? But Paul says, I want to make it so clear, no Baptist can miss it. In Him, God was active. God was proactive.

God was involved, bringing you to the point of repentance and faith. And when God does that work, you are a believer. You've repented of sin.

You've placed faith in Christ. You sense that reality. Then Paul says, hallelujah, God's just sealed the deal.

It's settled forever. You're God's child. He owns you.

Your destination is sure. You're not to look for believers baptism to give you that security. You're not to look for the sacraments or the ordinances of the church like the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion or whatever else it may be.

You must put your confidence in the fact that God has brought you to that point of believing and that is God's seal. You belong to God. It's a lot like I'm refinancing my house or at least I'm trying to because the interest rates are just too good to pass up.

And we've had a little problem, not a big problem, but a little problem and finally the loan guy calls me and says, I want you to know it's done. All we lack now is just the paperwork. It's sealed up.

It's ready. It's finished. All we lack now is the paperwork.

And friend, that's basically what happens to a child of God after you've believed on Jesus Christ. It begins at a point that belief grows and matures as you walk in Christ. Matter of fact, if you believed at a point and you don't see a pretty good pattern of growth and trust in Jesus Christ, you never really believed at that first point.

The faith that fizzles at the finish was faulty at the first. So we need to quit viewing salvation as simply a point in time. It begins at a point but it continues on.

Matter of fact, the moment you're saved you started repenting and then you continue to be a repentor the rest of your life. You continue to catch things in your life that are wicked and evil and wrong and ungodly and you continually hate them more and more. You continually despise your old flesh more and more.

You continually are grieved at the sinfulness of your own life more and more. And so daily, hour by hour, choir minute by minute for some of y'all because you're real bad people. So make sure you're listening.

We have to repent, don't we? We have to keep turning and saying, that's not who I am anymore. I'm a follower of Jesus. God, forgive me.

That's not who I am. That makes me sick of me. I want to follow Jesus.

You're a repentor. Started at a point, continues on. And you know what? That is the evidence you're sealed.

Are you hearing me? That's where security comes from. We need to stop this foolish nonsense of taking people back to the words they prayed when they prayed them and got saved and asked them, in your lifestyle are we seeing evidence of biblical repentance and being a repentor and biblical trust and reliance on Christ? Because that is the evidence you're sealed and secured in God. I never saw this.

Have you ever seen this before? I've never seen it before. And we must be careful that we don't make this a chronological thing because there's so many and some of them are well-intending people and sweet folks, but they want to say you're believed and saved and then somewhere down the road this sealing work takes place. And that's when you talk in tongues.

That's when you see signs and wonders and miracles. And that's when you fly up on the floor like a fish. And I'm not being silly.

They do fly up on the floor like a fish. Some of them just fall out. They just fall and fall.

All this, they say that's the sealing. That's this follow-up work. I'm going to tell you something, brothers and sisters in Christ, listen to me.

You don't have to talk in some nonsensical gibberish to know you're secure. Look and see if God has done that work of repentance and faith. And as you see that, say, praise God, I'm one of the sealed ones.

He's done this in my life. So when the Holy Spirit, using the gospel, at a point in time makes you a new repentor and a new truster in Jesus Christ, then that is the sealing, the evidence. God's taken what the kings in the old world would do.

They'd take their signet ring and their ring would have the seal of their kingdom on it. And when they wanted to say they own something or they wanted to secure something, they'd put a little wax droplet on that piece of paper. And while it was still warm, they put that signet ring, that seal in there.

And that was to testify to all the king's authorities behind this. Now, you listening child of God, God the Father has taken His signet ring and He's pressed it on your soul. And the evidence that that has happened is you've repented and placed faith in Jesus Christ.

And I'm telling you what God seals is secured forever and ever and ever. Well, let's go to our next major point and we're going to break this down and sort of look at this very thoroughly. And some of this is repetitive to some degree, but that's on purpose because I want it to burn into our thinking.

Roman numeral four, new material now, how does the Holy Spirit bring about repentance and faith? Passages now, how does that actually happen? If the Holy Spirit of God is involved in me coming to the

point of repentance and faith, if the Holy Spirit of God is active involved in bringing me to repentance and faith, how does that happen? Well, let me say something to you. It's a mystery. It's a mystery.

We can't figure this thing out completely, so cease trying to put it in your little chart, in your little diagram. It's not going to fit there. Have you realized God is just bigger than all of our charts? Not that there's something wrong with a million times and all, but when you start trying to calculate this thing out, some sort of scientific mathematical illustration, it's just not going to hold up.

There's some mystery there, but Scripture does give insights. Scripture gives some insights. Let's reaffirm again.

First sub point A, it is all the work of God. That's one thing Scripture makes clear is that if you're saved, God looks at it and says very clearly, this was all my work, working in and through you. It's all the work of God.

Quickly look at Ephesians chapter 2, one page over from our text, and look at verses 5 and 10. Verse 5, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you've been saved. He sees you were dead in transgressions.

A dead man can't think. A dead man can't hear. A dead man can't cogitate in his thinking.

A dead man cannot reason. A dead man can't reach up. A dead man can't receive.

A dead man can't decide. Dead man can't do anything. While you were dead, He made you alive.

Then Paul goes on to add that little phrase, by grace you've been saved. By the way, it's grace and I just illustrated it again, Paul is saying. He took the initiating work to bring us to belief because we were dead and dead men can't believe anything.

Verse 10 of the same chapter, Ephesians chapter 2, for we are His workmanship. We're not His workmanship and a little of our workmanship. We're not 98% His and 2% ours.

We're His workmanship. Created, now here he goes again, in Christ Jesus. How did this new creation that you become at belief, how did this happen? It happens in Christ.

Created in Christ Jesus to the end of our four good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them. In other words, God eternally from the foundation of the world, foreordained that you would be converted and after your conversion you would walk in good works. All this is God's work.

God does the initiative. 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verse 3, reaffirms this. Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says Jesus is accursed and no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

If you're talking to a person, witness to them basically like you always have. Urge them to repent. Urge them to place their faith in Christ.

Tell them if it's your method of doing it to pray and initiate that with a prayer, a sinner's prayer if you want to call it that. Nothing wrong with any of that, but if they do respond and it's true believing salvation, you can be sure it's the Holy Spirit that enabled them to call on Jesus as Lord. Because if you call on Jesus and you didn't call on Him as Lord, you didn't get saved.

Now I'm not saying you articulated that. I'm not saying that was verbally the words, but in your heart understanding, you didn't just say, give me some fire insurance. I'll come back when I'm 75 and make you Lord.

No, you come to Jesus as Savior and Lord and to the degree you understand it, you know He's Lord. You honor Him as Lord. You submit and yield to Him as Lord.

Then after you're saved, you begin to understand more and more what that Lordship means, but you do commit to it. How many of you ladies have been married? Now don't raise your hand, but you committed at the marriage altar if you're a Christian to honor the headship of your husband. Now some of you ladies years later have realized what all that means.

But just to the degree you understood it, you committed to it at that day. So it is with salvation. My point though being, you couldn't call on Him unless the Holy Spirit had done some kind of work in your hearts.

Mysterious. We can't explain it all. And once again, we're elaborating extensively from heaven's perspective on this thing, not from man's perspective.

Why are we elaborating on that? Because the Bible teaches us and instructs us to elaborate extensively from heaven's perspective. Because it gives us a greater awe of God. A greater understanding of how wonderful and majestic and holy He really is.

Matthew 11 25. Now in Matthew 11 25, Jesus is being confronted with what a lot of ministries would call a dilemma. A lot of people are rejecting Him.

A lot of people are hating Him. A lot of people are not becoming His follower. The more truth He tells them, the fewer disciples He has.

The closer He gets to the cross, the more they leave. And how does He respond to that? Does Jesus go over in the corner and say, If I could just find some creative way to show them they ought to follow Me? Is that what Jesus says? No. He says, I thank Thee, O Father, Creator of heaven and earth, that Thou hast... Now listen, Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes.

What all does that mean? Well, it's awful clear to me. But the point I want to make is this, unless God does the work of revealing, you won't see it. You won't come.

It's all the work of God. Second sub-point B, He uses the preached Word. Ephesians 6, 17 says that the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit.

Somehow, and this is figurative, illustrative language where somehow when the Word of God goes forth, particularly when it is preached, the Holy Spirit of God can take that Word and it's a two-edged sword. He can slice in and He slices back out. He can do some real damage on you with the Word of God.

Have you ever known a professing Christian that when it all boiled down to it, they really wanted to get out from under the preaching of the Word of God? You know why? Because it's a two-edged sword. It cuts both ways. Unless you're willing to yield to let God have His way, you're not going to enjoy the preaching of the Word.

And so in conversion, the Holy Spirit of God takes the preaching of the Word and cuts us down to size, reveals to us our need, shows us the truth of Christ as our only Lord and Savior. Hebrews 4, 12 further

elaborates on this. For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, both of joints and marrow, and is able to judge the thoughts and the intentions of the heart.

When the Word of God goes forth and that sharper than any two-edged sword slices into you, He can get down to the core of the center of your heart being. And you can see the rottenness and the self-centeredness and the God-hating core that exists inside of you. And it makes you broken over it.

It makes you contrite over that. It makes you have a spirit of confession over that condition. But only the Word of God is used by the Spirit to do that.

Now listen to me, folks. There's a whole lot going on by sincere people. And I'm not here to denigrate really the character or in any way a personal attack.

But all this fanciful stuff going on to try to get people to come to Christ. Why would we be trying all sorts of fanciful things when God's Word unmistakably clearly says it's the preaching of the Word that takes a sharp two-edged sword and does the deep work of God. Are you listening to me? My point to you is not that we will never do anything other than just preach the Word.

But why not stay as the foundation, the bulwark, the mainstay of what we are, the preaching of the Scripture because that's what God's going to use. That's what the Holy Spirit uses to divide and cut and bring people into themselves. That's why Paul says, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.

For it is the dynamite, the power of God into salvation. He was talking about preaching the gospel. So let me give you this summarizing statement here.

The preaching of the Word goes forth. The Holy Spirit in some way takes the preaching of the Word and persuades us. Now, listen, friend, we're not talking about us being robots and God mechanically requiring us or making us do something.

God doesn't do that. But God, the Holy Spirit takes the preaching of the Word and brings a persuasive convincing element on our heart, mind and emotions, whereby we voluntarily choose to repent and trust Christ. But now here's the key.

You would not have voluntarily chosen had the Holy Spirit not come with that persuasive work first. You're responsible for God if you reject Christ. If any man goes to hell, he is responsible because he rejects Christ.

But the truth of Scripture is all men will reject Christ unless there's the persuasive work of the Holy Spirit. The Word is preached. The Holy Spirit takes the Word and persuades a man's heart and mind about their sin and about Christ.

When they come to belief in Christ because of that persuasive work of the Holy Spirit, at that moment, they're sealed because that repentance and faith, that belief is the sealing of the Holy Spirit. Now listen, and when that seal takes place, you grasp that, you rely on that, you stand on that for the rest of your life for security because knowing that has taken place, that's the mark of conversion, trusting Christ by faith. And that mark of conversion brings security because that's what a seal always brought was security.

It tells me who I'm owned by and it tells me where my destination is. I'm going to heaven. But the Holy Spirit is a gentleman.

And I want you to understand that He does not force our will, but listen, He does convince our will. Here's a clear verse on this. John 16, 8. John 16, 8. Jesus is talking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And Jesus says, and He, when He comes will convince. You can amplify the word convince or convict rather to be the word convince or you could amplify the word convict there to mean persuade. When He comes, He'll be convincing and persuading people of something.

Jesus, what will the Holy Spirit convince and persuade people about? Of sin, righteousness, and judgment, the text says. He'll convince men that they're sinners and they're lost before God. He will convince men that God is righteous and that they are not righteous.

And that the only righteous way to God is through Jesus Christ. And that if they don't come through Christ and gain His righteousness, then there's a judgment to come waiting. He'll convince men of that.

And so when you're speaking with someone and they want to trust Christ as their Savior, or they believe they have trusted Christ as their Savior, spend a little time with them and say, tell me about what you think about sin now. Tell me what you think about God accepting you and how can God accept you now? Now, they may not can articulate the theological terms, but they can articulate the truth in their own understanding at that point. Of sin and of righteousness only because I'm in Christ, only because Jesus took my sin on the cross, only that can give me a righteousness, a right standing before a holy God.

And thirdly, judgment is on me, except Jesus has already taken my judgment for me. That's what the Holy Spirit will do. No one will believe unless they are convicted, are convinced or persuaded by the Holy Spirit.

So that's something of how the Holy Spirit does this sealing work, this bringing about repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Now, let me quickly try to give you some clear biblical examples of this. The first one is, was in your small group Bible study not long ago, and that's Nicodemus in John chapter three.

Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night, sort of sneaks in there and says, Lord Jesus, didn't call him Lord Jesus, but anyway, he says, you know, no one can do these attesting miracles you're doing unless God's with him. So tell me how this thing works. And Jesus immediately says, Nicodemus, you can't see the kingdom of God unless you're born again.

When Nicodemus thinks in the physical realm, he's not spiritually thinking. He says, well, how can I go into my mother's womb and be born a second time? And Jesus said, no, you're misunderstanding. I'm just giving you an illustration.

It's figurative language. When I say born again, I don't mean physical birth. It's gotta be a new spiritual birthing.

And then Jesus goes on to say, this thing of being born again is sort of like the wind. The wind blows where it wishes. You don't know where the wind came from.

You don't know where the wind's going next. So it is with whom God births into his family. It's up to God and he's about the business of it.

We're just supposed to preach and proclaim and see who God births into his family. So that was a clear indication from John chapter three that God does the initiating work of bringing a person to repentance and faith. The example of Peter in Matthew 16, 17, as Peter is asked by Jesus, who do you say that I am? And Peter boldly replies, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.

And then Jesus replies back to Peter. And Jesus answered and said to him, blessed are you Simon Barjona. Notice this because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my father who's in heaven.

You know that I'm the savior of the world. The one sent from God, Peter. But by the way, Peter, that didn't come out of you.

My father had to make you aware of that. You've confessed it, you've believed it, but my father revealed it to you. So God once again shows us clearly, this is his initiating act in someone's life.

We have the example of Lydia in Acts chapter 16 verses 13 and 14. Paul is talking and he says on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to a riverside where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer. And we sat down and begin speaking to the women who had assembled.

And a certain woman named Lydia from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, that means she was devoted to the Jewish religion, was listening and notice this phrase right there at the end, and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. The Lord opened her heart, then she could respond to the gospel message. Spoken by Paul.

Another clear example that God does the initiating work in conversion. John chapter one, verse 12. How many of you use John 1 12 when you're witnessing to somebody? It's one of my favorite verses.

I use it all the time. John 1 12 says, to as many as receive him, he gave the right or the power to become the children of God, even to those who believe on his name. And that's a wonderful verse.

That's a true verse. And we should challenge people. If you will receive him, you'll be a child of God.

But then John does something interesting in the next verse. John goes on and talks about how a person is enabled to receive Christ. If you want to look at it there with me, John 1 12 and 13.

And notice how he words it here. But as many as received him, he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name. Look at verse 13, who are born not of blood.

That means you don't get in the kingdom of God. You don't become a child of God because you're born of a certain bloodline. Now this really cut the Jews.

They thought since they were born of the bloodline of Abraham, they were in already. He said, no, no, no, no. Nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man.

It's not your decision, but of God. God has to will that you be one that receives first. And once again, this is one of those texts that you just can't make it mean anything else.

It's mysterious. We cannot fully comprehend, though in some sense we do apprehend because the Holy Spirit affirms in our hearts. This is truth.

This is right. This is God's word. And then if you would look real quick at John chapter 10.

John chapter 10. And just scanning through John chapter 10. And here Jesus uses another analogy speaking of the same truth.

And he uses the analogy of sheep hearing the voice of the shepherd. Now he's talking to Pharisees who are lost and have a difficult time with Jesus. They don't believe that Jesus is the way they don't believe Jesus is God's son or God's prophet.

And they're rejecting him. And then Jesus sort of turns the table to incriminate themselves. And he says in verse three of John 10, to him the doorkeeper opens and the sheep hear his voice.

And he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. Jesus in effect is saying this, I'm proclaiming God's truth. And by the way, I am God's truth and God's sheep hear it and follow.

Others don't hear it or follow. That's the only context you can give this interpretation. I read that's the only interpretation that can come out of this context rather.

Verse four, when he puts forth his own, he goes ahead of them and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. Now you've got to understand in this day and age, shepherds had various flocks of sheep and often the sheep graze together. And the way they separated the sheep was the shepherd would call out and those sheep knew that particular shepherd's voice and they would separate out and come to him.

And that's what Jesus was showing these folks when I've come and I'm proclaiming the truth to you, those who are my sheep come, they hear the voice and recognize it. Others don't hear or recognize. Verse eight, all who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

Verse 16, I have other sheep, which means not just Jewish sheep, there's also Gentile sheep. And thank God for that, we're Gentiles, which are not of this fold, this Jewish fold. And I must bring them along also and they will hear my voice and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

Pastor, what do we need to do? Make sure we can get as many people saved as possible. Boldly, prayerfully, passionately preach and share the gospel and the sheep will hear his voice. That's what Jesus is saying.

And they'll respond to their shepherd's voice. Look at verse 27, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. Now this probably will make somebody mad, but through the years, it's been amazing to me to have one man sitting over here and he's just receiving the preaching of the word.

It's enlightening him and building him up and he has joy in it. Another man sitting on here, so I ain't getting nothing out of that preacher. I'm so tired of this church.

What's the difference between this man and this man? I believe there's the difference. The sheep hear his voice, the goat doesn't. Jesus said, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give eternal life to them.

So this is talking about conversion here and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. My father who has given them to me.

Now, why does the father give these particular sheep to Jesus? Because he chose them in predestined for the foundation of the world. Ephesians chapter one, Romans chapter eight. The father picked them out, gave them to me and I do the redeeming work to save them and they're gonna hear the voice of the

gospel then they'll recognize that's for them.

They'll receive it, believe and be saved. Therefore they'll get eternal life, verse 28. And they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand, verse 29.

My father who's given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the father's hand and I and the father are one. Now, verse 31, if it wasn't so true, it'd be humorous. Look at what verse three, and the Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

You know what they said? Tell you what, we'll just kill you. We'll just get rid of you. We're just gonna kill you.

We don't like this teaching. We're gonna kill you. You wanna kill me right now? Don't say amen.

Does this doctrine bother you? It bothered these guys. How dare this Jewish boy from Nazareth proclaim he's the savior of the world. How dare he proclaim that we don't respond to him that just shows forth that we're not one of God's children and we're the children of Abraham and we're the spiritual leaders of Israel.

And furthermore, he says there are non-Jews who are God's children and that really makes us mad. Tell you what, we don't like your doctrine. We're just gonna destroy you.

Are you listening to me, child of God? If you stand on sound doctrine, there'll be people today who wanna ruin you. Are you listening to me? If they did it to your master, they'll do it to you. They'll hate you for it.

So if you wanna follow Jesus Christ, get out of this Mickey Mouse, Cracker Jack Christianity concept, everything's just gonna be one and everybody's gonna love me and he's so sweet. If I hear somebody, everybody just loves him. Well, he's not a man of God if that's true.

And you're not a woman of God if that's true about you. Bless God, you ought to stand, be sweet and be kind, but stand on God's truth. If that makes people hate you and reject you and turn from you and they don't wanna be your friends, it happened to Jesus, it happened to Paul, it happened to all of our forefathers, it's happened from the beginning of time.

The Bible says in Amos, they hate him who reproves in the gate. And anytime you preach truth or stand on truth, some are gonna hate that. They said, we'll just kill you, Jesus.

We don't like this doctrine. You know what I found through the years? Are you listening to your pastor? I found that I can have joy working with people who reject the sovereignty of God and say, if they'll preach the gospel and share with Jesus, I can preach with them and share with them. I'm not against them necessarily.

I'd hope they grasp more of what I believe the Bible says. The Bible teaches about this, but I can work with them. But you know what you very often find? They hate you.

The Armenian leading man-centered crowd hates you if you hold these doctrines. It makes them mad. They get vicious about it.

But I'm telling you, there can be ugly, vicious spiritedness on both sides of this road though. And we wanna listen to church. We wanna make sure we're always sweet spirited and loving and tolerant as we can be.

But now listen, never denying the truth of the Word of God. Well, I'm over my time, but let me just mention a couple of quick things here. The fourth sub point here, the indisputable example of Baptist history.

The indisputable example of Baptist history. Pastor, I've been a Baptist all my life and I've never heard these things. Well, I wish you were 150 years old, you'd have heard them.

Because Baptist history is full of this teaching. Just full of it. And here's the thing that's been interesting to me.

I'm talking to you as pastor and people right now. And I'm talking to you in the sense of church polity. That is how we do things and why we do things.

It's interesting to me that as we fought for the inerrancy of scripture, that the Bible is absolutely God's Word. All we heard was, look at our forefathers. Look at our forefathers.

Baptists have held the inerrancy of scripture. Go back to our founders. Go back to our forefathers.

The ones who suffered and bled and died were persecuted. They all held the inerrancy of scripture. So we did.

We looked at our forefathers, looked at our forefathers, looked at our forefathers. They all held the inerrancy. But now one of the hot topics in Baptist life is election.

Did you know that? By the way, I believed in it before it was hot. I didn't take sides when it got hot. It's always been where I've been for me.

Our former pastor taught and preached these doctrines. But now that's one of the hot issues. But you know what? The guys aren't saying, look to our forefathers.

You know why? Because they strongly taught election. So it's almost like when it came to the inerrancy of scripture, our forefathers were wise. When it comes to doctrine of election, they're a bunch of idiots.

Don't look to them on that now. Let me just give you one quick thing from the New Hampshire Confession of Faith. And you might say, you know, pastor, I'm not interested in that.

And I'm not really concerned about what Baptists used to believe. Well, listen, I understand that completely. And we've never been a church that walked in lockstep with the Southern Baptist Convention.

We're gladly a member of the Southern Baptist Convention. We give generously to the mission work of the Southern Baptist Convention. But we've always been a church that says if the convention leaves the Bible, then we're going with the Bible.

We don't live and die being Southern Baptist around here. However, there is a strengthening element. And there's some wisdom in looking at our roots, if you will, as Baptist people in America.

Now, the New Hampshire Confession of 1833. Now, listen, it is the definitive statement of doctrine for Baptists in America. Matter of fact, the New Hampshire Confession of 1833 was written because some Baptists begin to teach free will Baptist doctrine.

And that was rare. And our forefathers thought that was unacceptable. So they wrote the New Hampshire Confession to state very clearly, we're not one of those Baptist groups that holds to the full free will of man

and that God's just waiting to see what man does about this thing of salvation.

So they wrote it in reaction to a free will movement to bring Baptists back in line with the Bible. That was their premise. So in 1830, a committee of Baptists in New Hampshire, and there's probably not enough Baptists in New Hampshire today to form a committee.

But back in those days, Baptists were all over the Northeast. But anyway, in 1830, they said, let's get a committee together. And a quote, here's what they commissioned the committee to do.

To write a declaration of faith and practice together with a covenant as may be thought agreeable and consistent with the views of all of our churches in this state. So they said, we're gonna write this confession of faith that expresses all the views of the Baptist churches in the state of New Hampshire. Now you understand this is before Baptists were settled in the South at all.

Maybe sparingly, but the real Baptist work was in the Northeast originally. So in 1853, this New Hampshire confession was published in the Baptist church manual. That was a standard manual that churches were given as a guide to follow by.

In 1857, J.M. Pendleton, he wrote the little systematic theology that we use a lot around here. But in 1857, Pendleton incorporated the New Hampshire confession in his church manual. How many of y'all have heard the phrase landmark Baptist? Heard of that? Well, J.M. Pendleton made the New Hampshire confession of faith the doctrinal statement for the landmark Baptist movement in 1857.

In 1902, the New Hampshire confession became the doctrinal statement of what became known as the American Baptist Association. In 1933, the New Hampshire confession became the doctrinal statement for the association of regular Baptist churches in America. And in 1925, this New Hampshire confession became the basis for the Southern Baptist Convention's Baptist faith and message.

So if you want to look at a little statement of here's what we believe, according to our forefathers, you can't get any better than the New Hampshire confession. All right, what did they believe about what happens during conversion? Did they believe it was just completely man's choice and God sort of said, God died on the cross through Christ, through the message out there and man can just decide or not decide and God didn't have anything else to do? Absolutely not. Let me quote to you some of what they believed.

We believe that in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again. That regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind. So they say when you're regenerated, there's a persuasive work, a new disposition that comes into your thinking.

And they say it is effective in a manner above our comprehension or our calculation. They said, we can't understand how it works, but we know it works. And this new holy disposition that the Holy Spirit brings to pass in your heart and mind secures our voluntary obedience to the gospel.

It couldn't be better written than that. Man's not a robot. He voluntarily must repent and believe in the gospel.

However, he will not do that unless there's a regenerating work of the Spirit in his heart. Beautiful balance there. They further say, we believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties and inseparable graces.

Now, when they say repentance and faith are sacred duties, that means we are to preach and command men to repent and believe on Christ. But they go on to say that this repentance and faith is wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God. Once again, man must repent and believe, but it's the regenerating work of God that gives man that capacity, that gives that persuasive influence on man's heart to do that very thing.

Now, that is indisputable. And that is an example from Baptist church life. So my point to you is, when we stand on, preach and teach and hold to these things, we are being very, very Baptist.

But if we were not, I'd still preach them and hold to them. But I'm just thankful that that is and was the conviction of Baptist in America as Baptist began to form themselves in America. And then real quick, the last thought here in conclusion, Ephesians chapter one, verse 13, the last phrase there, he says, you were sealed in him with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Now, what does it mean you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise? I think it's twofold. Number one, it's the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised. Jesus promised there'd be a working of the Holy Spirit that would come after he ascended to heaven.

And that working the Holy Spirit is alive in the world. The Holy Spirit now is working in the world to secure the spoil or the treasure bought by Christ at Calvary for God's kingdom. Christ paid for us at Calvary.

The Holy Spirit comes out and applies the payment to our lives, if you will. So God promised the Holy Spirit would come and do his work. And secondly, the promise of the Holy Spirit is that it gives us promise of our future, our future destination.

Once again, that spirit comes and persuades the hearts and minds, repentance and faith occurs. And when that repentance and faith occurs, that is the sealing of the Holy Spirit. And we look to that to know God owns us, our destination is sure.

So in a very real sense, in an applicable illustration, we are like those timber company logs going down the streams and the rivers of life. And our ownership and our destination depends on something. Did someone mark us right? Have we been marked by God? If we're marked, then we know who our owner is.

If we're marked, we know where our destination is. What is the mark? Have you repented and placed your faith in Jesus Christ? That is the security of your salvation. That is the sealing of the Holy Spirit of God.

The preceding message comes from the Expository Preaching Ministry of Senior Pastor Teacher, Dr. Jeff Knoblett. For more information or other materials that are available, contact Anchored in Truth Ministries at [www.anchoredintruth.org](http://www.anchoredintruth.org) or call us toll free at 1-800-565-PRAY.

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