

1/26/25; Pastor Lenard Tavernelli—Ephesians 1:11-14 -- Union with Christ: Promised Securing Grace

Main Idea: Praise God for making us His own possession in Christ and for sealing us with the Holy Spirit--the guarantee of our inheritance.

Summary: Recall Eph. 1:3-14 is one long sentence. And today's message is the wonderful ending to that wonderful sentence. What does inheritance make you think of? Houses? Money? Personal items? Some very bizarre ones have been left—but the inheritance God gives his adopted children is wonderful beyond imagination. God will unite all things in Christ. Imagine: We are chosen and redeemed by God, and He makes us His own possession—we are co-heirs with Christ. And...we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of all that is to come.

Sermon Outline:

- Praise God for making us His own possession (1:11-14)
 - We react against being anyone's "possession". But being God's possession is different. We are united to Him in Christ and will inherit all things including being conformed to Christ. A Portuguese aristocrat didn't want the government to get his fortune upon his death. He had no heirs. So he selected 70 names at random from a directory. Not so with God. You were specifically chosen, elected and predestined before you were born, indeed before the foundation of the world--to proclaim His greatness. Nothing can thwart God's plan.
 - Deut. 32:8-9; "When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance...He fixed the borders...But the Lord's portion is His people...". (and now the gentiles as well as Jews—but only in Christ—are His people—the church).
 - 1 Peter 2:9; "But you are a chosen race... a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you...".
 - Eph. 2:18; "For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."
 - Eph. 4:30; "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
 - EFCA Statement of Faith, Article 6: We believe that the Holy Spirit in all that He does glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him, they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service".
- Praise God for sealing us with His Spirit (1:13) It was always God's intent to save all peoples—Gen. 12:3
 - Gal. 3:14; "so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith."
 - Ezek. 36:26-27; "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.
 - Joel 2:28-29; "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh... Even on the male and female servants... I will pour out my Spirit."
 - A seal shows possession, guarantees authenticity and protects.
 - Rom. 8:16-17; The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him...and be glorified with him.

- Rom. 10:13-15; For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?
- Praise God for guaranteeing our future inheritance (1:14) –Spirit is 1st payment on the full perfection/glorification.
 - Numb. 18:20; “And the LORD said to Aaron, “You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them. I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel.
 - Deut. 18:2; “They shall have no inheritance among their brothers; the LORD is their inheritance, as he promised them.”
 - 1 Peter 1:4-5; “to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Discussion Questions (select several to discuss):

- Do you ever wonder why God chose you to be His child? Why? Do you believe in eternal security (the perseverance of the saints)? Why/why not?
- How do you feel about being God’s possession? Why does God call you His possession—not just His child?
Have you ever “felt” the Holy Spirit in you? Describe it.
- How does the gift of the Spirit help us “proclaim the truth of Jesus” and “grow mature disciples” for God’s glory? What step can you take this week fulfill our church’s mission by God’s help?
- How do you picture your godly “inheritance”? Consider: Rom. 8:32 and <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/heaven-would-be-hell-without-god>
- Contrast and compare 1 Peter 1:4-5 to Matt. 6:20 (laying up treasures for yourself in heaven).