

For the last several months we have heard a lot of promises from the Presidential candidates.

A vote for one keeps things on track and a vote for the other creates a whole new track.

If you don't know how to pray or if you don't pray you will learn after Tuesday.

By the way the sanctuary will be open today and tomorrow from 8 am to 8 pm for those who would like to come and pray.

Many promises have been made and many of those promises will be broken.

Promises are made many times and the people making them have no intentions of carrying them out.

A promise is made to get what they want.

But we can't be too hard on them.

Many of us have done the same thing we make a promise and something comes up or something falls through and we don't or can't keep it.

Probably all of us have been on both sides of that.

We have broken our promises to others and others have broken their promises to us.

The scale may be smaller but the outcome is the same...someone was hurt.

A promise is never any better than the promisor.

If a known liar comes up to you and promises you something you better not put too much dependence in the promise.

When you read verses 11-14 we are reading about promises that are made to every believer.

Before I talk about the promises I want to clarify the Promisor who is God...

2nd Peter 3:9 says... *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise.*

Hebrews 10:23 says...*He is faithful that promised.*

Romans 4:21 says...*What He has promised He is able also to perform.*

Numbers 23:19...*God is not a man that He should lie neither the son of man that He should repent has He said and shall not do it? Or has He spoken and shall He not make good?*

So with that said that clears up the fact that if God gives a promise He is going to see it through.

In Ephesians chapter 1 we have discussed two things that apply to us as a believer.

Verse 4... *We have been chosen by Christ or elected by Him.*

Verse 7... *We have been redeemed through His blood and been forgiven according to the riches of His grace.*

Today we will discuss the third thing Jesus has done for us and the promise He has given us and how the promise is guaranteed.

To obtain an inheritance.

Verse 11 starts out by saying... *In Him also we have obtained an inheritance.*

Have obtained refers to something that has already happened.

This means the moment we invite Jesus Christ into our lives this inheritance became a reality.

The question is what is this inheritance?

The inheritance is every promise God ever made.

2nd Peter 1:4 tells us more about these promises...*By which are given to us exceedingly great and precious promises.*

2nd Cor. 1:20 says...*All the promises of God in Christ are yes and in Him are amen.*

This means if God said it or made a promise we can say amen or so be it.

Verse 11 tells us how to obtain the promise... *In Him.*

There is no way to receive anything that God has apart from Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:12 says...*Neither is there salvation in any other for there is no other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*

Romans 6:3 says...*Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?*

Baptized here is not talking about water baptism it is talking about union with Christ or being placed into Christ.

Rom. 6:4 goes on to say...*Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father even so we also should walk in the newness of life.*

Rom. 6:5 *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.*

When a person becomes a Christian Jesus transports them back 2000 years nailed to the cross, buried in the tomb, and raised with Him from the dead.

That's what it means to be one with Christ or in union with Christ.

It is putting your faith and trust and confidence in Him it is a real union.

We die to the old, we live to the new and we inherit everything He has.

How does it happen?

Paul goes on to say in **Eph. 1:11** *we were predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.*

The word **predestined means** to mark out the boundaries which in turn means God planned it out.

God put us in His plan as verse 4 says before the foundation of the world.

Verse 11 goes on to say...*according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.*

The word works needs to be understood.

The word work in the Greek is where we get our word energetic or energize and energy.

What this means is whatever God plans God energizes.

So God not only predestined us but He energizes the accomplishment of it.

Whatever God starts God energizes and whatever God energizes God finishes.

That's why Paul said *He that has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* This means when God makes a plan He will energize it and nothing can stop it.

When I look at this property and see what used to be a cow pasture I am still amazed.

I am amazed that God 28 years ago gave a vision of all these buildings being built and I had no idea where they would be or when they would come to be.

I didn't know how we would get the money all I could do was trust that what God started God would complete.

When God makes a plan He will energize it when God calls a person to do His plan He will energize them.

When God determines to set His love and grace upon you **Romans 8** says *who can separate us from that love?*

When God decides something in a plan He energizes its accomplishment.

It is irrevocable.

And verse 11 says *He works or energizes all things according to the counsel of His will.*

Verse 12...*That we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.*

That means God gets the glory and the credit.

I know it may seem strange to some when we sing for half an hour and clap our hands and tell Jesus we love Him...

In our world it is hard to understand it because nothing is pure and perfect.

We don't understand to right to glory and praise because we are sinful and most seek glory for the wrong reasons.

But God is Holy and Pure...

He is righteous and perfect.

He is the One supplying our oxygen and daily resources.

God wants to be praised and glorified not just prayed to and always be asked for something.

Let me say this if you haven't praised God for what you have you should be ashamed to ask Him for what you don't have.

God seeks the glory for the right reasons He is glorious and worthy to be praised.

Verse 13...*In Him you also trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation in whom also having believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.*

Notice the words *heard the Word of Truth the gospel of your salvation.*

Rom. 10:17 says....Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

Hearing refers to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Hearing a message about Jesus develops faith and the more we hear the stronger our faith will become.

Weak faith equals weak strength.

To have faith requires believing the Word.

No rituals no jumping through hoops.

John 1:12 says...*As many as received Him to them gave the right to be son's of God even to them that believe on His name.*

In whom also having believed you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Verse 14...*Who is the guarantee of our inheritance.*

In life one of the things we like to have is a guarantee.

We need a guarantee at times to give us confidence in what we buy that we will not get stuck if it breaks.

A man asks a woman to marry him and he puts a ring on her finger to seal the deal.

God knows how we are as people so He gives a guarantee.

He says *we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the guarantee or earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.*

It is important to understand that we have not been totally redeemed yet.

We have been spiritually redeemed but our body hasn't been physically redeemed yet.

We haven't gone to heaven yet and got that new body.

So God gives us the guarantee it will happen.

He says *we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.*

The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of promise because it is this promise that He is there to seal.

The Holy Spirit is the guarantee that the full and complete redemption will happen.

When we became or become a Christian God gave us the Holy Spirit.

We know this by what **Romans 8:9** says...*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is not His.*

Every Christian possesses the Holy Spirit.

This means God takes up residence in our life.

The Holy Spirit empowers us and equips us.

That's how you know a change has taken place in your life.

It's not what we quit doing it's what God starts doing in us.

The Holy Spirit is not only there to empower us and equip us for ministry He is there to guarantee our inheritance.

He is there to give us confidence and to lead us.

The way we know we are saved and God's promises are real is by the Holy Spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are children of God.

The Holy Spirit is the guarantee.

Notice Paul says we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

What does it mean to be sealed?

It refers to the seal of authority.

In those days any official document would have wax poured on it and the king would stick his ring in the wax and seal it.

The seal was a sign of security.

There are several examples of the seal in the Bible.

One is when Daniel was put into the lion's den and a stone was put over the entrance.

The stone was sealed with the king's signet ring.

That meant no one was to open that door or move that stone unless they had more power than Rome.

It was secure.

When Jesus was put into the tomb they rolled a stone across it and they sealed with a seal of Rome.

That meant no one was to open the seal unless they had more power than Rome.

We know there was someone because the stone was rolled away.

That answers the question why the stone was rolled away it wasn't to let Jesus out...or to let others in.

It was to show Roman official there was a power greater than Rome.

What all this means is when we become or became a Christian God put His Holy Spirit in us and said we are secure.

It meant no one can touch our life unless they have a higher authority than God.

The seal is a sign of security.

When God gives us the Holy Spirit it is as if He is saying don't mess with this person.

The seal is a sign of security, authenticity and authority over the life of the believer.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of promise or earnest the down payment that guarantees the inheritance and delegates to us divine authority.

Why does God do it?

Verse 14...*To the praise of His glory.*

God wants to be glorified through us.