

The Holy Spirit in Ephesians

A Basic Bible Summary by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.
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1. Ephesians 1:11-14

11 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, 12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.

13 In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; 14 this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

What does it mean to be sealed with the promised Holy Spirit?

It is like an earnest payment used for buying a house, but it is a stronger guarantee. Not money, but the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives who seals us.

A seal is something visible. Like a wax impression of a seal ring that a king might use to guarantee authenticity.

The seal of the Holy Spirit is a visibly changed life made possible by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. A life that is different from those who are committed to living for themselves supremely. True believers love God with all their hearts and live to the praise of His glory.

The seal of the Holy Spirit guarantees our redemption, our inheritance, eternal life with God. We are God's own people, so we will always be with God in heaven and on earth.

2. Ephesians 2:17-18

17 So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; 18 for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the One who came into the world and proclaimed peace to the Gentiles (the ones who were far off) and peace to those who were near (the Jews).

Through Jesus Christ, Jews and Gentiles can live together in peace. (Jesus also brought peace between the Samaritan Woman at the well and her

neighbors, because He led her to faith in Him and she told her neighbors that He was the Messiah. Her neighbors no longer needed to fear that she would steal their husbands from them.)

Only through faith in Jesus Christ will we have peace in the Middle East or anywhere else in the world.

The Holy Spirit gives all of us who believe access to the Father.

See also **Romans 8: 26, 27** — *“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”*

Notice the Spirit intercedes or “prays for” believers. He is a person who knows the will of God and prays for us according to the will of God. The Holy Spirit is not just an “active force” as the some teach, but the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity who prays to God our Heavenly Father for us.

We have access to the Father through Jesus Christ in one Spirit. Without Jesus Christ, we would not have access to God or peace with God and one another.

Therefore, right now we have a pledge of eternal life with God in the future (because we are sealed with the Holy Spirit), and we have access to God the Father right now in the Spirit.

3. Ephesians 3:3-6

3 the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, 4 a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.

5 In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: 6 that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

The Holy Spirit is a Person, not just an active force, who reveals truth and the mystery of Christ. People reveal truths or concepts to other people. The Holy Spirit is a Person who speaks real words, ideas, concepts, and truths, and He revealed the mystery of Christ to the apostles and prophets.

The mystery of Christ is not contrary to reason, but above reason. The mystery cannot be discovered by reason alone, but the mystery must be revealed. The mystery may not be fully understood by our reason alone, but the mystery

can be accepted and over time the mystery will be more fully understood. Let's not denigrate the fact that there is mystery in the Christian faith that the Holy Spirit can reveal and help us understand.

The Holy Spirit revealed these truths to the holy apostles and prophets, including the Apostle Paul. Then, they revealed these truths to believers. These truths were written in the Bible for us today in words the Holy Spirit inspired, so the Bible is without error in all that it affirms.

We need to pray to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to help us understand the Bible, and He will make the mysteries of God better known to us. Do not discard something because it is a mystery or not fully understood.

4. Ephesians 3:14-19

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.

16 I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.

18 I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Here Paul prays to the Father a prayer that we can pray for others and ourselves.

Notice, the Holy Spirit is not just an active power, but the Holy Spirit gives us power. He gives us power in our inner being. This power in our inner being is one of the results of being marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit.

Because we are marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, our inner being (our character) will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, and we will have the power to live the Christ-like life.

Notice that Paul prays for Christ to dwell in our hearts through faith. If Jesus Christ was not the Infinite, Personal, God, He could not dwell in ALL of our hearts through faith. Some talk of Christ as a Mighty God, but not Almighty God. They are polytheists, they believe in more than one God. As Christians, we believe in One God, who is in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The three Persons of the Trinity are one in substance, but three Persons, with unique, individual, personalities and responsibilities to each other and for us.

In essence, Paul prays for the Holy Spirit to dwell in our inner being. By dwelling in our inner being, the Holy Spirit will give us power in our inner being when we need power. The Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Trinity is a Person who will indwell us, intercede for us, and give us power. As God, the Holy Spirit indwell all believers, everywhere, at all times.

In essence, Paul also prays for Christ to dwell in us, in our hearts, in the center of our being. He prays for the Holy Spirit and Christ to dwell within us. Only as God can they both dwell within us at all times and everywhere and in every true believer.

There is much to say about these verses, but look at verse 19: Paul prays for us “that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” When we are filled with the Holy Spirit and when Christ indwells our hearts, we can be filled with all the fullness of God. When we are filled with all the fullness of God, we “have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge” We will have love of Christ and knowledge, but the love of Christ surpasses knowledge. We will not have the fullness of God in us or understand the mystery of Christ until we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and have Christ dwelling in our hearts.

**BASED ON THE FULLNESS OF GOD INDWELLING US,
PAUL TELLS US WHAT WE ARE TO DO
IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

5. Ephesians 4:1-7

1 I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

7 But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Because the Holy Spirit indwells us and Christ dwells in our hearts, we have the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. On the basis of this love that surpasses knowledge, Paul calls us to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. If we put love first, and if we do not have a knowledge that puffs up, then we will strive to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

What characterized Stonegate Church more than almost anything else last year? The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. What helps us maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Our love for Christ and one another, our desire to put Christ first, our desire to learn more of the mystery of Christ by studying and obeying the Scriptures, our praying for one another every day, our desire to the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

The one Holy Spirit within us unites us and encourages us to maintain unity based on our love of Christ and the mystery of Christ as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God, the Bible. We rely on the Holy Spirit to help us maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Maintaining the unity of the Spirit is a choice for us to make in the church. The one Holy Spirit will speak the truth to each of us, the same truths. All we need to do to maintain the unity of the Holy Spirit in our church is always seek the Holy Spirit's will through Christ, with the will to do God's will only.

6. Ephesians 4:30-32

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption.

31 Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, 32 and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

We can only grieve a person. We cannot grieve an active force. We can grieve the Holy Spirit by our words and actions, just as we can grieve any person. The Holy Spirit is a Person, not just an active force, who can feel grief over our thoughts and behavior.

We grieve the Holy Spirit when we are not “kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.” The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when we treat a fellow believer, who is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, with bitterness, or wrath or anger or wrangling or slander, or malice, we grieve our brother or sister in Christ and we grieve the Holy Spirit too.

7. Ephesians 5:18-20

18 Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit,

19 as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, 20 giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here Paul tells us to be filled with the Spirit. Earlier, Paul said that we “may be filled with all the fullness of God.” Now he commands us to “be filled with the Spirit.” Being filled with the Spirit is a choice for us to make. To be filled, we need to empty ourselves of everything that is contrary to the holiness of God. To be filled, we can “sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among ourselves” We do that in Sunday morning worship. We confess and forsake our sins, and we “sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among ourselves,” and by doing so we can be filled with the Spirit. We can be filled with the Holy Spirit as we pray or sing hymns driving down the street.

We choose to be filled with the Spirit by “singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts.” Notice that the Lord is in our hearts. God in Christ is in our hearts. We sing and make melody to the Lord who is in our hearts. We worship the Lord Jesus Christ, who as the Infinite Personal God indwells our hearts. When we worship the Lord in our hearts, wherever we are, we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

We choose to be filled with the Spirit by “giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” So, we make melody to the Lord and we give thanks to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we do so we are filled with the Spirit. We can be filled with the Spirit at all times as we give thanks to God the Father at all times. We need to give thanks to God for everything He gives us, and when we do, we can be filled with the Spirit.

8. Ephesians 6:17-18

17 Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

Persons carry swords, not something called an active force. The Holy Spirit will take up a sword to defend us. The Holy Spirit will take up the Word of God, the truth, the Bible’s teachings to defend us. The Holy Spirit in Jesus took up the Bible’s teachings and defended Jesus when Jesus was tempted as God incarnate. He will do the same for us.

The Holy Spirit will defend us by using the word of God, so as we memorize and study the Scriptures, we put the word of God into our minds so the Holy Spirit has the word of God within us to use. Just reading the Bible daily will give the Holy Spirit a sword to use in our defense for that day and the days to come.

Finally, Paul tells us to pray in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches us how to pray. We do not know how to pray as we ought, so we pray in the Spirit who

teaches us how to pray and who intercedes for us. The Holy Spirit can use the Lord's Prayer as a sword in our defense and in the defense of others as we pray. We can pray for the Holy Spirit to help us pray as we ought.

Conclusion

What is a sign that we were marked by the seal of the promised Holy Spirit? Read the verses in Ephesians again, for they give us pointers.

If we have been sealed, we know that we have access to the Father through Jesus Christ in the one Spirit.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we have some comprehension of the mystery of Christ that the Spirit has revealed in the Bible, and we have a love that surpasses knowledge. We are being rooted and grounded in love.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we have the Spirit's power in our inner being.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we can be filled with all the fullness of God.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we will strive to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we will make every effort not to grieve the Holy Spirit and those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we will practice what will fill us with the Spirit, we will worship the Lord Jesus Christ who indwells us with spiritual songs and we will give thanks to God the Father for everything He has given us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we will study the Scriptures so the Holy Spirit has weapons that He can use in our defense.

If we have been sealed with the Spirit, we will pray in the Spirit.

Have you been marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit? If not, the way to be marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit is to believe in Christ, set your hope on Christ, and live to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:12,13).

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