**The Seal of the Holy Spirit**

*Ephesians 1:13-14*

Introduction

1. Part of what we crave as children of God is confidence.
2. The world speaks of confidence in spiritual contexts as coming in the form of feelings and anecdotal experiences.
3. However, true confidence in any field comes down to evidence – something of verifiable proof.
4. Among the spiritual blessings in Christ enumerated in Ephesians 1, Paul notes one that especially exudes confidence for the believer – being sealed with the Holy Spirit, the guarantee of our inheritance.
5. The Nature of the Holy Spirit
6. A Divine Person
   1. Not an “it,” but a He – **John 14:15-18** – Not a mystical force; not a feeling.
      1. Christ leaving apostles, but promises He is not leaving **(v. 18).**
      2. (**v. 16)** – ***“another Helper”*** – *allos* – quantitative difference – “another of the same sort” – AS CHRIST.
      3. THE REASON HE IS A SUFFICIENT HELPER AS CHRIST IS DUE TO HIS DIVINE PERSONHOOD.
   2. Three members of Godhead/Divine Nature – **Romans 15:30; 2 Corinthians 13:14**
7. Intelligent
   1. I.e. not an unexplainable phenomenon; not ambiguous.
   2. **1 Corinthians 2:11-13** – knows and teaches.
   3. **1 Corinthians 12:11** – works, distributes, wills (choice, volition)
   4. **1 Timothy 4:1** – speaks. (“expressly” – precise, distinct, clear)
   5. **John 15:26** – testifies.
   6. **Acts 16:6** – forbids.
8. The Work of the Holy Spirit
9. Revelation of the Word
   1. Paul’s stewardship of the mystery – **Ephesians 3:3-5** – revelation through the Spirit.
   2. Holy men of God moved by the Holy Spirit – **2 Peter 1:20-21**
      1. ***“private interpretation”*** – “origin” (NKJV fn) – (**v. 21a** – never came by man’s will)
      2. ***“as they were moved”*** (passive) – *pherō* – borne along – by HS.
      3. Merely the instruments used to convey the thoughts of God in the exact words – **1 Corinthians 2:13**
10. Works through the Word
    1. Spirit’s instrument – **Ephesians 6:17** – word of God.
       1. **Ephesians 5:17-19** – will of Lord, filled w/ Spirit, speaking in songs.
       2. **Colossians 3:2, 16** – things above, word of Christ dwell in you, singing songs.
    2. Throughout, what the HS does the word does (like a tool and the one who wields it):
       1. Conviction – **John 16:8; Titus 1:9**
       2. Witnesses – **Hebrews 10:15-17** (concerning sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice in taking away sins; **cf. Jeremiah 31:33-34**)
       3. New birth – **John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23**
       4. Sanctification – **1 Peter 1:2; John 17:17; 2 Thessalonians 2:13**
11. The Seal of the Holy Spirit
12. Seal
    1. Seal – sphragis (N) – (1) the instrument used for sealing or stamping, signet; (2) the substance which bears the imprint of a signet and seals a document, seal; (3) the impression made by a signet, mark; (4) that which confirms or authenticates, attestation, confirmation, certification (BDAG)
       1. **Romans 4:11** – circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of Abraham by faith.
          1. When was his faith accounted for righteousness? Before or after circumcision? (Is circumcision necessary for justification?)
          2. **(vv. 9-12)** – before – circumcision, in addition to being the sign of the covenant (**cf. Genesis 17:11**), as a seal (“stamp of approval”) of Abraham’s righteousness which God accounted to him because of his faith.
          3. **Romans 4:3; Genesis 15:6** – Abraham’s faith was accounted to Him by God for righteousness before He was circumcised (**Genesis 17**).
          4. Circumcision as a sign of the covenant between Abraham and God also acted as a seal (authentication, confirmation) of his righteousness by faith.
       2. **1 Corinthians 9:2** – the faith (conversion) of the Corinthians a seal of Paul’s apostleship.
          1. Conversion through inspired preaching – **1 Corinthians 2:2, 4; 4:15**
          2. Signs worked among them, gifts imparted to them – **2 Corinthians 12:12** (signs of apostle); **1 Corinthians 1:7** (came short in no gift – **cf. 1 Corinthians 12**)
             1. That they obeyed the word due to confirmation by the signs of an apostle…
             2. …and that they were given spiritual gifts (by Paul)…
             3. …act as a seal of his apostleship.
       3. **2 Timothy 2:19** – seal that the Lord knows those who are His.
          1. Context – presenting self approved of God **(vv. 15-18),** depart from iniquity **(v. 19b),** making self a vessel of honor **(vv. 20-21).**
          2. Implication – He knows, but we can know too.
    2. Sealed – sphragizō (V) – (3) to mark with a seal as a means of identification, mark, seal; (4) to certify that someth. is so, attest, certify, acknowledge (BDAG)
       1. **John 3:31-33** – God “certified” (sphragizō) as true through belief of Jesus’ testimony. (Jesus came to reveal the Father.)
       2. **John 6:27** – Jesus has God’s “seal” set on Him as the one who can provide the spiritual food. (Through prophecy, Spirit descending on Him, miracles, etc.)
13. Identified and Authenticated as God’s Sons
    1. What does being sealed with the Holy Spirit mean? How does it happen?
    2. ***“in whom also we were made a heritage… to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ” (Ephesians 1:11-12***, ASV).
       1. Designated as a heritage – i.e. God’s – ***“unto the redemption of God’s own possession” (v. 14,*** ASV)
       2. Chosen to be a part of God’s family **(v. 5)** but stressing the idea of His allotment or portion.
    3. **Ephesians 1:13** – sealed with the Holy Spirit.
       1. ***“you also…were sealed with the Holy Spirit”*** = identifying/certifying mark of the Holy Spirit – regarding sonship/made a heritage.
       2. How? – ***“after you heard the word of truth…gospel…having believed”***
    4. Spirit bearing witness with our spirit – **Romans 8:12-17** – that we are sons.
       1. **(vv. 12-13)** – not indebted to the flesh, but the spirit.
       2. Why? – **(vv. 14-15)** – Sons of God as led by the Spirit – not bondage (slave of sin and death) but adoption (disposition).
       3. Verification – **(vv. 16-17)** – Spirit (revelation of will of God) bears witness with our spirit (in submission).
    5. Suffering for doing good – **Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 4:14**
       1. **Romans 8:17** – ***“if indeed”*** – *eiper* – if perhaps, provided that (notes a condition of previous statement).
          1. I.e. suffering is another identifying and authenticating mark of an heir/child of God by the Holy Spirit.
          2. I.e. suffering ***“with Him”*** – ***“the fellowship of His sufferings” (Philippians 3:10*** – not just any suffering.)
       2. **1 Peter 4:12-16** – (context – suffering for the will of God) – don’t think strange, nor be ashamed.
          1. **(v. 14)** – Spirit of God (HS) rests on you in regard to approval of such suffering…
          2. **(vv. 15-16)** – not through suffering period, but for righteousness sake.
          3. **I.e. when you suffer for submitting to the Spirit’s teaching, such is validation of your relationship to Christ.**
    6. Renewal of the Holy Spirit – **Titus 3:4-7; Ephesians 4:23**
       1. **(v. 5)** – occurred at baptism (**cf. John 3:5**).
       2. Continues daily – **2 Corinthians 4:16**
       3. **Ephesians 4:17-24** – contrast of the previous life with what is learned in Christ.
          1. **(vv. 22-24)** – putt of old, renewed mind, leading to putting on new.
          2. **(v. 25)** – Therefore – practical examples of putting off the walk of the Gentiles.
          3. **(v. 30)** – do not grieve HS by whom you were sealed – through obedience to word, and transformation.
    7. Fruit of the Spirit – **Galatians 5:5-6, 22-25** – **(vv. 24-25)** – crucified flesh, walk in the Spirit = Christ’s
       1. **(vv. 5-6)** – ***“through the Spirit wait for…hope…faith working through love”***
       2. Waiting through walking according to the Spirit – in Christ – Christ’s.
    8. **To be sealed with the Holy Spirit is to be identified and authenticated as a child of God through obedience to, and adherence to the Spirit’s revelation.**
14. The Guarantee of the Holy Spirit
15. Guarantee
    1. **Ephesians 1:14** – the HS is the guarantee of our inheritance.
    2. Guarantee – *arrhabōn* – a pledge, i.e. part of the purchase-money or property given in advance as security for the rest (STRONG)
    3. How is the HS a down payment of our inheritance? (along with being sealed with the HS)
16. Promise
    1. **Ephesians 1:13** – the HS OF PROMISE is the guarantee…
    2. God’s promises are certain – **Titus 1:2**
    3. God’s promises are so dependable we can be fully assured of their fulfillment – **Hebrews 6:13-18** – the immutability of God’s counsel makes a promise of God a guarantee.
17. Transformation
    1. Part of what makes God’s future promises certain is the fulfillment of other promises:
       1. **2 Peter 1:4** – through promises of God we can be partakers of the divine nature.
       2. This fellowship (partakers) as a promise is fulfilled in our time on earth through inner transformation.
    2. **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** – Paul’s defense of his apostleship, but also paralleled to all believers throughout context. (Established with Corinthians through preaching + their believing – both sealed and have Spirit as a guarantee – through the apostolic preaching – of Paul.)
       1. The down payment of the Spirit in their hearts was observable.
       2. **2 Corinthians 3:18** – being transformed from glory to glory.
       3. **2 Corinthians 4:4, 6** – light of gospel, glory of Christ, knowledge of God in face of Christ.
          1. **(v. 12) – death in apostles (v. 7 – earthen vessels), life in Corinthians – through gospel preached/believed/applied.**
          2. **(v. 14) – speaks knowing the certainty of hope.**
       4. **2 Corinthians 4:16-18** – outward perishing, but inward renewal – inward transformation.
    3. **2 Corinthians 5:1-5** – there is a heavenly body prepared for those in Christ, and the Spirit is the down payment of it.
       1. **(v. 5)** – Spirit as a guarantee of the resurrected body looks back to **4:16-17** – inward renewal, working a ***“far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”***
       2. I.e. our inward man is transformed into the image of Christ through the work of the HS in the word, and is the down payment of what is to come in the final transformation of our body to house our spirit.
    4. **Ephesians 1:14** – until the redemption of the purchased possession.
       1. ***“redemption of God’s own possession” (NASB)***
       2. ***“the adoption, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:23).***

**Conclusion**

1. Our craving for confidence is satisfied through the Spirit revealed will of God, and our response to it.
2. We can know we are God’s children as much as He knows (**cf. 2 Timothy 2:19**).
3. If we allow the Spirit to dictate our lives, thus, transforming our inner man, we can know we belong to God, and we will see the consummation of our inheritance in the end.