

# Series: Ephesians: *The Christian Mystery and Mission*

Week 3

CDOBC – beginning on 2/6/11

Title: “God’s Airtight Guarantee”

1:11-14 ~ February 20, 2011

---

**OBJECTIVE:** To help believers have great joy and security about their salvation...their position in Christ.

---

## Announcements

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- Rodeo-Fest instructions
- Men’s Golf Outing – March 19<sup>th</sup> @ The Views Golf Club
- Needed new leadership team for the Fall Festival – see Sheryl Beyer at the Fall Festival courtyard table.
- Church directory proof-reading
- Welcome Class March 2 or 9
- First Taste Luncheon – Sunday March 13

## Opening Prayer

How many things in life come with a guarantee? And even if they do come with a guarantee, when there’s a problem, will the guarantee be in force?

I had a bumper-to-bumper guarantee on a car. Bumper-to-bumper...the entire car. I realized that this guarantee didn’t include wear items like the brakes, tires, etc. I had that car about 9 years – and in the last few years, certain items in the interior started to break. However, when I inquired about replacing these items (*interior door handle, radio controls, etc.*), I was told that the bumper-to-bumper guarantee didn’t cover those items.

Life would be better if it came with a guarantee, wouldn’t it?

Guaranteed marriage...guaranteed obedience in your children...guaranteed romance after years of marriage...guaranteed income...guaranteed retirement...guaranteed health...guaranteed friendships...guaranteed pets...vacations that are guaranteed to be memorable.

But we all know that the only guarantee life offers is that there are no guarantees. For many this truth brings forth discouragement and pessimism about this life.

In addition, many Christians live their life with a great sense of insecurity about their faith – about the certainty or the guarantee of their salvation. They wonder if they are truly saved. Sometimes this comes as a result of their own sin – they wonder if a true follower of Christ would commit such sins...and they also doubt their salvation when life is painful they wonder if God is truly watching over them.

**Illus.** – *Thursday a.m. phone call – family whose 3 yr. old son drowned*

The Bible even seems to cast doubts upon one's salvation – making it sound as though we could lose our salvation if we don't straighten out our life enough!

Romans 11:20–21 “...they(*Israel*)were broken off because unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you either.”

1 Corinthians 10:12 “So if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!”

15:2 “By this gospelyou are saved, if you hold firmly...otherwise you have believed in vain.”

2 Corinthians 13:5 “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?”

Hebrews 6:4 “It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit...if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance...”

These passages teach that we should persevere in our faith – that we should be faithful always to the Lord and if we look to other things for security or satisfaction, then we will miss out on many blessings God has for us.

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter to the Ephesians. By his own admission, in Romans 7:15-25, we read of the Apostle's own battles with sin – his own difficulty to obey God.

Yet, what kept Paul going? Why did he have such unwavering confidence in his forgiven status before God? According to his own pen, he failed often at the Christian life, but he was always forging ahead in his ministry – always looking for ways to share Christ – and always praising God for his salvation. What caused him to be so positive, enthusiastic, and secure in his faith – even though he was vividly aware of his own spiritual shortcomings, and his present circumstances of being imprisoned?

He tells us the key to his joyful attitude in our passage this morning.

Turn to Ephesians 1:11-14

### **God's choice to blessbelievers** vs. 11

Paul uses a different word here in verse 11 (*kléroó*-klay-ro'-o) than he did in verse 4 (*eklegó*). This is the only use in the N.T. of this term, which is one of the reasons why it is a confusing term, and why there are so many different English translations of this verse.

NIV

In him we were also chosen,

NASB

(In Him) also we have obtained an inheritance

ASV

in whom also we were made a heritage

Wycliffe's Translations (pre-dates KJV)

In whom [also] we be called by lot

The word has the idea of being chosen to receive an inheritance.

The dramatic thing about this verb is that it is in the passive voice

in the Greek – which means that we aren't the ones who do anything to merit our inheritance. It indicates that we are acted upon by something outside of ourselves...in this case, God. What a wonderful truth! Your heavenly, eternal inheritance is not dependent upon you! It's something God does for you and to you!  
Col. 1:12

"...giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you(*Christian*) to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light."

Notice also that God predestined for us to receive this inheritance according to His perfect plan which vs. 4 told us was put into effect before the creation of the world. Another bonus...

"everything" was part of His plan! Everything...all things...were part of His plan and everything works out in perfect "conformity with the purpose of His will..."

Do you ever worry about life?

Do you ever worry about the future?

Be assured that you have an eternal inheritance that is based in God – not in you – and that everything is part of God's perfect plan. Nothing comes as a surprise...nothing fits outside of God's plan.

The Bible is clear that the "all things" includes inanimate things, such as fire, hail, wind, rain, snow, and lightning (Ps. 148:8; Job 37:6-13; 38:22-30).

It includes wild animals (Ps. 104:27-29) and even seemingly chance events, such as the casting of lots (Prov. 16:33).

God controls the affairs of nations and the rise and fall of powerful world leaders (Job 12:23; Dan. 4:34-35).

He ordains all of our days before we were even born (Ps. 139:16; Job 14:5).

(See Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* [Zondervan], pp. 315-351.)

### **United in Christ for God's glory** vs. 12-13a

The underlying foundation here is that our salvation – all of God's predetermined plan - is for His glory. We obviously receive a personal benefit from our salvation, but primarily, God saves us so He can be glorified due to His love, grace, and mercy, and when we are saved, we are then called to glorify Him with our life!

But, there's another great truth here in these verses – the truth of the united Body of Christ – and the equal Body of Christ. For 2,000 years, there was great disparity between Jew and Gentile - between God's chosen people beginning with Abraham, and all the other nations not chosen. Remember, God's choice of Abraham/Israel was not due to any merit of their own. He chose them to be an example to the world – and to be the source of the Messiah. But there was always a barrier between Jew and Gentile – especially one of spiritual pride on the part of the Jewish people. They believed they were somehow innately superior to other people because God chose them. Paul's message here strikes at the heart of that pride. He is referring to the Jews in vs. 12, and the Gentiles in vs. 13 – and he puts them on even ground. They are both fully included in Christ – and they are both included because of their common hope/faith in Jesus. Just because the Jews were the first to hear and hope in Christ, does not make them better or more superior than those who followed in faith when they heard the Gospel message.

### **Our eternal guarantee of safety** vs. 13b-14

“Having believed...”

Aorist (tense) Active (voice) – the Aorist means that our belief is final or complete – it is not uncertain, and *active voice* means that we have a part in this action. As we talked about a few weeks ago...God has chosen / elected some unto salvation, but the Bible also calls us to believe – to put our faith in Christ. These things seem like contradictory truths, but they aren't. We struggle to understand how these things work in harmony, but we must simply trust God where our finite and sinful minds struggle to comprehend His ways.

“you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit...”

Aorist (tense) Passive (voice)— means that our seal is completed – a certainty.

A seal in ancient times had many meanings and implications. In Scripture, we see that the tomb of Jesus was sealed (Matt. 27:66) and Roman guards were stationed at the tomb. In Revelation 20:3, God throws Satan in a pit, and seals it so he can't escape.

So, one aspect of the seal is security – and Paul's point here is that we are secure in Christ.

Another usage of a seal in Scripture is in Romans 4:11 where Abraham's circumcision is called the sign and seal of the righteousness he had by faith. In 1 Cor. 9:2, Paul says that his converts are the seal of his apostleship.

So, a second aspect of a seal is a sign of authenticity – God's seal of approval on you because you are in Christ.

Jeremiah 32:10f.f.details Jeremiah's purchase of a field, and the sale documents were sealed, indicating the rightful owner of the property.

So, a third aspect of a seal is ownership – As a believer, you are forever God's possession!

Lastly, we see that Queen Esther worked with Mordecai (Esther 8:8-12) to issue a counter decree to encourage the Jews in exile to defend themselves from the impending attacks. This decree was sealed by the king, which gave his full authority to its contents.

A fourth aspect of a seal is authority. As Christians, we have the authority of God and His Word.

As Christians...all of those things are true of us!

Then Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit is: "...a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance..."

The Greek word for 'deposit' is *arrabōn* – and Paul uses it a total of three times in his writings...2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5, and here in Eph. 1:14 – all with the same usage regarding our salvation and the Holy Spirit. It means to secure with a down-payment. It means

the rest of the payment is guaranteed, in this case, the fuller presence and knowledge of God in Heaven. (See New Testament Words, by

William Barclay, p. 58)

The Holy Spirit in the life of every believer...

2 Corinthians 1:22“...sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.”

2 Corinthians 5:5“Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.”

1 Cor. 12:13“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

“...until the redemption of those who are God's possession...”

Last week, we saw in verse 10 that when the time is right, God will put all things in heaven and earth under Christ – the Head. Well, only God knows when that time will be, but here we have a clue. God’s plan is to redeem – to purchase – to pay the ransom for – those who are His possession. In other words, those whom He has chosen / elected unto salvation. The deposit of the Holy Spirit in our life – will only be needed until the time comes that we are all in heaven. Then, the Holy Spirit will no longer be a deposit guaranteeing something in the future – the future will be the present! We will no longer need the earnest money because we’ll be living in the house!

“...to the praise of his glory.”

Paul bookends these thoughts with the glory of God. He stated in vs. 12 that the purpose of our salvation was for God’s glory...and he states here in vs. 14 that at the end of time, when all things are put under Christ, that this will bring glory to God.

## **Application**

Be filled with joy about your eternal security in Christ.

Your salvation brings glory to God!

Close in prayer