



Sermon Notes

Term – Spring Term

Series – Wholeness

Gathering & Date – 27th January 2019

Title – Signed Sealed Delivered (part 2 of 2)

Preacher – Natalie Shepherd

Reading: Ephesians 1:1-14

Main message of this talk in one sentence:

The spiritual blessings of redemption and forgiveness are sealed for us by Jesus' death on the cross and the reality here on earth is delivered through the Holy Spirit.

Main points –

Having looked at the spiritual blessings of being chosen, predestined and adopted being signed off by the Father last week, we looked at how those have been sealed for us by Jesus.

Verse 7 begins **“In Christ”**; Paul uses this phrase nine times in verses 3-14, as well as in numerous other writings. This phrase explains that we have access to all of God's blessings because we believe in what Jesus has done on the cross. Being 'in Christ' is like our relationship with an aeroplane when we are taking a flight; it is not enough to be under the plane or inspired by the plane or following the plane – we have to be in the plane. When we're in the plane, what happens to the plane, happens to us. Whatever is true of Jesus is true of us.

Redemption – this term means the payment of the price or the ransom from captivity or slavery. It was a common term in the first century. The Bible says that we are all slaves to sin. The Old Testament has many examples of blood being used to pay the price for sin but the price for God to buy back our souls for all eternity was the blood and life of Jesus.

Forgiveness – this is the cancelling of all judgment, debt and obligation; complete freedom and release from guilt. Psalm 103 tells us God removes our sins as far as the east is from the west.

Grace – the unmerited favour and inexhaustible and abundant love. We receive the redemption and forgiveness in accordance with the riches of God's grace. We don't receive the blessings just from his grace but in accordance with it which means we have them in abundance.

These weren't just *sealed* for us by Jesus for our own salvation but as part of God's wider plan and includes the redemption of everything under the reign of Jesus.

The spiritual blessings are *delivered* through the Holy Spirit. When we believe in all that Jesus has done, we receive the Holy Spirit as a **seal** which confirms God's redemption in our hearts and also acts as a **deposit** guaranteeing that, in the fullness of time, we will know the fullness of all of the blessings. We're reminded that we live in the 'now' and the 'not yet' and that complete redemption is still to come.

All of this is to “the praise of his glorious grace” – it is all from Him, by Him and through Him and the only appropriate response is in the praise and worship of our lives.

For further thought and prayer

1. Read through verses 3-14 and note all the occurrences of “in Christ”. How is the analogy of the aeroplane flight helpful in understanding this idea?
2. Spend time reflecting on the idea of redemption. Where do you see the need for redemption in the world around you and, more specifically, in your own life? Share with others if you feel able.

3. How do you see forgiveness playing out in your life? Can you see examples of where you have known the release of forgiveness for yourself, but also when extending forgiveness for others?
4. How do you recognise the Spirit's work in your life as a:
 - a) Seal
 - b) DepositWhat knowledge have you been assured of or still feel you would like to feel greater assurance of?
5. In light of our salvation being part of God's wider plan of redemption, spend some time praying for the people and situations on your heart that need redeeming.
6. In response to your reflections, write a Psalm of praise giving glory to God for all He has done.