

us. It secures, and it assures. It stamps us for God's possession, and His kingdom and glory as our possession."

The seal is affixed, not when we were chosen, nor when we were redeemed by His blood, but when we "heard the word of the truth of the gospel . . . and believed." The seal waits for the agreement of both parties to the transaction.

And this seal is no outward mark, visible to man. It is the mark upon the heart, seen only by its fruits. It is the indwelling Holy Spirit, which is given to all who believe, and becomes an experience to all who receive Him. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:6). "The Spirit witnessing with our spirits that we are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:16).

And finally, the seal is the "*Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.*" It is the first instalment of that which we shall receive in its fulness, when the work of God in us is consummated at "the redemption of the purchased possession."

Thus is completed this most wonderful single sentence (vs. 3-14), beginning with the first inception of the purpose of God in eternity past, and reaching to its consummation in the dispensation of the fulness of times, "unto the praise of His glory." And all this is the work of God alone, according to the counsel of His own will. There is left no room for our work or merit. The only thing for us to do is, having heard of it, to believe and trust. God does all the rest. These are wonderful realities. Let us endeavor not to make them true, but to apprehend them as facts.