

the Spirit's consent. He has consented, He appropriates the name, and why? Because He is love. "God is love."

We have no claim on Him for favours, unless He gives us the claim. But He has Himself in that name "Spirit of Promise," given us the right, so to speak, to every blessing He can bestow. We are entitled to go and ask for this gift, which includes and closes all gifts, and not merely because we need His aid, so indispensable for us, but because He is "the Holy Spirit of Promise."

## II.—THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCRIBED BY HIS WORK AS

### "Sealing Believers."

2. The Spirit seals believers.—"*Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit.*" "The seal" was used in the apostles' days, as now, to close and make fast a letter, to secure from common observation, the correspondence between confidants. Sealing was resorted to more frequently then, when fewer could write than now, as the subscription of an individual to any document, giving validity to it. We retain this usage still in giving a deed for land, and in some other important contracts.

The seal was at times entrusted to an agent, to be known as the owner's authority for the transaction of business by the agent on his account. It was thus a commission, or ancient *power of attorney*, granted to another person, whose action was thus sanctioned by the owner of the seal.

The seal, or its impression was also put upon articles to mark that they were private property, or public property, as the case might be, and to denote that what was sealed was sacred and right.

Thus "sealing" signified setting apart,—securing,—approving,—regarding as sacred and confirmed.

So the work of the Holy Spirit is a sealing of believers, inasmuch as He puts

the seal of God, the stamp of holiness upon them. They are set apart for God. All covenant blessings are secured to them. They are approved and trusted by God.—They are confirmed, and God sanctions all that the Saviour and Spirit have done for them. Sealed as His, they are chosen, and called; and saved, counted genuine by Him, who can be deceived by no seeming. Like a bag of coins tested, and counted, and marked, by one who can discriminate, the church of Christ, all true believers are sealed as genuine by the spirit of God; Coin that will pass current in heaven, where hypocrites shall never come!

They are sealed as God's property, His at first; torn from Him by sin; then redeemed by the precious blood; separated from an evil world, they are not their own, but Christ's, and Christ is God's.

There are common operations of the spirit affecting all men; there are special gracious operations affecting every sinner returning to God; but *the sealing* is true only of believers, for sealing includes all. It is the stamp of the Spirit on His thorough work.

The sealed were convinced of sin, led to Christ, washed, justified, adopted into God's family, and are being transformed into God's likeness. As such they live a life of faith upon the Son of God—a life of prayer, growing holiness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. They are guided and guarded, made meet for the inheritance and finally they enter into glory. And these graces of the Spirit are the sole sure evidences that any are sealed by God the Spirit, as true members of Christ's body.

## III.—THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCRIBED AS WHAT HE IS TO BELIEVERS,

### "The Earnest of Inheritance."

3 *Earnest* means the pledge given to ratify a contract:—as when you make an important purchase, you give a part of the money, which confirms the bargain, and binds you in law and honor to abide by