

Fact Sheet for **“How Great a Salvation”**
Ephesians 1:1-14, Part III

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Read Ephesians 1:1-14

One of the more memorable Psalms is Psalm 119. It is the longest chapter in the Bible (176 verses), and some beloved memory verses are found there (verses 11 and 105 for instance). The whole Psalm is an acrostic, with each verse in every 8 verse division beginning with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There are also multiple synonyms for the Word of God, most of which show up in each 8 verse division: word, commandment, judgment, law, precept, statute, testimony, and promise.

Think about that word “promise”. God doesn’t have to say “I promise” for it to be true. All God has to do is say it because he never is mistaken and never lies (Titus 1:1-2). God’s word is his promise. Keep this thought in mind as we go to Ephesians 1:11-14.

Verses 3-14 translate one of the longest and most complicated sentences in the Greek New Testament. But at the same time these are some of the premier verses that speak of the greatness of our salvation in Christ. These are some of the thoughts we have already covered.

The pronouns referring to people in verses 3-14 are all plural (“our”, “we”, “us”, “you”).

In verse 4 Paul wrote that the Father chose us before the foundation of the world. This was his sovereign choice, and was not just his choice of what he knew our choice would be.

In verse 5 we see that God predestined us for adoption into his family. The word “predestined” means that God determined this beforehand. He determined this before creation. He did this according to the purpose, or good pleasure, of his will.

And the Father’s good pleasure in our great salvation in Christ looks forward to the time or “dispensation” (verse 10) when all things will be brought together under the headship of Christ.

We’ve been looking at some of the small pieces of this long and complicated sentence, and will be looking at a couple other pieces today. But before we do I want to take a step back and show you some of the big swings in these verses. And you will need to have your Bibles open for this.

Verses 3-6 form the first major section of this sentence.

Verses 7, 11, and 13 all begin with the words “in him” and mark smaller divisions within this sentence.

Verses 7-10 focus on our redemption in Christ, and God's future plan for us in Him.

Verses 11-12 again remind us of many of the thoughts in verses 5-6 (predestination, The Father's will, and his praise).

Verses 13-14 speak of the Holy Spirit.

We've already covered many of the thoughts in verses 11-12 so I want to spend time on verses 13 and 14 today.

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

When we became Christians God marked us with his seal, the promised Holy Spirit, making us his inviolable possession. And the Holy Spirit is the "guarantee" of our inheritance, until we acquire possession of it.

The word "guarantee" is a legal concept from the language of business and trade. It means (1) an installment by which someone secures a legal claim upon something that is as of yet not fully paid for, (2) an earnest, an advance payment, by which a contract becomes valid in law. The Holy Spirit is God's guarantee of our full future possession of salvation.

Now here is where Psalm 119 comes into play. If God says it in his word it's a promise, so who is this guarantee for? Is it something to keep God honest, to make sure he fulfills his word? Or is it entirely for us, to encourage us in our current, but partial, enjoyment of salvation?

This same thought about the Holy Spirit being our guarantee is found in two other places in the NT (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 5:4-5). Now here's a thought to ponder. If someone has prayed the sinner's prayer but there is very little or no evidence that the Holy Spirit is in their life, then do they have that guarantee of salvation? Now be careful, all it takes is belief to be saved (John 3:16).

How do you know the Holy Spirit is indwelling you? Romans 8 is the "go to" chapter for this question (Romans 8:2, 5, 7, 9, 16-17). But there are many other verses such as 1 Corinthians 2:11-14; 6:19-20; 12:3; and Galatians 5:22-23.

Let me end with a question. Is God at work in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure? (Philippians 2:13). It seems to me that is a key question we should ask ourselves and others.