

Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Church Bulletin Articles from June 19, 2011

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Scripture of the Week



Ephesians 1:13-14

"In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."

The familiar slogan of a popular credit card company is "membership has its privileges". If you think a few thousand bonus points and frequent flyer miles makes you a privileged member of an elite group, you should really be impressed by the perks that God blesses the members of His spiritual family with. Ephesians 1:5 tells us that God allows us to be adopted into His family through His Son Jesus, and He does so out of the kind intention of His own will. Verse 8 says He lavishes the kinds of riches upon his children that no earthly father could possibly hope to supply. In Christ, God showers all His spiritual blessings down upon us from heaven (verse 3). In Him we have redemption through His blood,

forgiveness of our sins and the riches of His grace (verse 7). Our heavenly Father has also left us an inheritance that puts to shame any estate the richest earthly father could ever hope to leave to his child in his will. The inheritance awaiting the faithful Christian is *"imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved for you in heaven"* (1 Peter 1:4). As a pledge of that eternal inheritance, God has placed His stamp of ownership upon His beloved children with the seal of the Holy Spirit until the final day of ultimate redemption. If you haven't been adopted into God's family, what are you waiting for? Your adoption and seal of the Holy Spirit is achieved through obedient faith (Acts 2:38).

The Seal of the Holy Spirit

The Bible tells us that God seals us in Christ with the Holy Spirit and gives Him to us as a pledge of our eternal inheritance when we allow ourselves to be adopted into His spiritual family (Ephesians 1:13-14). Let's spend a little time considering what this does and does not mean. In ancient times a person of authority would place a seal on a document with wax or ink and press his "signet ring" into the seal. The ring would be engraved with an insignia or formed into a certain shape that was unique to the person who owned it. When the document was rolled up and he pressed his ring into the seal, that served as his signature and confirmed the document was written with his authority. In view of

our inheritance in Christ, this means that our heavenly Father has verified His eternal promises to us by setting His seal upon us in the person of the Holy Spirit. He has made us a promise and authenticated it by the Holy Spirit of promise. While this seal is a great honor that gives us confidence in Christ, it is not a guarantee that we can never lose our inheritance. It is a reminder to us that we've entered into a covenant with God, and that we must be certain to keep up our end of the contract. If we fail meet God's covenant requirements we will break the seal and forfeit our inheritance. In Ephesians 4:30 we are told not to grieve the Holy Spirit by whom we've been sealed. In Ephesians 5:4-5 we

are told that filthy talk, sexual immorality, greed and idolatry are things that do grieve the Spirit and make void our kingdom inheritance. God's seal is not a sign of eternal security. It is a symbol of God's approval and a reminder of who we belong to and how we should behave. The Holy Spirit is also said to be a "pledge" of our inheritance. A pledge is a first installment or a down payment made as a promise in good faith to make full payment in the future. This down payment is said to have been made with a view to our future redemption (Ephesians 1:14). Since God hasn't fully redeemed us on the last day yet, we must make certain to not grieve the Holy Spirit and make void God's pledge.

Please Come Visit Us At...

Prairie Village Church of Christ
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Preacher – Louie Taylor
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www.pvchurchofchrist.com

Times of Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study.....9:30
Sunday Morning Worship Service.....10:30
Sunday Evening Worship Service.....6:30
Wednesday Evening Bible Study.....7:30



The Presentation of Jesus

The story is told in Luke 2:21-38 of Jesus' parents taking Him to the temple and presenting Him to the priest when He was an infant. Living under the Law of Moses, Mary was considered ritually unclean for 40 days after the birth of her Son (Leviticus 12:3-4). During this period she was not allowed to visit the temple or come into contact with anything consecrated to God. But after the days of her purification, she was required to go to the temple and bring the priest a one year old lamb as a burnt offering, and a pigeon or turtledove as a sin offering, to complete her ritual cleansing (Leviticus 12:6). Jesus' parents were too poor to sacrifice a lamb, so the Law allowed them to offer two small birds instead (Leviticus 12:8). She was also required by the Law to present her firstborn Son to the priest so

that He could be dedicated to God (Exodus 13:2). When that ceremonial dedication was completed, the parents were required to pay five shekels of silver in order to redeem the child (Numbers 18:16). Being impoverished as they were, they likely had little or no money to offer the priest in exchange for their baby boy. It is amazing to know that the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the entire world was born into a family that couldn't even afford to buy a lamb to offer God. And though they were probably unable to offer a few pieces of silver in exchange for their child, He would later redeem all mankind with blood more precious than all the silver in the entire world. "You were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your

forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Even if you don't have two dimes to rub together, in Christ you have the heavenly riches that matter most. While Jesus' family was at the temple, they met a righteous and devout man named Simeon. God promised this man that he wouldn't die until he saw the Christ with his own two eyes. When he saw the infant Jesus, he knew that promise had been kept. Simeon told the parents that Jesus would cause the rise and fall of many in Israel. If we stumble over Jesus and reject Him, our fall will be great and eternally devastating. But God promises us that if we obediently humble ourselves before Him, He will raise us up to the highest of heavenly heights (1 Peter 5:5-6).

GOSPEL MEETING AUGUST 15-17 WITH GERRY SANDUSKY — Please mark your calendars and make early plans to attend every day of this short, three day meeting with Gerry Sandusky of Madison Indiana. Brother Gerry has entitled this series of studies, "Standing at the Door of the Day of Eternity". Each lesson will be taken from the New Testament book of 1 Thessalonians, and the goal of this meeting will be to motivate each one of us to live every day of our lives on planet earth as if it might be our last.