

“The Glorious Inheritance of the Saints”

(Ephesians 1:11-14 ~ Part 2)

Introduction

➤ We have been studying, for some time now, the great doxology found in the first chapter of the book of Ephesians (1:3-14). After his initial (short-but-profound) salutation, the apostle Paul – writing words inspired by the Holy Spirit of God (2Tim.3:16; 2Pet.1:21) – launched into a litany of praise to God [one 202-word sentence in the original language (244 in ESV)]. Ultimately, the doctrine declares in this doxology is beyond human knowledge and language – too awesome for us to fully grasp.

Eph 1:3-14 ~ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In 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, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”

➤ In the last portion of this great passage, we find Paul’s teaching on the glorious inheritance of the saints. As we began last week, we can identify two main points regarding our inheritance in Christ.

I. The reality of our Inheritance: “we have obtained an inheritance” (vs.11-12)

➤ In verse eleven, that apostle Paul wrote: “*In him we have obtained an inheritance*” (vs.11). In simple terms, the Christian’s inheritance is their salvation (see Eph.1:14, 18; Col.3:24). As in our English vernacular, an inheritance refers to something that is passed down from one family member to another (typically, a parent/grandparent to a child/grandchild). In Biblical times, the concept of inheritance was a common cultural practice. A child would receive a portion, or allotment, of his/her parent’s estate after the parent(s) died.

The New Testament reveals that only the children of God (i.e., true Christians) will receive an inheritance from God as they are part of His heavenly kingdom. Only those who are “*in Christ*” will receive the inheritance, for it is only through faith in Christ that a person can become a child of God (see Eph.1:5; 2:3; 5:5; Gal.3:18, 29; Rom.8:15-17). Out of His mercy and kindness and grace and love, God (“legally”) adopted us into His family making us heirs of His kingdom. We receive this spiritual inheritance not when God dies (for He will not and cannot die), but when we physically die (or when Jesus comes again).

And, since God is the (one and only) self-existing and eternal (immortal) God – who cannot die – and since His kingdom is an eternal kingdom, the Christian’s inheritance is an “*eternal inheritance*” (Heb.9:15) – secured in heaven (1Pet.1:4) and secured by God (1Pet.1:5; Jn.10:27-29). Far beyond human comprehension and description!

➤ True Christians will receive an eternal inheritance from God because they – by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone – are children of God. As God’s children, through Christ’s sacrificial and substitutionary death on the cross (Is.53:4-6; 2Cor.5:21), Christians are children of God and therefore legal heirs of His spiritual and eternal kingdom.

A. For those who are **“IN CHRIST”** (vs.11)

- As we have already seen many times in our study of this, one of the most prevalent themes – if not the most prevalent theme – in Paul’s letter to the Ephesian saints is what it means to be “in Christ” (i.e., **“In Him”**) (vs.11; see **“Christ”** vs.9). This represents the Christian’s union (relationship/fellowship) with Christ – the Christian is in Christ, and Christ is in every Christian (Gal.2:20). God’s inheritance is for Christians, and only for Christians (Jn.14:6; Acts 4:12; 1Jn.5:12).

“having been predestined”

- Those who are truly **“in Christ”** have **“been predestined”** (vs.11) to be in Christ. As we have already seen in our study of the book of Ephesians, simply put, the word **“predestined”** (*proorizō*) means “to predetermine”, “to preordain”, or “to decide beforehand” [the same as in English; not the same as “foreknowledge” (*prognōsis*), see Rom.8:29]. That is, before the foundation of the world, God determined who would be saved – not based on their goodness or good works (or God looking down the corridors of the future to see who would believe), but according to His sovereign purpose and pleasure (see Eph.1:4-5, 11; cf. Acts 2:22-23; 4:27-28; Rom.8:28-30; 9:11; 2Thess.2:13-15; 1Jn.4:19).

“according to the purpose of [God]”

- Those whom God has chosen for salvation were chosen **“according to the purpose of [God]”** (vs.11). The **“purpose”** (*prothesis*) of God refers to His intention or design. This is the basis of God’s why God predestined some to salvation. To put it simply, God chose them for salvation because He determined it to be so. Or, to put it another way, God chose who would be saved based upon whom He wanted to save (see Eph.1:5; cf. Ps.115:3; Eph.3:11; 2Tim.1:9). God is sovereign over everything, including our salvation. God’s sovereignty is never limited, manipulated, or altered in any way. In fact, it is never seriously challenged (see Ps.2:1-3). God is the Creator, and we are His creation. God is infinite, and we are finite. God is immortal, and we are mortal. God is perfect (holy, in and of Himself), and we are imperfect (unholy, apart from Him). God is all-knowing, and we know very little. God is the Potter, and we are the clay (Jer.18:1-6; Is.64:8; Rom.9:20-21).

“according to the counsel of [God’s] will”

- This means that God did not first consult humans, or any of His creation, to determine what He should do. God did not look down the “corridors of the future” to find out who would believe, and then save them based on their decision. God’s redemptive plan does not rest on the foreseen decision or responses of human beings. Rather, God **“works all things according to the counsel of his will”** (vs.11). This means that God’s purpose is informed by His own **“counsel”** (*boulē*; plan or decision) – or, **“the counsel of his will”** (vs.11). Who did God consult when devising His redemptive plan for mankind (before the creation of the world)? Himself. Salvation is going according to God’s sovereign plan, which was informed by God’s sovereign will (Acts 2:23; 4:28; Rom.11:33-36). Salvation is according to God’s sovereign plan, which was informed by God’s sovereign will, and executed by His sovereign work (**“works all things”**; vs.11).

B. For those who **“HOPE IN CHRIST”** (vs.12)1

- After describing the sovereign work of God in salvation, Paul shifted to the human reality of salvation: **“so that we who were the first to hope in Christ”** (vs.12). The Christian’s **“hope1”** (*proelpizō*; i.e., “first to hope” or “hope beforehand”) is not wishing thinking or nervous anticipation. The word basically means trust, as in a confidence in something that has not yet happened (Rom.8:23-25). Since this hope is based on, rooted in, the promises of God, it is absolute and unwavering. God does not – in fact, cannot – lie (Num.23:19; Heb.6:18; Tit.1:2). Therefore, His promise to save those who believe should not be doubted or diminished. For God will never break His promises, and no one (or nothing) can undermine God’s sovereign and salvific plan (Jn.10:25-29; Rom.8:31-39; 1Jn.5:13).

True Christians are eternally secure in Christ (based on the person and work of Christ) – they cannot lose their salvation, nor have it taken from them. The assurance of their salvation must come from the genuineness/sincerity of their faith in Christ (not internal goodness or external good works). However, a true faith in Christ will produce a faithfulness to Christ (see Matt.7:24-27; Jn.14:15; Jms.2:17, 26; 1Jn.5:2). While no one is saved by good works, all who are saved are saved unto good works (Eph.2:8-10).

“to the praise of [God’s] glory”

- Salvation comes from God’s sovereign purpose, according to His sovereign work and will, and for His sovereign glory – *“so that we ... might be to the praise of his glory”* (vs.12). God is sovereign over salvation so that He receives all the glory for our salvation. We are not saved because we are so good, but because He is so good. We are not saved by the good works that we have done, but by the good works that Christ has done for us. God alone deserves all praise for our salvation (Eph.2:9; 1Cor.29, 31; Rom.3:27; Gal.6:14).

II. The **SECURITY** of our Inheritance: *“sealed with the ... Holy Spirit”* (vs.13-14)

- In these verses, Paul addressed another aspect of the Christian’s inheritance: *“In Him you also ... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit”* (vs.13). This is the security of our inheritance, or the security of our salvation. The Bible teaches that true Christians are secure in Christ – they were not saved by good works and they do not secure their salvation by good works. Salvation never rests on the work of humans, but on the sovereign redemptive work of God.

✓ **Illust:** At the time it was completed in 1937, the Golden Gate Bridge was the longest suspension bridge in the world. During the first phase of the \$77 million project very few safety devices were used and 23 men fell to their deaths in the waters of the Bay.

Before they began the second section, it was decided that something had to be done. Stout cords were fashioned into the largest net ever made (the cost was \$100,000) and it stretched out below where the crews were working. Was it worth it? Ask the ten men who fell into it without being injured! Not only did it save those ten lives, the work was completed in three-fourths the time because the workmen were relieved of the fear of falling.

“God’s great net of security spans the globe. No matter where His children live, He has stretched out beneath them His everlasting arms. As a result, every one of [His children] can live and work freely and fearlessly, knowing that we are protected, safe, secure, sealed, and kept by Him” (Charles Swindoll).

- Some people, however, can have a false assurance of salvation. That is, they believe they are saved when they are not (i.e., false believers). Many people today live lives that are contrary to Christianity – immoral, ungodly, sinful lives. And yet, they profess to be a Christian (when it’s convenient or safe) and believe that they will go to heaven.

Our security of salvation (objective reality) is not anchored to our goodness or good works, but to the person and work of Jesus Christ. Therefore, our assurance of salvation (subjective reality) should not be based upon our own goodness or godliness. Our assurance of salvation, however, must be informed by the evidence of our salvation – that is, our faith in Christ and faithfulness to Christ. For we are not saved by good works, but unto good works (Eph.2:8-10).

Whereas some people (unbelievers) can have a false assurance of salvation (assurance with no security), others (believers) can have no assurance of salvation (security with no assurance). As Christians, we can have an unwavering assurance of our salvation when it is based solely on God’s grace, through faith, in Christ alone!

- After describing the glorious reality of our inheritance, Paul declared the glorious security of our inheritance. In verses thirteen and fourteen, he identified those who have this security.

A. For those who are “*in [Christ]*” (vs.13)

➤ Here we are reminded, yet again, that salvation is only for those “*in [Christ]*” (vs.13; cf. vs.9, 11). Outside of Christ, such blessings do not exist. True Christians are those who put their faith in Jesus Christ as their one and only Savior, and seek to follow Him as their one and only Lord. No one who lives their entire life in rejection of, or in rebellion against, Jesus Christ is “*in Christ*” (the notion that someone can be chosen by God and live their entire life as an unbeliever is unbiblical and absurd). Those who are truly saved belong to Christ, they love Christ, they are devoted to Christ, they worship Christ, and they live for the glory of Christ.

All throughout the Bible we read that those who are truly saved will live lives producing the fruit of that salvation (Eph.2:8-10; Jn.14:15; 15:1-6, 8; Gal.5:22-24). Furthermore, we read that those who do not produce spiritual fruit are not truly saved (Matt.3:10; 7:19, 21-27; Jms.4:4).

➤ This is further evident when Paul wrote: “*In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him*” (vs.13). This verse identifies two characteristics of those who are truly “*in Christ*.”

Who “*heard the word of truth ... the Gospel*” (vs.13)

➤ One essential identifying mark of a true Christian is someone who hears “*the word of truth*” (*logos alētheia*) which is “*the Gospel*” (*euangelion*; vs.13; see Col.1:5). This is where all saving faith must begin.

Rom 10:14-17 ~ “How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!’ ... ¹⁷So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

➤ God has revealed Himself, the salvation that comes only through faith in Christ, through His Word, and specifically through the Gospel. Without the Gospel – the “good news” of Jesus Christ as the one and only Son of God and one and only Savior from God – there can be no saving faith.

✓ **Illust:** “Just as the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ and may not be separated from him, so also does the Holy Spirit always speak through and with the Word of God, the Bible, and is not to be separated from it. The Holy Spirit never speaks or works apart from Scripture” (James Montgomery Boice; *Ephesians: An Expositional Commentary*; 1:11-14).

➤ Therefore, all our evangelistic efforts, and Christian ministries, must be based in and through the Word of God. People are not genuinely saved through dramatic or theatrical appeals apart from the Gospel. People are not genuinely saved by intellectual or emotional arguments apart from the Gospel. People are not genuinely saved by following their hearts. People are not genuinely saved through any presentation of a false gospel (Gal.1:6-9). All those who are saved, and will ever be saved, are saved through the preaching or proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:14-15 ~ “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, ¹⁵and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’”

Mark 16:15 ~ “And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

Rom 1:16 ~ “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Eph 3:6 ~ “This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.”

Who “believed in [Christ]” (vs.13)

- A second essential component of true saving faith is believing in the Gospel. That is, putting your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. True saving faith is not merely acknowledging Jesus existed (historically) or even that He was a good or religious man. It is not asking Jesus into your heart, making an insincere profession of faith, reciting a “sinner’s prayer”, or adding Jesus to a pantheon of gods (idols). Salvation is only for those who truly believe in – put their faith in – Jesus as the Christ: “*and believed in him*” (vs.13).

Gal 2:16 ~ “yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.”

John 3:16-18 ~ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ... ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (see Jn.3:14-15)

Heb 11:6 ~ “And without faith it is impossible to please [God] ...”

Rom 5:1 ~ “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- Faith in Christ is the saving response to the Gospel of Christ. Where there is no (true) faith, there is no salvation. Saving faith is not a matter of “accepting Jesus” but submitting to Jesus as Lord and Savior! A person is saved by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. However, as Martin Luther (the 16th century Reformer) stated, saving faith is never alone. It is not “easy believism”, nor does it lead to “carnal Christianity.” Saving faith drives the believer to live in submission to and to the glory of Jesus Christ. Christ is the root of our salvation, and Christlikeness is the fruit of our salvation.

B. For those “*promised [the] Holy Spirit*” (vs.13-14)

- Notice the language used to describe the security of our salvation in Christ: “*In Him you also ... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit*” (vs.13). There are two words in this verse which specifically describe the security of the Christian’s inheritance. The first word is “*sealed*” (*sphragizō*, vb.; vs.13), which can mean (literally or figuratively) to “stamp or mark” – “*you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit*” (NET).

In ancient times, important documents or places were sealed with an official stamp or seal. Oftentimes, this seal was the official or royal mark of the owner or person of authority (usually with a signet ring (pressed into melted wax) or official seal, to ensure the content’s authenticity and security. That seal would indicate ownership, not to be broken by anyone who did not have the authority.

Matt 27:62-66 ~ “The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate ⁶³and said, ‘Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ ⁶⁴Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.’ ⁶⁵Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.’ ⁶⁶So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing [*sphragizō*] the stone and setting a guard.”

Rev 5:1-2 ~ “Then I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed [*katasphragizō*] with seven seals [*sphragis*]. ²And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals [*sphragis*]?’” (see Rev.20:3)

Dan 6:16-18 ~ “Then the king [Darius] commanded, and Daniel was brought and cast into the den of lions. The king declared to Daniel, ‘May your God, whom you serve continually, deliver you!’”

¹⁷And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet and with the signet of his lords, that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.”

- The fact that *“sealed”* (in Ephesians 1:13) is a past tense verb (aorist), and in the passive voice, indicates that this is something that has already happened to a person not something that a person has yet to do. It is God who seals the salvation of all those who believe in Him – it is God who saves (redeems) them and secures that salvation. We do not earn our salvation (by goodness or good works), and we cannot secure our salvation (by goodness or good works).

Eph 4:30 ~ “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed [*sphragizō*] for the day of redemption.”

2 Cor 1:21-22 ~ “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²²and who has also put his seal [*sphragizō*] on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”

2 Tim 2:19 ~ “But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal [*sphragis*]: ‘The Lord knows those who are his,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.’”

- The second word to note is *“promised”* (*epangelia*): *“In Him you also ... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit”* (vs.13) – or *“the Holy Spirit of promise”* (NAS). A “promise” is only as good as the one making it (on that person’s integrity or credibility). It is a pledge to do something, or a promise that something is true. If a person is a liar, their promise is suspect and unreliable.

Heb 6:16-17 ~ “For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. ¹⁷So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise [*epangelia*] the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed [*mesiteuō*] it with an oath [*horkos*]”

- The *“promised Holy Spirit”* is a pledge by God to give all believers the indwelling power and presence of His Spirit, which they receive immediately following their genuine conversion. It is a promise from God of God – God the Father promised to give us God the Spirit! Notice that God’s seal is not what the Spirit can do for us, but the Holy Spirit Himself.

“who is the guarantee of our inheritance” (vs.14)

- Every true Christian receives the Holy Spirit at the moment of their genuine conversion. The Holy Spirit serves as *“the guarantee of our inheritance”* (vs.14). The word *“guarantee”* (*arrabōn*) conveys the idea of a “deposit” or “down payment” (like a down payment on a house or a piece of property) securing ownership until the full payment is made.

2 Cor 1:21-22 ~ “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, ²²and who has also put his seal [*sphragizō*] on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee [*arrabōn*].”

2 Cor 5:5 ~ “He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee [*arrabōn*].”

1 Cor 1:4-9 ~ “I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge – ⁶even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you – ⁷so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁸who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The *“sustain”* (*bebaioō*; vs.8) could also be translated “confirm” or “establish.” This future tense verb indicates a promise that is yet to be realized. The phrase *“to the end”* (vs.8) is translated from one Greek word (*telos*) which means completion and/or perfection [Jesus used a form of this word when He said, *“It is finished”* (*teleō*; Jn.19:30)].

Phil 1:6 ~ “And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion [*epiteleō*] at the day of Jesus Christ.”

“until we acquire possession of it” (vs.14)

➤ The “final payment” is when *“we acquire possession of it”* (vs.14). The *“it”*, of course, refers to *“our inheritance”* (vs.14), and the *“we”* refers to all those who are (truly) “in Christ” (vs.11, 13). This phrase (*“until we acquire possession of it”*) can literally be translated “until the redemption [*apolytrōsis*; see 1:7; 4:30] of God’s own possession [*peripoiēsis*].”

1 Thess 5:9 ~ “For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain [*peripoiēsis*] salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ”

1 Peter 2:9 ~ “But you are a chosen [*eklektos*] race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession [*peripoiēsis*] ...”

➤ The point is that those who are saved have been saved by God and for God. Those who are saved belong to God. They have been *“bought with a price”* (1Cor.6:20; 7:23), and that price was the substitutionary and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ – *“In him we have redemption through his blood”* (Eph.1:7).

The completion of our redemption is realized when our eternal lives begin; when we receive the fullness of our salvation as we are resurrected and glorified in Christ forever.

“to the praise of God’s glory” (vs.14)

➤ This long passage (one sentence in Greek; vs.3-13) ends with the exclamation: *“to the praise of His glory”* (vs.14) – the exact phrase in verse 12, and similar phrase in verse 6 (*“to the praise of His glorious grace”*). The primary and ultimate goal of our salvation is the glory of God.

Since salvation is by God’s sovereign grace and love – having nothing to do with the goodness or good works of those who are saved – God alone receives the praise and glory and honor for it.

Rom 11:36 ~ “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”

Eph 2:9 ~ “not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

1 Cor 1:29-31 ~ “so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”

1 Peter 2:9 ~ “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

Conclusion

- Those who are truly saved are eternally saved – kept by God in Christ. The security of our salvation does not rest on our obedience, on the depth of our faith, or even on our faithfulness or perseverance. The security of salvation rests on the person and work of Jesus Christ, which we receive by faith. Jesus not only saves us, but He also protects our salvation enabling us to persevere in our faith.
- To be sure, we are commanded to persevere, but we must never forget that we can only persevere in and through Christ. While we are indeed called to abide in Christ (to hold onto Him), we must never forget that Christ also abides in us (He holds onto us). Though our grip may weaken and slip, Christ’s grip is firm and secure.

John 10:27-29 ~ “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch [*harpazō*] them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch [*harpazō*] them out of the Father’s hand.

Rom 8:37-39 ~ “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors [*hypernikaō*] through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate [*chōrizō*] us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (see Rom.8:33)

1 Peter 1:3-5 ~ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept [*tēreō*] in heaven for you, ⁵who by God’s power are being guarded [*phroureō*] through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

➤ Christ keeps (protects) every true believer from being eternally marred or injured (Jd.1); every true believer is one who keeps himself (perseveres) in God’s love (Jd.21); and God keeps (secures) every true believer from suffering eternal loss (Jd.24). There is nothing we can do to obtain or sustain our salvation – it is an unmerited gift of God from first to last – yet we are called to persevere in our faith. Faithfulness, not complacency, is the right response to God’s gracious security!

✓ **Illust:** Charles H. Spurgeon made the great observation that while Noah may have fallen in the ark, he never fell out of the ark: “All who were in the ark were safe. Nobody fell out of that divinely-appointed refuge; nobody was dragged out; nobody died in it; nobody was left to perish in it. All who went in came out unharmed. They were all preserved in it; they were all safely brought through the dread catastrophe. The ark preserved them all, and so will Jesus Christ preserve all in him. Whoever may come to him shall be secure. None of them shall perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand” (Charles H. Spurgeon; sermon: “Noah’s Flood”; March 5th, 1868).