

“The Family of God” continues . . .

Paul’s Letter to the Ephesians

Ephesians 1:11-23

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Don Maurer: We’re going to sing “Holy, Holy, Holy,” at least the first verse. *(The men sing)*
Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Jeff: Well, let’s pray. Father in heaven, we rejoice, knowing that You are God and that You are seated upon the throne even now, that You rule the nations through Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is for them to bow and kiss You before it is too late, before they meet with Your wrath. Father, we delight in knowing You personally, and ask that You will continually nurture that relationship by Your Spirit in us, cultivating Christ and the fruit of the Spirit, that we might grow thereby.

Father, we ask, we pray this morning that You will feed us upon Your word, that that Word would be so ingrained in our lives that when we talk to people it would simply come out in its words, in its phrases, certainly in its concepts and ideas.

And Father, we pray that we would be gospel men, men who share Your word of life with others. We pray, Father, that You will use that to bring fruit in the lives of others, but also new life. Father, send Your Spirit before us and make the way. Father, we pray now that You’ll bless us as we continue in the book of Ephesians. We ask that Your hand would be upon us in our study.

Lord, we also pray as we come upon an election year and are very close to it. Father, we pray that You will be with us as a nation. We’re so divided and we are fragmented and we are in such chaos. And Lord, we pray that You will mend this country not by our choice of a president, but by our repentance, for we as a nation need to repent. Father, we ask that we would turn to the Son and that we would kiss Him before Your wrath visits us. And in fact it already has; it is already upon us in so many ways. So Lord, we pray that You’ll grant repentance.

Lord, we ask now that You’ll give us eyes to see and ears to hear. We pray as we turn to Your word that we would be fed. We pray these things in the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.

Jeff: All right. Well, today we’re looking at Ephesians. And so I want us to turn to Ephesians chapter 1. And the last time we were together we looked at three verses. *(Laughter)* So we’ll give her a whirl again. And this time we’ll start in verse 11. So let me read from verse 11 on. This is the word of God.

“In 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, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory.

“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 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory.

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“For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope to which He has called you, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things under His feet and gave Him as Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. The word of the Lord.

Brave Men: Thanks be to God.

Jeff: All right. So what we are looking at today is starting in 11-14. We’re looking at the work of the Holy Spirit. You remember that we’ve been thinking about the Trinitarian work in our salvation and our redemption. And first of all we thought about how the Father allocates some to be saved, some out of a mass of sinful humanity.

And then we moved to looking at how the Son accomplishes salvation for those whom the Father has chosen. And now having finished that we’re going to look at the work of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because the Holy Spirit takes the work of the Lord Jesus and applies it. Theologically we oftentimes call that the *ordo salutis*. And the *ordo salutis* oftentimes eclipses the other *salutis*. But the other *salutis* is foundational. And you can’t have the *ordo salutis* without having the *historia salutis*.

What am I talking about? Well, the *historia salutis* is the history of salvation. When we think about that designation, that moniker, what we think about is that we think about the life and the death and the burial and the Resurrection and the Ascension and the outpouring of the Spirit. We think about all of that in the life of Christ. That’s the *historia salutis*. That’s the gospel. Technically speaking that’s what the gospel is.

The application of the gospel is the *ordo salutis*, the order of salvation. In other words, there is where you find your calling. And there is where you find your regeneration. There’s where you find your conversion. There is where you find your justification, sanctification, and so on. the order of how it is that the Spirit applies the work of Christ to the individual person is the *ordo salutis*, the order of salvation. So what we’re looking at is that really we’re looking here at the application of salvation, the way in which the Spirit brings this to bear upon us.

Now let me just read these verses again to you—11-14. *“In Him we have obtained an inheritance.”* The question is, how have we obtained that inheritance? Well, *“having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory. 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, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory.”*

So we’re looking at the work of the Holy Spirit. And what we need to remember is this. We need to remember that the Spirit brings the future into the present.

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I want to put it like this, because when you think about Paul’s use of language, oftentimes he talks about “in the present age and in the age to come.” In fact I’ve read those two ideas for you just now.

When you think about the present age Paul also for instance in Galatians chapter 1 talks about “*the present evil age.*” So what we think of is that we think of this age. And when we think about the age to come we think about two separate lines as if to show some sort of continuum. We think about two separate lines—this present evil age to come as the heavenlies. And how is it that the heavenlies are brought to bear upon this present age?

Well, Gerhardus Voss in his *Biblical Theology* draws a paradigm for us to consider.

Transcriber’s Note: As Jeff speaks he draws a diagram on the board.

Jeff: And he says that this line is the Incarnation. And in the Incarnation what do we have? We have the life and we have the death and we have the burial. And we have all of those things pertaining to the *historia salutis*. But we also have what? We have the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as part of this. And the outpouring of the Holy Spirit does what? It brings resurrection. It applies the *historia salutis* to the individual man. And the individual man is resurrected from spiritual death. And upon his resurrection, his spiritual resurrection, what happens? Well, he is now living in two ages. He is living in this present evil age. And yet he is living in the age to come. He’s living in the overlap of the ages.

So the age to come, the futurities of the future, have been brought to bear upon the present by virtue of Christ’s resurrection and its application to us. The consummation of all this will be with the coming of the Lord. And this interim period, what we call *the last days*, will come to an end. And we’ll just be living in the age to come, as it were. What we’ve anticipated now will be what there is then for us.

And so there’s a sense in which the Spirit brings the age to come to bear upon us who are living in this present evil age. And that means that the storehouse of God’s blessing—Whoops! I have a slide that I don’t—Oh, that’s because I’m going backwards! (*Laughter*)

Ted Wood: That’s the age that was.

Jeff: That’s right. (*Laughter*) All right, that’s the age that was. I’ll tell you what. The age that I am is causing the problem now. (*Laughter*)

All right. So the hearing and believing, what we find it, it’s almost as if when you think about that passage that I read toward the end of 11-14, one of the things that you grab is that this happens by virtue of hearing the Word. When we hear the Word the Spirit brings this newness of life to us. And we’re sealed with the Holy spirit of promise.

And I want you to think about this. When you think about how it is that the future comes to bear upon the present, it’s simply by the hearing of the Word. Oftentimes I think we have a tendency to think that there’s got to be something more that’s going to impact our world than just the spoken word, just the preached Word.

I’ll never forget. I was with a group of pastors. I was ministering in another town. It was in a gathering of pastors. These were my friends. Five or six of us used to meet once per month.

And I was talking to one guy. And the other guy came up and entered into our circle. And he said to the guy I’d been talking to, the minister I’d been talking to, that “we finally canceled our evening service.”

And the other guy looked at him and said, “Oh man, that’s great! Now you can do something worthwhile with that time.” And I thought to myself, if that’s indicative of what ministers think

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about preaching services, then surely that must be indicative of what people think. And if people and ministers think very little of a preaching service, then they think very little of the means that God uses to bring the future into the present.

And I think that what we need to do is to just let that soak in, because it's the Word that makes the difference. And it's not our word. But it is certainly not absent from our word. We are called to speak the gospel into people's lives. And it's the Spirit's work to bring newness of life. But we're called to share the gospel with people. And that's fundamentally important.

And then this talk about the Spirit's sealing. What is the Spirit's sealing upon our lives? Well, I want you to think about this. I'm going to try to flesh this out for a minute. But I want you to think about this in terms of what we find in the book of Acts.

When we open up to the book of Acts we find Peter in chapter 2 quoting from Joel. And one of the things that he does is that he says that our children “*will dream dreams*” and have visions and utter prophecies and things like that. And the question that many people have when they read that is well, why aren't my children uttering prophecies?

Now I understand that there are some traditions out there that will say, well, my children are uttering prophecies. And we might have a confab about that. But I think that in general we might agree that all children of believers don't dream, prophesy, and utter words of knowledge.

And so the question becomes well, if this is general for all believers, than why isn't it manifest in every believer? and you know, there are some groups that will say, “Well, you have to pursue that. That's really a second work of grace.” I don't buy into that theology, so I'm just going to leave that aside. And if you have questions about it you can certainly ask them.

But I'm going to tell you what I believe is happening in that passage. For instance, when you find that Luke or Paul (I'll go through “All My Children” here; that kind of thing.) (*Laughter*) When you find that Peter quotes from Joel, one of the things you realize is that he's talking about our children being like or akin to a prophet.

Why is he saying that? Well, he's saying that because when you go back to the Old Testament and you look at Amos chapter 3, one of the things that you find is that it says that God does nothing without first telling His prophet. In other words, there's an intimacy that is shared between God and His prophet that is shared with no other like role.

So for instance, when Elisha and Gehazi are sitting there and the Shunamite woman is coming to them,-- Don, do I have that right, or is it Elijah? It's Elisha with Gehazi, isn't it?

Don: Yes; correct.

Jeff: Okay. So when Elisha is sitting there and the Shunamite woman to whom Elisha has given a child in the sense that he's promised her, upon prophecy the child says, “*My head; my head!*”, and then dies. And she comes after Elisha to say, “What is happening here?”

Gehazi is in her way. And Elisha says, “Get out of her way and let her come. The LORD has not revealed this to me.” In other words, this is a surprise, an anomaly if you will. “The LORD hasn't shown me what He's doing here. And so I need to hear it from her.” So the idea that there's an intimacy shared between God and His prophet is crucial.

Now I actually think that if you stop and think about that, it's not a surprise. It's not a surprise that that would be the case. And why is that? Well, I want you to think about the life of a prophet for just a minute.

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Hosea. “Hosea, I want you to go and marry that harlot. The first child will be yours. The second child will be questionable. The third child definitely won’t be yours. And by the way, you’ll have to redeem her from the slave block because she’s going to be a whore.

“And Ezekiel, We’re going to kill your wife. We’re going to have her die and I don’t want you to mourn, because I want your life to be a lesson to the people of Israel about what My marriage was like with them.” The same with Hosea; that was the idea with Hosea, right?

Jeremiah. “Jeremiah, what We’re going to do with you is that We’re going to have you dictate a scroll. The king is going to burn it. We’re going to then throw you into a well.”

You know, I think that when God calls the prophet to lay on his side for 100-plus days without moving, there needs to be some intimacy between God and His prophet in order for that to happen. *(Laughter)* I mean, do you know what I’m saying? Just to minister to the guy. And so when Peter says that “your children will be like prophets,” what he’s saying is not that they will be prophets. What he’s saying is that they will enjoy the intimacy that the prophets alone enjoyed. And by the way, we’ll all enjoy that. Old men will enjoy that, young men will enjoy that. Your sons and daughters, all of them will enjoy that. That’s what he’s saying there.

So this Holy Spirit who is a seal, who is a deposit, a guarantee of better things yet to come, is the seal of that intimacy. That’s why the Holy Spirit can cry out within us and pray within us when we know not what to pray. And He does because there’s an intimacy that we enjoy with God now because of the Spirit. I want you to think about this. Yes?

Ted: I just thought that what you just shared is an illustration of what the prophet wrote earlier concerning the importance of the work. And taking Joel’s prophecy found in Acts 2 on the surface, you would come up with an understanding that children are going to prophesy.

Jeff: Mm-hmm.

Ted: If you really dig into the Word, you find that’s not exactly what that means. So there’s kind of a surface understanding because you’re not studying the Word deeply. And then there’s a deeper, more accurate understanding that comes from studying the Word.

Jeff: Yes, that’s right. Yes. Anybody else before we move on? Jim?

Jim O’Brien: How do you understand the role of the Holy Spirit, as in the question of does He indwell all the people of the Old Testament?

Jeff: Great question. So Jim asked a great question. And what I would say to that (and I’ll just put my view on the board and then you can pick it apart), but my view is that if you are saved the Holy Spirit has to be in you, indwelling you. He has to have regenerated you. And so that means that in the Old Testament and the New Testament alike people are saved with the same gospel. Abraham in Galatians 3:7-9 believed the gospel.

Transcriber’s Note: Galatians 3:7-9, NKJV. *“Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed.’ So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.”*

Jeff: It says that the gospel was preached to Abraham who believed. That’s why he’s a man of faith, the father of the faithful. And so there’s an enabling that has to happen to Abraham. There’s an enabling that has to happen to us. So the Holy Spirit has to make alive.

The question then becomes well, wait a minute. When I look in the Old Testament I don’t see the same level of Christian experience or believing experience that I see in the Old Testament as I

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compare it to the New Testament. And that’s exactly right, and part and parcel of what I was saying about Acts chapter 2.

But what you do find is this.

Transcriber’s Note: Jeff draws a slanted line illustrating Old Testament to New Testament experience increasing.

Jeff: And what you do find is that you find, for instance, along with progressive revelation a progressive experience, a progressive intensifying of spiritual experience. Our problem is this. We read the Psalms, for instance. And we say something like this. As New Testament believers we say, “Boy, I just wish I could attain the experience of David.” Someday, right? And what we really ought to be saying is that where David’s experience ends is where ours begins as New Testament believers because of what is now available to us in terms of our intensified experience with the Holy Spirit.

Now what I’m saying is this. Old Testament believers possessed the Holy Spirit. Their experience of His presence in their lives grew with revelation. As revelation progressed so did the experience of Old Testament believers until it vitally culminates with Christ’s coming and His outpouring of the Holy Spirit, such that believers can now enjoy this culminating experience in the New Testament. I probably shouldn’t have drawn the line increasingly up that way, because there’s a sense in which now that the Holy Spirit is available to us, we access the resources that God has made available to us and bring them to our spiritual experience, albeit by the Holy Spirit’s enabling and help.

But you understand that. So for instance, you know, when Paul talks about strong and weak, one of the things that we have to remember is that I may be particularly weak in a moment and you may be particularly strong. But those roles could reverse, and you would be weak and I would be strong. And the reason for that is that we access that wonderful storehouse of blessings through our faith, right? And if my faith is weak, so too will be my experience. And if my faith is strong, so too will be my Christian experience.

Let me put it one more way, just another way so you can see what I’m talking about. I’ll put it like this. Let’s take Saul in the Old Testament, okay? And let’s take, say, Jesus in the New Testament. And then we’ll take Old Testament believers and New Testament believers.

So we think about Saul. We see that God and the Spirit of God intentionally withdraws Himself from Saul. And when you think about Jesus you think about the Father intentionally withdrawing Himself from Jesus. These are two examples of where in the Scriptures you find God withdrawing Himself.

Now He withdraws Himself from Saul because Saul is reprobate. He withdraws Himself from Jesus so that Old Testament believers and New Testament believers can enjoy the intimacy with God that we’ve been talking about.

Now when Jesus secures the blessings of God’s presence and deposits them in us by virtue of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament believer has a pool of blessings that He can access by faith. If the believer is feeling particularly cold as if his spiritual life is in a dry and desert land, it is not because God has withdrawn from Him. It is because the New Testament believer is not exercising faith and drawing down upon the blessings that we have in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament if you are in Christ God does not draw back from you because you’re not reprobate. And you’re not Jesus who accomplished your salvation. If you’re in the New Testament

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you have what Ephesians 1 says: every blessing that is in Christ in the spiritual places. If you feel like you don't have them, the problem is probably with you and not with Him.

Brave Man: Because you've withdrawn from Him.

Jeff: Right. Which is why James chapter 4 says: *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to You.”* But the idea is not that God is saying, “I'm not going to do this anymore. You've got to make the first move.” The idea is “I haven't moved. And if you draw near to Me you'll be near Me,” right? So does that make sense? Did you want to follow that up with anything, Jim?

Jim: No; that's remarkable.

Jeff: Okay, good.

Matt Reichart: What did you mean by—

Sig Tragard: Hold on, Matt.

Matt: What do you mean by when God withdrawing from Jesus would help the Old Testament people?

Jeff: What did I mean when He withdraws from Jesus to help the Old Testament people?

Matt: Yes.

Jeff: Well, I mean that when I talk about God withdrawing I'm talking about when He's on the cross and He says in Psalm 22: *“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”* He's experiencing the dereliction of His mediatorial role, right?—the abandonment of God for us. And when I talk about the Old Testament and New Testament I'm basically saying that spans the Old and the New Testaments, such that the Old looked forward to the promise of the Messiah. And we look back to that promise being fulfilled in Christ. So the abandonment of the Son for the Old Testament believer is for the same reason as for the New Testament believer. It's for his redemption in Christ. Yes?

Kirk Ellerbusch: Maybe you already said it. What did Jesus mean when He said to His disciples, “I must go so that what the Father promised would come?” How does that relate to the Old and—

Jeff: Yeah, that's great. That's a good question. So Charlie, you got a good one. *(Laughter)* I can't tell if Charlie is smiling or not, Kirk. *(Laughter)* I tried to help you out, but I just don't know.

Sig: Who's Charlie?

Jeff: You know, the guy you introduced earlier. *(Laughter)* Did I get your name right? Your name's Charlie, right?

Charlie: Right.

Jeff: See, I got it right. All right; I'm just going to move on. *(Laughter)* So do you remember—What was your question? *(Laughter)*

Kirk: Don't make me repeat it.

Jeff: I'm not sure I'm going to answer it. But this is the way I heard it and this is the answer I'm going to give; you can follow it up. When Jesus talks to the disciples in the Upper Room in John 14 He says: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in Me will also do the works that I do. And greater works than these He will do, because I am going to the Father.”* Okay, that approximates what you said.

Kirk: Okay.

Jeff: Did you say, “Okay?” *(Laughter)* What I want you to grab from this is not what people typically wonder about. What people typically wonder is, wow! What works am I going to do that are greater than the Son? You know, as if the comparison was between Jesus and His works and

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between us and our works. And that’s not what I think is in view when Jesus says that. Jesus doesn’t have Himself pitted against His people.

What He has helped us with in terms of this context is to see that He will be glorified. And right now these are the pre-glory works that He is doing, that He is engaged in. He will be doing post-glory works, greater works. But those greater works will manifest themselves in His people through the power of the Holy Spirit. But they are Jesus’ works.

And so what the comparison is is Jesus’ pre-glory and post-glory works, no matter how they are manifest, so that with the coming of the spirit these greater works—post-glory works—that we delight to engage in because of the Spirit being with us. And so that’s how I see it. Kirk, you can tweak it if you want to.

Kirk: Well, I don’t know if I can tweak it or anything like this. But what I think you’re saying is that when Jesus said to His disciples, “I must send what the Father has promised to come”—namely, the Holy Spirit,—

Jeff: And the manifestation of greater works through im,—

Kirk: Okay. So the Holy Spirit was always with the Old testament saints, in and indwelt.

Jeff: Yes.

Kirk: Okay.

Jeff: Yes, yes. Yes?

Kevin Cohn: You were saying that when Jesus was on the cross that He said, “Father, why have You forsaken Me?”

Jeff: Yes.

Kevin: Would that also have been the same when He was in the garden? Toward the end there He was down to His last time. Being the Lord that He is, and at the same time Him being human,—

Jeff: Yes. I think that the dereliction of the Son begins in the garden. He prays, and really the heavens are like brass. He knows the Father’s will. And He knows the cup He must drink. Okay? Yes, Matt?

Matt: Just help me understand it too, because my understanding of the Holy Spirit is that He was given at Pentecost. It was something different than back in the Old Testament.

Jeff: Yes.

Matt: But you know, my tendency is to stand in critical judgment of the Old Testament saints. But from my understanding they didn’t have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them all the time. But you’re saying that you feel that they did. In the Old Testament it seems like the Holy Spirit came upon them and then left. But we constantly have the Holy Spirit. Is there a difference, or am I mistaken on that?

Jeff: I think the difference is—and this may be a terrible example because I’m just not a motor head,—but it’s like you have an engine that could go if you let it have its full head. It could go 180 miles an hour, or something like that, right? But you put a regulator on it of some sort so that no matter what, you can only go 120, right? But if you took the regulator off the engine would go that fast, right?

And when you think about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, there’s a regulator on the spiritual experience that the Old Testament believer will enjoy by virtue of the Spirit’s presence. The question is this. What’s the regulator? And what I’m arguing is that the regulator is revelation itself. In other words, the spirit will never give the Old Testament believer a spiritual experience that goes beyond the actual revelation of God that is given at the time.

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So their experience will stay consistent with what God is providing for them by way of revelation until we get to Jesus. And then the regulator is taken off, as it were.

Matt: Okay. So in light of that we need to be more gracious towards the Old Testament believers because they didn’t have the full advantage of the Holy Spirit that we do.

Jeff: Yes. I would say—

Matt: Or the Scriptures either. They didn’t have the whole bible either.

Jeff: That’s right. That’s the progressive part of it. You’re right.

Ted: But I think it would be wrong to say that they didn’t have the whole Holy Spirit. They just didn’t have the whole revelation. But to have any faith at all you have to have the Spirit. You cannot believe without—

Jeff: The full experience of the Spirit, yes.

Ted: and to me the question is what does experience mean? Does that mean my personal experience—my feelings or encounters about that? I mean, I’m looking at the Psalms right now. And I’m seeing experiences that are talked about there that are far beyond where I’ve been in terms of joy and delight in God’s word. So I would say that the Old Testament saints, for anyone to have faith, (the book of Hebrews; Abraham and the rest), they would have had to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit. But you said that they did not have the fullness of revelation. They could hope for the Messiah to deliver.

Jeff: So now I’m going to make a qualification. And the qualification that I’m going to make is this. I want to go back to Matt’s question for just a minute. The qualification I’m going to make is that sometimes I think we can grant exceptions to the experiences of the Psalmists, because when you think of the Psalms what you think of is what Luther says. “*This is my little bible.*” In other words, the Psalms seem to stretch beyond their moments, right? So in Psalm 40 you have the Incarnation. That’s the way Hebrews 10 uses it. In Psalm 16 you have the Resurrection. That’s the way Peter uses it in Acts chapter 2. So you have sort of this full gamut of revelation in the Psalter that is a little bit different than what you find in other places in the Old Testament. And so I think that our experience there in thinking about the Psalmists in some ways can be adjusted.

I want to go back and say something about Pentecost. And sometimes when I teach on this what I’ll do is I’ll put two envelopes up here. And I’ll just put some words up like *justification, bodily resurrection, sanctification*. We’ll put *regeneration*, we’ll put *Incarnation*.

We’ve got all these words up here, right? And the question is, to which envelope do they belong? In this envelope here is the *historia salutis*, or the history of redemption. And this is the *ordo salutis*, or the application of redemption. And we have to ask ourselves. Well, where do these words belong? Where do these ideas belong? Where, for instance, does justification belong? Does it belong here in the *historia*, or the unfolding life of Jesus Christ? Or does it go in this envelope, which is our experience of that?

And the answer is that it goes in this envelope. Justification is part of the *ordo salutis*. What about bodily resurrection? Well, that could be ours. But typically when you think about the bodily resurrection, you think about that going here, in the *historia salutis*—Jesus’ bodily resurrection. When you think about regeneration you think about the *ordo salutis*. You get the idea. The Incarnation: *historia*. Sanctification: *ordo*.

Then what I would do is that I would put up the word *Pentecost*. And I’d say, “Well, where does Pentecost belong? And into which envelope do we put that?” And a lot of people are divided. They want to put that in the *ordo salutis*. This is our experience.

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The point that I would say to you though is that the Pentecost experience actually goes in the *historia salutis*. The Pentecost experience belongs in the *historia salutis*. And I think, for instance, that I am going to give you just one place in Acts chapter 2.

Notice how Peter in his sermon describes what it is that they’re experiencing in terms of this Pentecost moment. I’ll start in verse 29.

“Brothers, I may say to you with confidence that the patriarch David both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us today. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that He would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of Christ, that He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.”

Now notice what he mentions there. There’s the resurrection there. There’s the Ascension. There’s the Cession to God’s right hand. And there is the reception and outpouring of the Spirit. All of that belongs to the *historia salutis*. All of that belongs in the *historia* envelope.

And that’s why Pentecost does not continue on and on and on. And that’s why we can never recapture Pentecost, because it belongs to the one-time *historia salutis* event. So I would put Pentecost in that envelope.

Now if you look at the book of Acts, the book of Acts is going to say that this Pentecost moment is not a singular moment. But it begins in Jerusalem and goes out to Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. That’s Acts 1:8. If you look at the book of Acts it goes in that direction, to the very point that all of these are covered.

And here’s the striking thing about it. If you look at the end of the book of Acts, the end of the book of Acts is a very boring ending. Why? Because Paul is basically on house arrest, right? Now if that book is written before 65, that may just be the way it is. It’s still boring. And if it’s written after 65, then it’s really boring because the death of Paul is not described.

So you see, the problem is that for us to talk that way is to misunderstand the book of Acts. The book of Acts is not about Paul. It’s not about Peter. The book of Acts is about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this *historia salutis* sense, such that Peter and Paul and others are used to take the gospel from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria and to the ends of the earth. Even Stephen’s death is the very first thing that moves the gospel from Judea to Samaria. It’s the death of a man that prompts the persecution that pushes people out, so that people now in Samaria can experience the outpouring of the Spirit, the *historia salutis*. Yes, please?

Sig: What was the passage in Acts that you quoted?

Jeff: 2. And I think I started in verse 29.

Matt: So with that there was obviously a change. There’s something new that happened with the Holy Spirit. So I always viewed the Old Testament saints like crazy, because again my understanding was that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and then He would leave, whereas He abides with us constantly so that we have the power all the time available to us. My understanding was that there was something in this moment here that from that point forward, we do. So is that a proper understanding?

Jeff: Well again, what I’m saying is that this Pentecost moment is sort of—If we were thinking again about this idea of the progressive from the Old to the New, and you’re thinking about the regulator—the regulator being the Scriptures and the revelation of God kind of keeping the

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experience in check with the revelation itself,—once we get to Jesus, the climax of everything that has been said—the climax of revelation,—then Pentecost, notwithstanding the Second Coming, is really the pinnacle event of Jesus’ coming, because it’s at Pentecost that the Spirit is poured out.

And let me put it this way. Let me shift gears. This is just off the cuff, so it may not work. But I want you to think about this.

I remember when Sam Ferguson was a little boy. He talked about Elizabeth coming to power in England. And what she did was that she gave gifts to all the children in the United Kingdom. Every child got a toy when she ascended to power.

So I’m thinking of Ephesians 4. He ascends into heaven and He gives gifts to men, right? And so every child gets a toy.

Now let’s say that Ferguson held on to that toy and passed it down from one child to the next. Let’s say that it’s kind of broken down by the time his great-grandchildren get it. But it reminds them of that day, right? It’s not that they’re necessarily going to play with that toy in each generation. But they’re going to keep that toy as a reminder that the Queen ascended and gave this to that race.

It is sort of an apt illustration. But the *historia salutis* is sort of like that. It’s not something that we should look to repeat with every generation. But it is something that we should look back to, and remember that the reason that we have the intimacy we do with the Spirit now is because of that. That’s the best I can do. All right.

Ted: I’m sorry. But I would object to the idea that the work of the Spirit was kind of given and then taken away, because I’m looking all through Hebrews 11 now. And it says, “By faith, by faith, by faith” that these Old Testament saints did this. Now maybe it’s saying that was not saving faith; maybe that’s great belief or trust. But I’m just looking at Hebrews 11:13. “*These all died in faith.*” I mean, you cannot be “in faith” without being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Jeff: Well let me ask you this, because I think this is what Matt is referring to. And I think Matt is referring to empowerment. So you’re referring to regeneration and constancy of belief. And I think Matt with some of the examples he is giving is referring to empowerment.

So for instance, the Spirit did come on Saul and empowered him for the moment, but withdrew from him. But there were moments of empowerment. But with what you’re talking about I agree. But the idea is—

Ted: Saul is not mentioned in these heroes of the faith.

Jeff: Yes, right.

Ted: So God gave Saul the Spirit for whatever reason, to do whatever. But the fact of the matter is that Abraham, Moses and Abel, all these died in faith, “*not having received the things promised.*” Fair enough. “*But having seen them they greeted them from afar.*” Only by faith can they do that. “*And having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.*” Only by faith can they do that. All these things that he mentions here are—

Jeff: And the subject is that only by faith can we do that. But only by the Holy Spirit can we have faith.

Ted: And that’s the point I’m making.

Jeff: Yes.

Ted: So I see that indeed there were Old Testament folks who were regenerated.

Jeff: Right; yes.

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Ted: And they did not get regenerated because they accepted Jesus as their Savior. They were regenerated because *“having seen and greeted them from afar, having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who seek thus make it clear that they are seeking a better homeland.”*

Jeff: Right. But wouldn't you say that they're embracing the promise of the Savior?

Ted: Oh absolutely! Sure, absolutely. But “Abraham, are you born again?”

“Oh, yes.”

“Did you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior?”

“No.”

Jeff: Right.

Ted: “Are you trusting God to do something incredible with the result that you should develop your relationship with God?”

“Yes, I am. I'm looking for a better home.”

Jeff: And also, don't you think that the idea is that if you walked up to Abraham and said, “Abraham, are you looking for something better, for God to do something incredible to resolve the problem of sin?”, he would point to the sacrifice and say, “ Yes. I'm looking for Someone to come and take the place of that lamb. I don't know who that is going to be. The prophets don't even know. But that's what I'm looking for.”

Ted: Or however God decides to resolve the issue, because anybody living would have to see the great contradiction between their own lives and the ultimate or the perfect. I mean, that's obvious to all people. And every religion has tried to resolve that brokenness between man and eternity that has gotten hold of us. And so Abraham is looking to the God of Abraham to do that.

Jeff: Yes; that's right.

Sig: The passage at the end of Hebrews, maybe that summarizes it. *“And all these, though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God provided something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.”*

Jeff: Yes. And that's part of the experience issue, right?

Sig: That's my point; that's what I'm saying.

Jeff: The Bishop wants to say something.

Ted: I had to get my word in first. *(Laughter)*

Bishop Rodgers: Is it fair to say that God literally has given the experience of faith? But He also gives gifts. Perhaps it's the fact that this guy was giving gifts through the temple. He is very gifted. But that doesn't necessarily imply that he's been gifted with faith. I mean, in the Charismatic renewal, for instance, *(unclear)* Just because somebody says he has gifts , that's no guarantee that a person is saved. Are you a believer?

Jeff: That would be kind of like Saul, right?

Bishop: Yes, that's right.

Jeff: I mean, Saul even prophesies. But he didn't have faith.

Bishop: He doesn't make that identification.

Jeff: Okay. Yes?

Don: I think too that mentioning Saul and Judas, they certainly had gifts. But I don't believe that they were regenerate. And they could be examples not of Hebrews 11 but of Hebrews 6.

Jeff: Sure.

Ted: Oh yeah.

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Jeff: Okay, we’ll just wrap it up there. Thanks for another three verses. *(Laughter) (Applause)*

All right. Why don’t we pray and then we’ll adjourn. Father, thank You for this day, for the time that we could spend in Your word. Thank You, Lord, for Your Holy Spirit who indwells us. Thank You that He is this guarantee of better things yet to come. And yet in the midst of these last days we can enjoy the blessings that we have in Christ Jesus through His presence. Father, we ask that You’ll receive our thanks in Him, and we pray it in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen.