

Signed, Sealed, and Delivered

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Almighty God "signed off", or determined, who He would "call to repentance" before they were born

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he (Christ) might be the firstborn among many brethren (cf. 1Cor. 15:23; Col. 1:18).

³⁰Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified (forgave their sins following repentance; cf. Ac. 2:38); and whom He justified, these He also glorified (Rom. 8:29-20; cf. Isa. 43:7; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise stated; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The "glorification", mentioned in verse 30 above, refers to those who will be transformed at the first resurrection that will occur when Christ returns (cf. 1Cor. 15:51-52). The past tense, "glorified", is used because Almighty God regards the resurrection as an absolute certainty for those who repent of their sins and continue living in accordance with His will until the end of their physical lives.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit which dwells in you (Rom. 8:11).

*Therefore we were buried with him (Christ) through baptism into death (ending our old sinful way of living), that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory (power) of the Father, even so **we also should walk in newness of life** (Rom. 6:4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

In fact, Almighty God considers those who repent of sin, and continue to live in accordance with His will, as simply being asleep because He is going to wake them up in the future.

*But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? ²⁷**He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living....** (Mk. 12:26-27a; emphasis added).*

*Most assuredly, I (Christ) say to you, he who hears my word and believes in Him (Almighty God, the Father) who sent me has everlasting life (again, following repentance of sin; cf. Ac. 2:38), and shall not come into judgment (at the 2nd resurrection; cf. Rev. 20:5-6), but **has passed from (everlasting) death into life (everlasting)** (Jn. 5:24; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

Although Almighty God chose certain individuals from the beginning of His Creation to be part of the first resurrection, everyone else will be in the second resurrection at the end of Christ's millennial rule on earth (cf. Rev. 20:7-15).

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴just as **He chose us in him** (Christ) **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵**having predestined us to adoption** (away from the god of this world, Satan; cf. 2Cor. 4:4) **as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself** (Rom. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14), according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace (willingness to forgive sin), by which He has bestowed favor upon us through the Beloved. ⁷In him (Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to*

the riches of His (the Father's) grace (Eph. 1:3-7; cf. 1:11; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

As Almighty God is not willing that anyone perish forever (cf. 2Pet. 3:9), it is His prerogative who he calls to repentance and when He calls them.

*What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,²³ and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, **which He had prepared beforehand for glory (in the 1st resurrection),²⁴ even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles*** (Rom. 9:22-24; emphasis added).

Having decided a long time ago who He would call to repentance and when He would call them, Almighty God then "seals" these individuals following their request to be forgiven of sin, which is part of repentance and baptism. In other words, baptism is not a ceremony where someone "accepts Christ". Instead, it is an admission of guilt and a request for God's mercy to be extended so that the repentant person can have their past sins forgiven through the shed blood of Christ (cf. Heb. 9:22). Having been baptized, an individual is "sealed with" God's Holy Spirit. The English word "seal" comes from the Greek word (SGD 4972) which includes "a confirmation of one's testimony or promise".

*In Him you also trusted after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation (being 'saved' from everlasting death); in whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise*** (Eph. 1:13; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

However, should someone who has repented and been baptized start neglecting God's word, they

are on a dangerous course that could eventually lead to quenching His Holy Spirit, which is the theme of Christ's parable involving five foolish virgins (see study: Five Foolish Virgins).

*And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by which you were sealed for the day of redemption*** (time of the resurrection from the dead; cf. Rom. 8:11) (Eph. 4:30; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Do not quench the (Holy) Spirit (1Thess. 5:19; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Receiving God's Holy Spirit at one's baptism acts as a deposit toward the full price, which is inheriting everlasting life at Christ's return.

(God the Father) *who also has **sealed us and given us the (Holy) Spirit in our hearts as a deposit*** (2Cor. 1:22; cf. 5:5; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Again, this deposit can be withdrawn if someone returns to a sinful way of life.

*Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, **having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."*** (2Tim. 2:10; emphasis added).

Much of Christianity misses this important connection about being sealed with God's Holy Spirit. Specifically, anyone wishing to be sealed needs to express a deep and genuine concern about departing from iniquity (2Tim. 2:10), which means ceasing from the transgression of God's law (1Jn.3:4).

*.... **the Holy Spirit which God has given to those who obey Him*** (Ac. 5:32b; emphasis added).

(The) *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, **in sanctification** (being set apart for holy conduct) **of the** (Holy) **Spirit, for obedience** and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ* (1Pet. 1:2; cf. Rom. 1:5; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

*Bind up the testimony, **seal the law among my disciples*** (Isa. 8:16; emphasis added).

In other words, Christ was willing to have his blood sprinkled so that everyone's past sins can be forgiven, but NOT so they can continue breaking his Father's law and commandments which is the reason Christ had to die in the first place.

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace (forgiveness) may abound? ²Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? (Rom. 6:1-2; Ed. note in parenthesis).

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the (penalty of the) law (which is everlasting death; cf. Rom. 6:23a) but under grace? Certainly not! (Rom. 6:15; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The default position in much of Christianity is that mankind is incapable of obeying God's law and commandments; therefore Christ "fulfilled the law" by keeping it for us, which is contrary to many scriptures on this subject.

For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. ¹²It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' ¹³Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' ¹⁴But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in

*your heart, **that you may do it*** (Dt. 30:11-14; emphasis added).

By the time of Christ's return there will be one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed by God's Holy Spirit, along with an innumerable multitude.

Then I (John) saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, ³saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." ⁴And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed (Rev. 7:2-4; Ed. note in parenthesis).

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb (of God; Jesus Christ), clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands (Rev. 7:9; cf. Lev. 23:40; Jn. 12:13; Ed. note in parenthesis).

However, without God the Father's intervention in their lives, the majority of mankind will continue to reject His word and authority with impunity.

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be (Rom. 8:7).

Sadly, by walking contrary to God's word, people only harm themselves.

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death (Prov. 14:12; cf. 16:25).

Eventually, when mankind has reached the zenith of rebellion, everyone who is not sealed by God's Holy Spirit will begin to experience the consequences of their sinful behavior.

*They (angels meting out punishment) were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but **only those men who do not have the seal of God** "figuratively" on their foreheads (Rev. 9:4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).*

"Figuratively" sealing, or marking foreheads, is not a new concept. Those who have God's Holy Spirit are identified this way not only in the writings of the New Testament, but also during the Old Testament.

And the Lord said to him (man with the writer's inkhorn), "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done in it." ⁵To the others He said in my hearing, "Go after him through the city and kill; do not let your eye spare, nor have any pity." (Eze. 9:4-5; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Jesus Christ was sealed with his Father's Holy Spirit when he took the sins of the world upon himself and buried them in the waters of baptism.

Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while he prayed, the heaven was opened. ²²And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove (because the Holy Spirit is not a person; see study, "The Doctrine of the Trinity – A Provable Fact or Deeply Embedded Fiction") upon him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in you I am well pleased" (Lk. 3:21-22; Ed. note in parenthesis).

*Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of man will give you, because **God the Father has set His seal in him** (Christ) (Jn. 6:27; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).*

In conclusion, a very long time ago, Almighty God decided, or "signed off", on who He would call to repentance and when He would call them. Following their repentance, He forgave them and they were "sealed" with His Holy Spirit, which is His power or glory and not a third person. Providing these people continue living a new life in accordance with His will, they will be "delivered" from everlasting death to everlasting life, which will occur at the time of the first resurrection in conjunction with Christ's return (cf. Mt. 10:22; 24:13; Mk. 13:13). Everyone who is not part of this first resurrection will be brought back to life at the end of Christ's millennial rule on earth and begin a process of judgment, which can lead to everlasting life based on the decisions these people make (cf. Jn. 5:24-29; Rev. 20:4-6).

Those who are in receipt of God's Holy Spirit can assist anyone that Almighty God is already working with (cf. 2Cor. 1:24). However, those with God's Holy Spirit must be mindful that they are not empowered to sign, seal, and deliver anyone. Only God the Father does this.

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