

**Series: "Ephesians: Discovering Our Riches in Christ"**

**"Diamonds REALLY Are Forever!"**

Ephesians 1:13-14

February 17, 2008

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We just recently celebrated Valentine's Day. On this past Friday evening a few of our Life Groups sponsored our wonderful Valentine's Banquet (and by the way let me be 'another' one that says 'thank you' to everyone involved for the excellent job and enjoyable evening with friends AND uplifting our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.) The Jazz trio; the Quartet; the 'oldie-wed game (Clint & Kim West - you are too much!); the photos; my wife singing to me; it was all just delightful!

I'm sure many of you gave to and received gifts from your loved one this Valentine's Day as a way of expressing your love to each other...and I commend you for doing so. By the way...

What do you suppose the #1 gift given on Valentine's Day is?

Flowers!

Candy

Evening Out

Jewelry - **Diamonds**

Marilyn Monroe is still right - "Diamonds are a girl's best friend."

Are you aware that just a few years ago on February 13<sup>th</sup> of 2004 (the day before Valentines Day) the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics made public the discovery of the world's largest diamond! Guys, if you really want to impress the love of your life on Valentine's Day get her this diamond! She won't be able to wear it and you'll have to have a pretty deep wallet to afford it because this 10 billion trillion trillion carat monster has a cost that's, well let's just say, astronomical!

Here is an image of what it looks like:

**SLIDE** –



The fairly newly discovered cosmic diamond is a chunk of crystallized carbon 50 light-years from the Earth in the constellation Centaurus. It is 2,500 miles across and weighs 5 million trillion trillion pounds, which translates to approximately 10 billion trillion trillion carats, or a one followed by 34 zeros. Oh, they named it "Lucy".

When asked to estimate the value of the cosmic jewel, Ronald Winston, CEO of Harry Winston Inc., indicated "*Who knows. It is definitely too big to wear!*" It's the mother of all diamonds"

The diamond star completely outclasses the largest diamond on Earth...

**SLIDE** – Star of Africa



The 530-carat Star of Africa resides in the Crown Jewels of England. It was cut from the largest diamond ever found on Earth, a 3,100-carat gem.

Puts a little twist to our old Nursery Rhyme...

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are.  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
How I wonder what you are!

...doesn't it

I hope you will recall that we have been studying the Book of Ephesians on Sunday mornings and finding out that as large as this diamond star is and as rich as it would make someone...it doesn't hold a candle to the spiritual riches we have because we are 'in Christ!'

**SLIDE** –Pg. 1156 **Diamonds REALLY Are Forever!**

Take your Bibles, please and open them to the New Testament book of Ephesians 1 as we look today at “*Diamonds REALLY Are Forever*”. If you didn’t bring your Bible with you today I would encourage you to reach forward and grab that burgundy colored Bible and turn to page 1156. (1<sup>st</sup> Service – Video Café – Raise hands for a Bible and someone will come by and hand you one! Keep it up!)

Ephesians 1 starts by addressing the saints/Christians/believers in Christ! So this book is written to we who are currently saved/saints/Christians! And these first 14 verses are our “*Spiritual Diamonds*” showing us 9 different spiritual blessings that we received when we became a Christian. There are more, but 9 grand ones listed here.

And to help us see WHO blessed us and WITH WHAT blessing we received and WHEN we received this blessing we have been using this chart with the hopes it will reveal some understanding of what is in these verses. Look at it with me...

**SLIDE – The Spiritual Blessings**

Verses	Who?	With What?	When?
vv. 3-6	The Father	He chose us He adopted us He graced us	Eternity Past
vv. 7-12	The Son	He redeems us He shows us He directs us	Past/Present and Future
vv. 13-14	The Spirit	He saves us He seals us He secures us	Past/Present and Future

We have already looked specifically at the three blessings the Father gives to us! And we have also looked at the three blessings the Son gives to us and today we will see the three blessing the Spirit gives to us.

READ vv. 13-14

What is the first blessing the Holy Spirit gives to us? He saves us! And the wondrous aspect of verse 13 is it tells us how I get saved! I.e. - what is the process God uses to get me saved? You will like this!

**SLIDE – How Do I Get Saved?**

v. 13 - I hear the word...but let me just take the liberty to tie some passages of Scripture together so you can see the entire sequence that God has set in motion when it is time for someone to get saved; to accept Christ as their Savior; to become a Christian.

Let’s start where Scripture starts and go from there...it all begins in the very beginning.

**SLIDE –**

1. God the Father chooses me

READ (v. 4)

**SLIDE –**

2. God the Father draws me to Christ (John 6:44)

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.

**SLIDE –**

3. God the Father sends someone to me (Romans 10:14-15)

How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

**SLIDE –**

4. That someone shares the gospel with me

READ v. 13

Remember, the gospel means “good news”. It is unfolded for us in I Corinthians 15:1-5.

**SLIDE –**

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

**SLIDE – What is the ‘gospel’?**

- Christ died for my sins
- Christ was resurrected from the dead

SLIDE –

5. I hear the gospel (Romans 10:14-15)

How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in?  
And how can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

SLIDE –

6. The Spirit renews/enlightens me (Titus 3:5)

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.”

SLIDE –

7. I believe the gospel (Romans 10:14-15)

How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in?  
And how can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

READ v. 13 ‘having believed...’

Let’s look at this for a moment. “*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed”* That’s an aorist participle. In other words, at the same time that I was listening to the truth, something was responding to it within me. There was a response coming back to it. It wasn’t three weeks later. It wasn’t five days later. The aorist tense means that in a specific time there was a response back to what I clearly understood coming from the Word of God. Something inside of me was responding, and that response is called “belief.” It says, “...*having believed*...”

**Now what does it mean to believe?** I wish just for the sake of argument we could go up and down the rows and ask you what you thought it meant to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. So many people think that belief is only associated with understanding. No, we hear it with understanding. When we believe, we respond in belief. Well, what is that belief? First of all the word “believe” is pisteuo. It means “faith.” In other words it means “to put my full trust and my full faith into Jesus Christ,” the Jesus Christ who is God’s Son. The Scripture clearly brings that out in the gospel of our salvation.

But what does that mean?

Well, let’s take it one more step. Pisteuo comes from the word peitho. The word peitho means “to be firmly persuaded to the point that you’re willing to abandon and surrender and obey that which you’ve heard.” So...what does it mean to believe? Does that mean I just simply believe what you say? I understand it, and I believe what you say? No. It’s more than that. Having heard the message we’re so persuaded by it that we’re willing to turn and surrender to it. How do I receive the Lord Jesus Christ? By opening myself in full surrender and by believing in Him. That is the way I receive Him into my life.

Okay, it is at this point that...

SLIDE –

8. I call on Jesus Christ to save me (Romans 10:14-15)

How, then, can they call on the One they have not believed in?  
And how can they believe in the One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?

SLIDE – REPEAT Main Points...

ILL -

My life (and yours)!

He chose me

He began to draw me

He sent someone to me

That person shared the gospel

I heard the gospel

The Spirit enlightened me

I believed the gospel

I called on the Lord and I was saved.

That’s how it happened in my life...and yours! Think about yours!

He saves us! That is a blessing that comes from the Spirit!

A second blessing that comes from the Spirit is...**He seals us!**

READ v. 13

## SLIDE – What Does It Mean To Be Sealed?

What does it mean to be sealed with the Spirit? Undoubtedly this is a reference to the ancient practice of sealing letters or other objects with a sealing wax and impressing the wax with a seal worn on a ring and bearing an identifying image. The use of the seal always involved three specific ideas:

### SLIDE –

- Ownership
- Protection
- Delivery

### ILL. -

I have a letter I want to send. I first place this letter into an envelope. Now, my letter is no longer an independent entity floating around by itself. It is joined to the envelope. And when I moisten the glue on the flap and close it, I have sealed the letter inside the envelope. It is now secure and no one can open it except the person whose name is on the envelope.

- THEN I address the envelope
- THEN I put sufficient postage on it.

More...My letter is backed by the postal system that has a tremendous network of technology and people to make sure that my letter is delivered to the proper address. This system even has security people whose job it is to make sure that no one messes with my letter on the way to the destination.

### APPL -

When I believed in Jesus Christ as my Savior, the Holy Spirit placed me inside the envelope called Jesus Christ. I was ‘baptized’ into Christ.

The “glue” of the Holy Spirit sealed me and I don’t have to worry about reaching my intended destination (HEAVEN) because Christ put the right amount of postage necessary to get me there (HIS BLOOD). I have all the postage I will ever need to get me there!

Since God the Father owns the Postal Service and since all His employees who work for the Postal Service carefully watch over the mail, He can guarantee that the delivery will be made. And to go one step further the Postmaster marks us as “Registered Mail” because my name is written down in the Lamb’s Book of Life and He tracks my every move!

The whole idea is I have ‘safe delivery’ to my destination - HEAVEN!

Jesus paid the price;  
The Holy Spirit Sealed me;  
God the Father has the system in place to get me to my destination!

So, I can go home and sleep like a baby because I’m guaranteed delivery at the precise time I’m supposed to be there!

THAT is what it means to be sealed!

- Ownership
- Protection
- Delivery

**He saves us!** That is a blessing that comes from the Spirit!

**He seals us!** That is a second blessing that comes from the Spirit.

READ v. 14

A third blessing that comes from the Spirit is...**He secures us!**

## SLIDE – How Does The Spirit Secure Me?

READ v. 14

Do you see that word “deposit”?

**SLIDE – Deposit (“arrabon”) - earnest/first installment!**

In the Greek it is the word “*arrabon*” - earnest/first installment!

I.e. - It was what you and I would call today - earnest money!

ILL - buying a home (earnest money down)

Want it; serious about it; rest will come later.

THEN - pledge; promise that the rest will be there!

I.e. - The Holy Spirit’s presence in my life indicates that God will not abandon me. He will come and take me home with to be with Him. This is what we call “Assurance of Salvation.” We can be totally assured that we are going to heaven for eternity because we have the Holy Spirit in us as the “earnest” or “pledge” of God that He will come back (at the redemption of those who are God’s possession - either when we die or when we are raptured) and take us to be with Him forever!

## SLIDE – Rings

### ILL - Carol

As a pledge of his intentions to marry here and love her for the rest of his life!

- Relationship has just gotten under way
- A lot more to come
- He is pledging his commitment
- He is promising a future together
- Holding the wedding ring in reserve until the wedding day

God says, “When I saved you I gave you a pledge of My commitment because I want you to be my bride. You belong to Me, and even though we are not together right now, I will come for you and fulfill all my promises to you.”

## SLIDE – Wedding photo

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