

“The Power of A Promise” [Pentecost Sunday]

2 Corinthians 1:20-22 & Titus 3:4-8



Pentecost Sunday!

We all have things we trust and we all seek guarantees in life. Most of us have had to verify our signatures by going to a Notary. We all want certainty in our lives and relationships. Promises are a part of this desire.

Yet as humans we often fail to live up to our promises. We nuance them by adding loopholes.

Garrison Church of God

June 5, 2022

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If you have ever obtained a substantial loan from a lender they often require collateral holdings of property to protect their investment in in the loan. The holding of that collateral property is surety of your promise to repay.

2 Corinthians 1:20-22 [ESV]

19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not **Yes and No**, but in him it is **always Yes**.

20 **For all the promises of God find their Yes in him.** That is why it is through him that **we utter our Amen** to God for his glory.

21 And it is God who **establishes** us with you in Christ, and has **anointed** us,

22 and who has also **put his seal** *[sphragizo]* on us and **given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee**

[arrabon].

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2 Corinthians 1:20-22 & Titus 3:4-8



This is a royal signate ring from around 800 BC. It is silver with a cut stone set into the bezel. Such rings were used to verify or authenticate documents and mark property.

In 2 Corinthians 1:22 Paul uses 2 words that are similar in meaning but divergent in their linguistic origins. One is a common Greek word that was used widely in Greek culture of the time “*sphragizo*”.

It is the word translated most often as “seal” it had roughly the same meaning as our concept of notary seal. It was an authentication seal. It either verified the identity of the person making a contract, or verified that something was accurate. Its root meaning in Greek was to “fence off” or “protect”.

Ephesians 4:30 [ESV]

25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

30 And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 Let **all bitterness** and **wrath** and **anger** and **clamor** and **slander** be put away from you, **along with all malice**.

32 **Be kind** to one another, **tenderhearted**, **forgiving** one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

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In the Bible the concept of “sealing” something or some person was to “protect” or mark them as special. God seals His people Israel, but they offend him by pursuing other gods and doing wickedness. This leads to God’s judgement but eventual restoration.

Paul indicates that we grieve the Holy Spirit who is our seal of God’s presence and approval when fill our hearts with bitterness, revenge, unresolved anger, accusations and complaints, and worst of all malice toward others. Paul draws this idea for Isaiah 63:10.

Isaiah 63:7-11 [ESV]

7 I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel that he has granted them according to his compassion, according to the abundance of his steadfast love.

8 For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely." And he became their Savior.

9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

10 But they rebelled and **grieved** his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

11 Then he remembered the days of old, of Moses and his people. Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit,

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To be sealed by God's Spirit demands of us a full commitment to the the mind of Christ. The word for grieve in Isaiah 63:10 is a word which means to “cause pain”, when translated into Greek in the Septuagint they used a word which means to “jab with a pointed stick”. In Ephesians 4:30 Paul uses a Greek word that means “to fill another sadness”. When we live a life that is contrary and antagonistic, we fill the Holy Spirit with sadness and sorrow.

2 Corinthians 5:4-7 [ESV]

4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened — not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee *[arrabon]*.

6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord,

7 for we walk by faith, not by sight.

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This is an original flour sack for Dakota Maid Flour, from 1922 through the 1930's. The North Dakota Mill was established by the state of North Dakota to protect ND farmers from unscrupulous mills in Minneapolis. It became very successful and now pays a large dividend into ND state coffers.

My wife, Terry, will not allow me to buy any other flour but Dakota Maid. It is because of the quality of their flour. She just doesn't trust anyone else's. This trust was earned when the State of North Dakota guaranteed the cost of start up for a flour mill that allowed ND farmers to by pass Minnesota millers who shorted farmers through freight cost.



Titus 3:4-8 [ESV]

4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,

5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

8 The saying is **trustworthy**, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

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To everyone's surprise the State mill became a successful business and has paid a dividend to ND's budget for the trust placed in them. God has invested His Holy Spirit in us and as he is poured into our hearts there is a dividend to God's kingdom. Isaiah 44:1-4



Isaiah 44:1-4 *3 [ESV]

1 "But now hear, O Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen!

2 Thus says the LORD who made you, who formed you from the womb and will help you: Fear not, O Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen.

3 For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.

4 They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams.

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God Has promised us abundant life in Him as we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. The effects are identified in Isaiah 32:14-18 – our lives will from being barren to a garden of righteousness and a lush forest of justice.

A garden characterized by righteousness that produces peace. And results in quiet assurance and and trust in God.



Isaiah 32:14-18 *15 [ESV]

14 For the palace is forsaken, the populous city deserted; the hill and the watchtower will become dens forever, a joy of wild donkeys, a pasture of flocks;

15 until the **Spirit is poured upon us from on high**, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.

16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.

17 And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.

18 My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

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LLOYD'S
LLOYD'S OF LONDON

When we think of a guarantee company we think of Lloyd's of London. But there history before 1871 was at times sketchy. The British Government stepped in to establish the credibility investment firm establishing regular business practices. The motto of Lloyd's is “*Fidentia*” or “confidence”.

The word Paul uses in 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5 and Ephesians 1:14 is “*arrabon*” it is a loan word from Hebrew.

Lloyds of London began in 1686 in Lloyd's Coffee House. The owner brokered deals between investors and marine shippers to protect investments. Lloyd's is not technically an insurance company but an investment clearing house specializing in risk management.

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Ephesians 1:11-14 [ESV]

11 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,

12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, **were sealed** [*sphragizo*] with the promised Holy Spirit,

14 who is the **guarantee** [*arrabon*] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

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Cuthbert Eden Heath [1859-1939] Worked his way up to a Syndicate leader in Lloyds [group of insurance investors] his famous telegram after the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake when most insurance brokers and and companies were trying to use loopholes to avoid paying claims made Lloyd's reputation. "Pay all our policyholders in full, irrespective of the terms of their policy" The pay out for Lloyd's investors was \$50 million [well over a billion dollars now]. But it established the credibility of Lloyd's. Mr. Heath also established the yearly audit of all investors to make sure that Lloyd's could pay claims.

The word Paul uses in 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5 and Ephesians 1:14 is "*arrabon*" it is a loan word from Hebrew. It only appears 3 times in the New Testament it is a word that means "pledge" or "security". It was an item of property left in another's possession to establish the credibility of a promise. "

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We have often seen promises made that were broken no matter the best intentions of the person who made the promise. If you are anything like me, you have on occasion had to apologize when you failed to live up to a promise. As we grow older, we come to understand the nuances [“yes and no” nature] of promises.



As children a broken or even “nuanced” promise is heartbreaking, no matter the intent of the adult making the promise. It is especially painful when that adult is a parent. Pa

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Paul in 2 Corinthians 1:20-22 informs us that in Christ the promise is not nuanced as in so many of our human promises. Paul admits to the Corinthian church that even in his own case his promises to them have been nuanced. In contrast he states that God's promise to us in Christ is “yes” and not “yes and no”. The work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts is the surety of God's promise.



The Holy Spirit is given to Christians as the guarantee of salvation.