

Church, Praise The Holy Spirit

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 20 September 2026

Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0:00] Our sermon passage for today is Ephesians chapter 1, verses 11 through 14.

! This is the third and final section of this glorious doxology with which Paul opens up this letter.! We focused on the Father, then we focused on the Son.

Now, today, we have the joy of keeping our focus on praising God on the Holy Spirit. Please follow along, verses 11 through 14.

God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, sufficient word for you and me. 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 whom 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.

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands forever.

[1:39] Let's pray. Oh Lord, we praise You that You have created all things by Your Holy Spirit who goes forth to accomplish Your will.

We praise You that Your Holy Spirit has breathed out the very words of the Bible, and it's Your Holy Spirit who now helps the preacher and helps Your beloved church to receive the word as from Christ, the living word of God the Creator.

And it's Your Holy Spirit who takes the gospel as it is preached and does the miraculous work of bringing life to those who are dead, causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the good news of Jesus Christ to save sinners like us.

Lord, we confess we are powerless on our own. We pray for Your glory that Your Holy Spirit will work in power through Your word as it is preached.

Amen. Well, here in Colorado, we're about as far as you can get from the ocean, but picture that you traveled east or west or south to one of the bodies of water, the Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific Ocean or the Atlantic Ocean, and there you are standing looking out over it all.

[3:01] And then someone hands you a little match box. You're going to take that match, scrape it on the box, and you throw it out into the ocean. How long until that match is extinguished by this great body of water?

That match probably doesn't even have a chance of hitting the water, does it? The vapor, the mist from the ocean spraying up will probably put it out. A pastor from centuries ago named John Owen, in reflecting on the Holy Spirit, marveled with that illustration in mind.

Quote, among all the glorious works of God, next unto that of redemption by Jesus Christ, my soul does most admire this of the Spirit, in preserving the seed and principle of holiness in us, as a spark of living fire, in the midst of the ocean, against all corruption and temptations, wherewith it is assaulted, attacked, and fought against.

That's the end of Owen's quote. Do you get what he's saying? He's saying next to the redemption that Christ accomplished, it's the work of the Spirit to keep a faith in Christ alive inside of me.

The Holy Spirit protects that small spark of spiritual life inside believers like you and me, keeping it burning like a match in the midst of a massive ocean of sin and trials all around the Christian.

[4:42] Isn't that marvelous? So beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, today I invite you along with Paul who invites the church in Ephesus and every church that will read this, we have the joy of praising the Holy Spirit together.

In this passage we'll see four reasons to praise God, focused on the person of the Holy Spirit. I'll give them to you quickly so you know what they are and you can see them, verses 11 through 14.

Number one, it's the Holy Spirit who is working all things. Number two, it's the Holy Spirit who leads you and me to trust in Christ. Number three, it's the Holy Spirit who seals you and me in Christ. And four, it's the Holy Spirit who guarantees your inheritance in Christ. So church, praise the Holy Spirit. Praise the Holy Spirit.

Number one, praise God the Holy Spirit who works all things according to God's will. Look at verse 11. His flow through each person of the Trinity continues, saying, In Him also we have obtained an inheritance being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.

[6:04] Well, how do we know the focus is now shifting to the Holy Spirit? Well, we're told this in verse 13. Let your eyes drop down to verse 13. This is the work of the Holy Spirit who seals you.

But also, when He says in verse 11, Him who works all things. This is how the rest of the Bible teaches us the Holy Spirit works. This is what is ascribed to the third person of the triune God. The Holy Spirit works all things according to the counsel of God's will. Think of, for example, Genesis 1.26. The triune God, here's His will.

He says in the first person plural, Let us make man in our image, in our likeness. That's the will of the one God. And then how does the Bible describe the way that God did that?

The rest of the Bible says it's the Holy Spirit who accomplishes this. Psalm 104.30 says, You send forth your spirit. They are created. You renew the face of the earth.

[7:13] Alluding back to the description in Genesis, how there's the face of the earth covered in this deep, chaotic water. And the Spirit of God hovers over it, bringing forth the creation.

Job 33.4 says, It's the Spirit of God who made me and the breath of the Almighty who gives me life. The Holy Spirit is the person who works all things according to the counsel of God's will.

1 Corinthians 12.11 says, It is the one and same Spirit who is in each believer who works these things. Specifically, he says, It's the Spirit who works all these good gifts from the Father within the local church, the local body, for the good of God's people.

In verse 11, we read that, In Him, in God, through Jesus Christ, we are, the words here are literally, we are assigned an inheritance.

inheritance. It's a verb that refers to, to casting a lot, to being assigned an inheritance, to be given a portion. For the people in the church that were familiar with the Old Testament, and for us as well, this is the way that the division of the promised land was described.

[8:34] So in the book of Joshua, God leads them into the promised land and there's a casting of lots. But that's a way of saying, it's not for any tribes to fight with one another, we're going to trust the Lord will assign the portion to each one.

And that's how he describes our union to Christ. We are assigned as an inheritance to Christ. Believers are claimed as Jesus Christ's allotted portion.

His name, Jesus, is Yeshua. It's Joshua. He comes to fulfill this, this apportioning, and we are the ones that he takes as his gift from God.

Verse 11 goes on, having been predestined. Here's this word one more time. So this word was used earlier in describing how the Father, God the Father, elected you. He predestined you for adoption.

And now in describing the Spirit going forth and working all things, we're told, who is it that the Spirit calls and regenerates? It's the same group of people, those whom God foreordained, whom he determined in advance, who he marked out beforehand.

[9:45] And that word is fascinating. I learned this week, it comes from two words being put together. The first word is pro, which means before. The second word, it's going to sound familiar in English, it's horizon.

And it's where we get the word for horizon. So it means that the boundary markers of the horizon, where this line will stop, has been determined before.

See what he's saying is that the Holy Spirit is accomplishing, he's applying, he's working out those borders, those boundaries that God decreed long ago.

God drew out the lines of human destiny. Who would believe in him? Who would hear his gospel? Who would believe in Christ and trust in him before time even began?

And that's the purpose that the Holy Spirit is now going forth to accomplish. He does this, verse 11 says, according to the purpose of him who works all things.

[10:43] According to the purpose, that's the plan. It's God's design, his decree. I love how the Holy Spirit is called here, him who works all things.

It's really like one combined term describing the Holy Spirit. We could say this is a name for the Holy Spirit. Word for word, it would read like this. The all things working one.

That's the Holy Spirit. The all things working one. Who is operating, who's making effectual, and who's producing everything according to the counsel, the purpose, the intent of the triune God. According to God's will. It's literally according to God's desire, his inclination, his pleasure. You see how the Holy Spirit is described in Scripture?

The Holy Spirit actively orchestrates all things that God has ordained. He orchestrates the daily steps each of his people will take, even before they believe.

[11:55] He is the one who opens doors for ministry at some points in time and closes them at other times. The Holy Spirit is the person working out God's counsel in time and space.

Paul knew this when he's describing the Holy Spirit as the one who is working out all things according to God's counsel. He knew how active the Holy Spirit was in doing this. We read in Acts 19 how that's when Paul first traveled to Asia Minor and arrived at Ephesus.

But there was a close call where he wanted to go to Ephesus sooner. It's three chapters before that. We read in Acts 16 verses 6 and 7 now when they had gone through the region of Galatia they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

Remember Ephesus is the gateway to all of Asia. So Paul and Luke and their company tried to go into Ephesus once. Then they tried to go to another city but the Spirit did not permit them.

So I looked up how much time would have passed between Acts 16 and Acts 19 when they actually did arrive in Ephesus. And it's four to five years. Well we just celebrated recently this church being planted four years ago.

[13:15] And you might think back on your own life four years ago ten years ago and I find myself doing this because I'm not wise. God is all wise. But we can easily look back and think man why didn't this or that and we can start to question ourselves and wish we could have done things differently.

At least that's how I do in my flesh. Paul could have done that with Ephesus. He could have said man I wish I could have gotten to Ephesus five years ago. Maybe it felt like even a waste of time here I'm doing these other getting beat up thrown in prison.

No this was God's decree and it was the Holy Spirit orchestrating working all things. So that when it was time Paul would arrive in Ephesus he would preach the gospel he would make disciples for two or three years the Lord would plant a church this church would be a demonstration of the power of God toppling over the demons that had a hold of that city to the whole city is now praising the demon God and we have a spiritual battle over Ephesus.

That was the moment that the Spirit orchestrated the right time to apply the gospel so that those believers in that city at that time would hear and believe.

Isn't it glorious how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all accomplish their will each fulfilling this beautiful ministry to redeem us.

[14:39] What the Father purposed the Son executed and the Spirit works out. all that the Father willed the Son accomplished and the Holy Spirit applies.

The Spirit arranges all things for the salvation of those that the Son redeemed to ensure that God's counsel would be realized. Isn't this glorious church?

This is how Father, Son, and Spirit work to ensure that you will be adopted by the Father in every aspect of the Christian life from the moment that you first heard the gospel explained to you to the final breath that you and I take on this earth.

It happens by the active work of the Holy Spirit who works all things according to the counsel of God. Praise God the Holy Spirit church who works all things according to God's will.

Number two, praise God the Holy Spirit who leads you to trust in Christ. Praise God the Holy Spirit who leads you and me to trust in Christ.

[15:53] Look with me at verse 12 and the beginning of verse 13 next. According to the counsel of God's will that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of his glory.

Verse 13 says in him you also trusted after you heard the word of truth the gospel of your salvation in whom also having believed.

You and I can only understand the gospel if it's revealed to us directly by the Holy Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit who must lead you and me to trust in Christ.

Paul says the Spirit is working all things according to the counsel of God's will and part of that working resulted in Paul as a Jew believing and now it's also resulting in the Gentiles the people of Ephesus receiving the gospel trusting in Christ.

1 Corinthians 2 9 and 10 confirms how we cannot believe without the Spirit leading us to trust in Christ. Here Paul writes He's saying that it's the Holy Spirit who shines a light on us.

[17 : 24] He illumines us. He reveals the glory of God, the righteousness of Christ, our sin, our need for a Savior and He's the one who draws us to God to trust in Him.

It's the Holy Spirit who leads you and me in this way. Jesus had already declared this is how you will believe. In John 16 verses 7 and 8 and 14 Jesus told His disciples the helper this is referring to the Holy Spirit he will come to you after I depart I will send Him to you and when He has come He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment He will glorify me for He will take of what is mine and declare it to you.

So when you hear the gospel this is because Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit to declare and minister the gospel to you as a helper as one who will advocate!

to draw us to God to lead us to trust in Christ in Acts 16 verses 14 we get another example of how God does this Lydia heard us preaching Luke wrote and then he records by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the Lord opened her heart to heed to pay attention to the things spoken by Paul and Lydia believed and he says the same thing now of the church having heard the word of truth the gospel of your salvation you believed also having heard this to believe the gospel we must hear it listen to it understand it by the ministry of the spirit and then his spirit will cause us to respond with faith and obedience you heard the word of truth the gospel of your salvation the good news of your deliverance your preservation your safety in

Christ he uses the word gospel here evangelion that's where we get the word evangel evangelize evangelize I learned this week it was not originally a religious term though it referred to official imperial announcements so back in Rome if the new Caesar was born or a major general came back to the capital announcing a great victory in battle or there's been a change in power now a new ruler has taken the throne each of those would be an occasion to send the messengers out and declare the evangelion the good news the big breaking news for all to hear across the empire well the news for the church the gospel is the gospel of your salvation this is the greatest news that we need to care about we don't care about what's happening at the temple of Diana or to

[20 : 35] Caesar in our setting we don't care about too much what's going on with oil and prices of gas or artificial intelligence or the president or the elections in Colorado in November we don't even care too much about the Broncos the news we care about here in the church is the gospel of Jesus Christ there's no greater announcement there's no greater word of truth to declare Jesus was born Jesus won the battle Jesus ascended on high Jesus rules over his church and it's the Holy Spirit who trusts you and me to receive and embrace and rejoice and sing about this great gospel news Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3 no one can believe unless they are first born of the Spirit 1 Corinthians 12 3 no one can say that

Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit church praise God the Holy Spirit who leads you and me to trust in Christ number three praise the Holy Spirit of promise who seals you in Christ praise the Holy Spirit of promise who seals you in Christ verse 13 continues having believed you were sealed with the Spirit of promise other translations also handle it very well by saying the promised Holy Spirit Jesus said I will send you my spirit the spirit of promise we read in Acts 2 33 that having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit he poured out his spirit which you now see and hear so the Holy

Spirit was promised to Christ and Christ now from his session seated at the right hand of God sends forth his spirit to his church he uses this language of as the spirit is poured out on the church on those who believe in Christ they are now sealed it means you are stamped you are marked you are secure how is this so it's with the spirit of promise the spirit there it's it's the wind the breath of God the inner life the spirit of God himself now who rests on his people making them God's holy ones in whom he can dwell that verb to be sealed to the people of Ephesus would have had a big importance to them it would have reminded them of how they trade with other nations and you can picture yourself being on a big ship in the middle of the Mediterranean ocean and on this ship are a bunch of logs that were chopped down somewhere north of

Israel by the Phoenicians maybe and sent on this ship to be brought to Asia Minor and to know who owned this lumber who owned this good that's being sent to another place they would take either a piece of clay that was still wet and soft or wax and they would bind the ropes with that seal and on that wax that was soft or the clay they would take a signet ring of the owner and mark it that meant three things it meant ownership authenticity and security no one gets to come and steal this lumber this product that's being shipped it's authentic from that region that you bought it from and those that are in charge of the shipping have to keep it secure all the way and he takes this term that the Ephesians know about and he says that's what the

Holy Spirit does in you the church the Holy Spirit seals you who are in Christ you bear God's mark of ownership by the Spirit in you we have a special blessing a special privilege because after Christ completed his work and breathed out the Holy Spirit the ministry of the Holy Spirit is it's the same spirit from the old covenant to the new but what's new about the new covenant is that the Spirit has been poured out over the church in a way that the church is the corporate temple of God wherever we gather to meet in his name he is with us the church by the ministry of the spirit unites us in a special spiritual way as the habitation of the holy God the Holy Spirit encourages us in a special way that

[25 : 45] Paul knew about as well in Philippians 119 he knew it was the spirit in him that was preserving him sustaining him God owns him God will keep him secure to the very end and Paul wrote all things referring to his trials and suffering will turn out for my deliverance how by the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ in me and this is the blessing we have of belonging to him being sealed by him now I know that for some of us these have been hard weeks life has felt unstable we've been shocked and reminded how unpredictably things can turn and if you are in Christ he is your only comfort in life and in death and his spirit reminds you again and again and again you belong to him he owns you you're secure in him that's the seal of the

Holy Spirit in you the Holy Spirit is never surprised never overwhelmed never out of control and it's this powerful Holy Spirit of God that dwells in you and me his people he causes us to trust the truth that Christ owns me by his sealing work the spirit in you and me causes us to trust that our adoption in Jesus Christ is authentic it can't be taken away from us by his sealing work the Holy Spirit causes you and me to trust the truth that in so praise the Holy Spirit of promise who seals you and me in Christ number four and finally for today from this passage praise the Holy Spirit who guarantees our inheritance!

Praise the Holy Spirit who guarantees our inheritance! Verse 14 continues who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession to the praise of his glory the Holy Spirit has sealed you and he is the guarantee of our inheritance!

as a church until the day of the redemption of the purchased possession and all of this is to the glory of God he refers to the believers great and final hope here the redemption that will come one day finally with our bodies being resurrected like Christ and receiving our heavenly glorified bodies we read in 2nd Corinthians 5 5 that God who has prepared us for this very thing is the God who has given us a spirit his spirit as our guarantee God gives the Holy Spirit now verse 14 calls it a guarantee a pledge something tangible like a down payment of that future bodily resurrection and full redemption that we long for that word is like earnest money or a non refundable deposit you might have talked to your parents children about how is it that you can buy a house where you got to save up enough to make a down payment and

I don't even know how it all works legally but when you put that money for a down payment there's a period that passes and you at a certain point cannot get that money back that means the seller knows you're serious down payment somewhere else that's the idea of this word here as well God says I'm saving you and I'm leaving you in this broken body in this broken world until the full redemption but I'm not leaving you as orphans you don't need to question this I'm putting my Holy Spirit as a guarantee a deposit that I will not take back until that day when I make all things new it's a foretaste of the final redemption we have in Christ I need this reminder life can feel very fragile and it's the ministry of the

[30 : 16] Holy Spirit to come close to you and me in our weakness within the true believer the Holy Spirit encourages us he points us to trust in God's promises by faith you don't see it now but look at your life look at this this faithful work of God you would not you would not have loved God you would not have seen these sins in your life these idols be toppled over you would not be cleaned up by God in this way this is the guarantee you have you belong to God he's preparing you for himself I

love how this Paul had said we first trusted referring to the Jews looking forward to Christ coming now he says now you also believed but now he puts it together it's our inheritance!

Jews and Gentiles all in Christ receiving what God promised Christ as Christ blessing shared with his whole church this is our unity it's that we have an inheritance together in Christ he's redeemed us together so the inheritance belongs to the church to the people of God but I had to study this very carefully what is the purchased possession if the inheritance belongs to the church who gets the purchased possession well it changes we're not the ones who get a purchased possession Jesus Christ gets the purchased possession and we are that prized possession that Jesus Christ gets at the redemption of all things he promises an inheritance to believers and the believers themselves who God has called and who Christ has purchased with his own blood are Christ's precious prize when he returns all believers will receive this inheritance of salvation and Christ will receive those believers to the praise of God's glory see the unity of the church in Christ and the unity of the church through Christ with God the creator what unites a church is faith in Jesus Christ alone for the praise of God's glory alone he kept saying this phrase didn't he to the praise of the glory of

God over and over marking out this entire passage this entire doxology and this is likely an allusion to another point that anyone in the Roman Empire would be familiar with which were public monuments you'd be walking through the cities like you would have seen this in Washington D.C. or London or some other big capital of the world you see these big statues or big plaques carved into stone these are monuments and in the Roman Empire these were put up to give praise or glory to emperors military conquerors or someone who used all their wealth to fund something that would be good for the city like a park to celebrate those from whom those blessings came and in verse 14 believers are called God's public monument we are formed by God to the praise of his glory we are the ones he has raised up to showcase his majesty this is the work of the Holy Spirit is to bring glory to God through Jesus Christ who saved us so that we would live for the glory of God our Savior praise God the Holy Spirit who guarantees our inheritance he guarantees we will fulfill this purpose for which

[34:18] Christ created us maybe you're sitting here today or maybe in a moment when you're very tired very weak and you have sinned you're tempted if you're like me to to question and wonder if you're truly saved what is it that marks a Christian having the Holy Spirit being sealed by him that is the distinguishing trade of a Christian unless a person is indwelt by the Holy Spirit that person does not have an inheritance!

with Christ and that person does not have any right to membership in the church of Christ well how do you know if you're not sure if you have the guarantee of the Holy Spirit I hope to encourage you by how the Holy Spirit reassures you and ministers to people like you and me let's have a dialogue I'll have to do both parts of it but you you walk this out with me I'll ask you did you hear the! from God's word and do you do you do you believe in your heart and confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Lord you say yes then you are born by the Spirit you believe and confess because the Spirit has worked all things that you will believe that you will be united to Christ you can sing was grace that brought my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved and the grace of God is worked out by the person of the Holy Spirit it's the Holy Spirit who caused you and me to follow Christ and then we can wonder well why did I believe and not this other person the answer from scripture we can turn to passages!

like John 10 it's because Christ's sheep know his voice he called you by name but why me why did he call me by name it's because he knows his own really yes because Jesus purchased you with his own blood how do I know he purchased me died for my sin because he is your good shepherd who laid down his life for you his sheep and Satan accuses you and attacks you and you want to keep asking over and over but why me because the father predestined you for adoption in Christ and so the Holy Spirit worked all things for your salvation in Christ you can sleep in complete peace tonight because your ultimate destiny is secured by God the father God the son and is being worked out in all things by

God the Holy Spirit but why is God so so kind to save a wretch like me this passage tells us very clearly it's to the praise of the glory of God's amazing grace don't you find yourself loving each person of the Trinity one by one by one so much you almost feel yourself as if we could do this but it's like I almost can't pick my favorite the good news is that we don't have to we ponder our creator God in three persons and let our triune God as he's revealed in scripture overwhelm you with his

great love this is the experience of every true Christian and this is the guarantee the seal that the Holy Spirit dwells in you you can agree with those ancient words in the fourth century so the 300s after

[38:37] Christ by Gregory Nazianzen he wrote no sooner do I conceive of the one God than I am illumined by the splendor of the three no sooner do I distinguish them that I am carried back to the one when I think of any one of the three I think of him as the whole and my eyes are filled and the greater part of what I am thinking escapes me when I contemplate the three together I see but one torch and cannot divide or measure out the undivided light amen church God created you and me to graciously receive the gospel he created you and me in Christ again now and he's sanctifying us by the Holy Spirit to be living monuments to the praise of his glory we're in this world still we're in these bodies still we're in the middle of this massive ocean of sin and temptation but the

Holy Spirit will protect and preserve the fire of your faith because that's his presence and dwelling in you God's decree will not fail Jesus Christ will receive the reward of his sufferings and the Holy Spirit will ensure that God receives you as his prized possession at the redemption of your bodies when Christ comes again may God's grace be glorified in our lives and in the life of this church we are the creation the prized possession of the triune God three in one all glory be to him let's pray father we thank you we praise you that you have begun a good work in each life and in the life of this church you will see it through to completion for your glory we praise you for the ministry of the Holy Spirit among us and within us please grow our faith Lord please establish us in Christ through your word we ask this for your glory amen