

Greenways Benefice Weekly Devotional (No 1/2021)

3rd January 2021

Lifetime Guarantee!

Readings: Eph 1:3-14 JN 1:1-9 Jer 31:7-14

I wonder if you received a gift for Christmas this year that came with a guarantee from the manufacturer, if so it might be wise to put in a safe place where you can find it just in case you need to use it in the future!

The guarantee offers you security and peace of mind that your product will be repaired or replaced if there is a problem.

Being secure is something that God wants us to recognize and experience in a relationship with Him.

Unfortunately the guarantee of security and peace of mind as we begin a new year in 2021 will be sadly missing for many people across the world.

Dealing with the uncertainty that continues to effect livelihoods, health and family relationships is proving to be a difficult time for many during this pandemic. Naturally people are thinking how they can see the way ahead for the future.

When Paul wrote his letter to the Christians at Ephesus he included a vital truth that is also an encouragement for us today.

'When you believed you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession- to the praise of His glory.' Ephesians 1:13, 14

Paul speaks of being sealed by the Holy Spirit who is a deposit guaranteeing everything that God has planned for us in this life and beyond into eternity.

Seals were used in biblical times as a mark of ownership, authenticity and authority, like the signet ring handed to Joseph by Pharaoh used for validating and stamping royal decrees. Gen 41:42

And a deposit is the first instalment of a final agreement. It might be a sum of money paid in advance as a deposit, or a pledge guaranteeing the substance of something yet to come.

Paul uses these various metaphors to paint a picture to help us to grasp the depth and permanence of our relationship with God. It is guaranteed that the investment that God is making in our lives will continue to grow into our full inheritance and be fully manifest in heaven.

The mystery of God's initiative working in the life of a believer that the New Testament consistently proclaims is seen here, showing us that our lives are in God's powerful hands and not the grip of fate.

God has sealed the lives of those who belong to Him with the deposit of the Holy Spirit, guaranteeing our future inheritance in the present.

One of the strongest desires that human beings have is to be loved and accepted and to feel they really belong. Whilst we can't always be sure of getting that from other people who may let us down, we can get it from God who has chosen us to know Him and be part of his family.

In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will – to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. Eph 1: 5

God is never surprised or disillusioned with us because He knew exactly what he was getting when He chose us. He wants us to receive His love because He has hope for us to trust Him and walk in his ways.

Whilst there is a lot of uncertainty in our world today, there is a real and positive climate in the kingdom of God that we have entered into through Christ.

'Jesus said, I am the vine, you are the branches, he who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.' John 15:5

And a prayer for the beginning of this new year...

Heavenly Father,

We pray that as we go into 2021 we will remember that we have the deposit of God in us, and our security and plans are rooted in Christ. Help us to know we are living our lives with you, and for you, and with every spiritual blessing that you pour out. Amen.

Blessings

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