

50 POSITIONAL TRUTHS

#46: BLESSED WITH THE “EARNEST OF THE SPIRIT”

The forty-sixth positional truth consists of the blessings of the Holy Spirit for every believer. “Earnest” is a mercantile term which originally came from the Phoenicians. Its general meaning is that of a pledge or token given as the assurance of the fulfillment of a bargain or promise. In the spiritual sense, when used of believers, the reference is to the work of the Spirit of God in their lives being a token and pledge of a perfect redemption and a heavenly inheritance. There is more than the idea of security in the word as used, for it clearly implies the continuity and identity of the blessing. Originally it meant no more than a pledge; but in common usage it came to denote that particular kind of pledge which is a part of the full price of an article paid in advance; and as it is joined with the figure of a seal when applied to the Spirit, it seems to be used by Paul in this specific sense.

The Spirit is the earnest of the believer's destined inheritance. The Spirit's gracious presence and working in believers is a foretaste to them of the blessedness of heaven. God is graciously pleased to give not only pledges but foretastes of future blessedness.

2 Corinthians 1:22 who also sealed us and gave *us* the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

2 Corinthians 5:5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

Ephesians 1:14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

I always receive great encouragement from the fact that every day I am one day closer to being with God. Wow! People often wonder what life will be like in heaven with God. While the Bible does not go into *great* detail, it does provide a few details of what heaven will be like. The “earnest” of the Spirit is one of them. When we are enjoying wonderful fellowship with God in our lives, we are actually experiencing a foretaste of what heaven will be like. Just as when someone gives you a down payment (earnest) of money to purchase something from you, you would expect more of what was paid down (money), so it is in the spiritual realm. At the point of salvation God made a down payment of the Holy Spirit in our lives. This down payment means that we will receive more of the Spirit when the transaction is completed in heaven, and that He binds Himself to complete the transaction.

Since the subject money is at hand, I feel the need to remind us all of the great danger of living for money and material things (Mammon). Christ made it clear that one cannot live for both God and Mammon. It is unfortunate that many believers think they can do what Christ says that they cannot do. God must come first. When believers put money and work ahead of doctrine

and the Lord, they should at least know why they are doing this. They do this because to them the Good just is Mammon. Every man seeks after what he thinks is his Good—what will make him the happiest. In positive volition the Good really is God and therefore the Lord comes first in everything; doctrine is always the first priority. Negative volition is nothing more than someone actually believing that something else is the Good. That is why he or she pursues it. A similar attitude is found in certain doctrinal believers who think they will be happy once God gives them their supergrace package. It is as if God is not enough to make them *perfectly* happy. They feel like they will never be happy until God blesses them with some riches. How can it be said that God is really their greatest love when they just see Him as a means to get what they really want? The Bible says that as long as Mammon is your greatest love, you cannot really love God.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love for the Father is not in him.

Matthew 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

The person who lives for God is the only one who can really enjoy the other “goods.” There are four categories of goods. First, there are spiritual goods related to God and Bible doctrine: fellowship with God, a life that is lived for God, Truth, wisdom, and the spiritual virtues. Second, external goods, things we call wealth, all the economic goods and services we employ, all the commodities. Third, bodily goods, things like health and physical pleasure and rest. Fourth, the social goods that satisfy our human social nature, our friends and families. Only by keeping God first and foremost do we capacity for the remaining goods. Only with Bible doctrine do we have the truth, wisdom, and virtue to enjoy the remaining goods. Without wisdom how can anyone really appreciate and enjoy external goods, bodily goods, or social goods? Without character how can anyone really enjoy life as such? (Consider the Lindsay Lohans and Martin Sheens of the world).

At the end of the day it is character that determines our choices. It is character that determines what we really want in life. A character of virtue seeks the Lord and finds satisfaction in Him regardless of the circumstances. A character that is marked with Evil is always seeking satisfaction in things. What fools people are who live a life of grieving and quenching the Holy Spirit, of casting aside the wonderful blessings of the Holy Spirit for a life of angst as they pursue kosmos diabolicus. Let us redouble our efforts to remove all traces of Evil out of our lives and join the ranks of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the angels, Simeon, and Anna and thus live in great joy and fulfill God’s destiny for our lives. All for the glory of God! Let’s live in the glory of God, not for the “glory” of the world.

In Christ,

Pastor Don