

# ANOINTED AND SEALED BY GOD

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Strong evidence in support of the certainty of God's promises and the surety of His word (the fact that with God there is only "yes" instead of both "yes and no") is given in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22: "*Now he which establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, is God; who has also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*" God had "anointed" the Corinthians (and Paul), and this anointing is associated with the sealing and earnest that is immediately spoken of in the next verse. What is this "anointing" and "sealing" and "earnest" that is mentioned in these verses, and do we have this today?

## **The anointing of the Holy Spirit**

The evidence is overwhelming that this is referring to the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit that God gave to Christians in the First Century A.D. The miraculous abilities that Jesus received from the Holy Spirit are called an anointing. "*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised*" (Luke 4:18). "*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him*" (Acts 10:38). The miraculous abilities that Christians received while the New Testament was being revealed are also called an "anointing" (or "unction" as the same Greek word is translated within the same passage in 1 John 2). "*But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things*" (1 John 2:20). "*But the anointing which ye have received of him abides in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him*" (1 John 2:27). This "anointing" caused these Christians to "know all things" and "taught them all things." This clearly refers to direct divine inspiration via the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.

## **Being sealed by God**

God had also "sealed" these Corinthians. "Seal" (Strong's #4972) literally means *to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation*. This is also used to describe the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. These miraculous gifts were only given to those who believed (Eph 1:13), and obeyed the gospel of Christ (Acts 5:32). There is strong evidence that these gifts were given to all believers whenever an apostle was present to lay his hands upon them (Acts 2:16-18,38-39; 8:14-18; 10:44-45; 19:1-7; 1 Cor 12:7,11; 14:26). Therefore, these believers had God's seal of approval. The miraculous gifts were tangible proof that those who possessed them truly were

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Christians and were on the strait and narrow road that leads to eternal life. This seal was “unto the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30). The Ephesians were “*sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory*” (Eph 1:13-14). The Holy Spirit of *promise* refers to the miraculous gifts (Acts 2:1-21,33,38-39).

## **The earnest of the Holy Spirit**

Ephesians 1:13-14 and 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 both refer to this sealing by the Holy Spirit as the “earnest” of the Holy Spirit (see also 2 Cor 5:5). “Earnest” (Strong’s #728) literally means *a pledge*, which is “a token of what is to come” (Merriam-Webster’s English Collegiate Dictionary). As the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit served as a divine seal of approval, it also served as a token of what is in store for Christians. It was evidence that the person with the gift was an heir of eternal life. Those gifts were an earnest of the inheritance (Eph 1:14). A token may be forfeited, and the miraculous gifts did not prevent anyone from going astray and falling away from the faith and thereby forfeiting their inheritance (i.e. someone with the gift could still be lost eternally). But they certainly provided evidence that a person was eligible for eternal life and would receive that inheritance if they remained diligent and faithful servants of the Lord (Matt 10:22; 24:13; 25:21,23; Mark 13:13; Jas 1:12; Rev 2:10). The anointing, sealing, and earnest of the Spirit was only given to believers (Eph 1:13; Acts 5:32). And 2 Corinthians 1:22 says God has given that “earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” Faith resides within the spiritual heart. For example, Christ dwells in our hearts *by faith* (Eph 3:17). Similarly, God’s love resides in our hearts, and that love is perfected in us by obeying the word of God (1 John 2:5). That is why Romans 5:5 says that “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

## **Not for us today**

Finally, it must be understood that this anointing, sealing, and earnest of the Holy Spirit no longer exists today. The main purpose of the miraculous gifts was to confirm the word that was being revealed (Mark 16:20; Heb 2:3-4). When the New Testament was completely revealed, the gifts were no longer needed and were thus done away (1 Cor 13:8-10). And they could only be given by the laying on of the apostles’ hands (Acts 8:18). The death of the last apostle forever brought to an end the means by which the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were given to Christians, which coincided with the completion of God’s revelation to man and the need to have that revelation confirmed. Therefore, we do not need the same promise of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit that Christians had in the First Century.