

Thirsty #1: Secure

Objectives: God has made you a part of his family by redeeming us through Jesus. We want to learn that because of this, the Holy Spirit has sealed us and guaranteed us the Father's inheritance.

Launch

- What is an aspect, characteristic, or tradition of your family you enjoy? Why?
- What is something that you wish were different? Why?
- If you were to wake up tomorrow and suddenly be a part of a new family, what do you hope would be true of it? (If it helps, think about it like a plot of a movie. Also, it's not meant to suggest you have to leave your current family.)

Explore

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

- What do you observe from the text that is most striking to you? Why?

In this passage, Paul writes about the story of our being adopted by God. Think of this as a description of the family you are now a part of. All three persons of the trinity are listed here, and Paul writes about the role each play in our adoption.

God the Father and Lord Jesus Christ

Re-read 1:3-10

- List all of the actions (verbs) (has blessed, chose, predestined, lavished, etc.)
- Who is the doer of those actions (God) and who is the recipient of those actions (us)?
- What is God the Father's role? (chose us-v4, works things according to his will-v5)
- What is Jesus' role? (redeemed us, forgiveness-v7)
- *Looking at how God the Father treats those he adopts:*
 - What kind of Father is he?
 - What is it like to be adopted into his family?

The Holy Spirit

Re-read 1:11-14

- List all of the actions (has blessed, chose, predestined, lavished, etc.)
- What is the Holy Spirit's role? (is our seal-v13, our guarantee for our inheritance-v14)

When reflecting on the keywords, this is a very powerful passage. Just pondering a definition can open up new windows of meaning from the passage.

- How would you define 'seal'?

*A **seal** is a piece of wax, lead, or other material with an individual design stamped into it, attached to a document to show that it has come from the person who claims to have issued it. For example, there is a seal of the President of the United States to authenticate and distinguish a document, or even a person or event, as important because of what it represents. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is our seal that authenticates and distinguishes Christians as accepted by God. (If they answer this with a definition like 'the sealing of a lid' it is ok. This definition can be like a seal on the back of a letter, which would be meant for security of what's in the letter (like a lid).)*

- How would you define 'guarantee'?

*A **guarantee** is a formal promise or assurance of fulfillment.*

How would you define 'inheritance'? (You may want to point out the Biblical definition is slightly different.)

*Our **inheritance**, as God's children and heirs, is his eternal kingdom. An heir of God enters into a possession given to him because of his relationship with God.*

- Is there one word that you find most meaningful?
- Which do you find most difficult to believe? What is holding you back from believing them?
- Why do you think God wants us to know that we can never lose our relationship with him?

Apply

The apostle John describes how we receive the right to become children of God.

Read John 1:12-13

- According to this verse, what does God require of us to be adopted into his family?

Our adoption by God means that we have security as a child of God. While you who believe in Christ may never have signed papers from some heavenly adoption agency, you have, in fact, been adopted into God's family. No matter what you do, relationally and genetically you can never cease to be your parent's child. Your parentage is, by virtue of your birth, irreversible.

Ephesians 1:1-14 is your adoption paper, and it has been sealed and guaranteed with the Holy Spirit. Read Ephesians 1:1-14 again to yourself, this time whenever it says 'us' or 'we' change it to 'I' or 'me'. Let this be the affirmation of your adoption.

- How does it impact you to know your life is sealed by the Spirit into the family of God?
- How can the knowledge of your guaranteed heavenly inheritance help satisfy your thirst the way God intended?