



Sealed For Heaven

Revelation 7:1-4, 9-17 Ezekiel 9:1-11 John 14:15-21

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In the book of Revelation, one of the names that is given to the one, holy, Christian, and apostolic Church is the “**144,000**.” In the numerology of Revelation, **12** is the number of the Church -- reflected in the 12 tribes of Israel in the Old Testament, and the 12 apostles in the New Testament. Twelve Old Testament tribes x twelve New Testament apostles = 144. That 144 is multiplied by the complete number of **1,000**, and you get 144,000. **144,000 is the complete number of all of God's people** throughout both the Old Testament and the New Testament times. It is not a literal number, but figurative. It means that *no one is excluded*. **Every single believer in Christ is included – including you.**

In the book of Revelation, the 144,000 are SEALED.

A “seal” is a *mark* that identifies those who belong to God. It is an image that comes out of the Old Testament, *for instance*,

- † where the blood of the **Passover Lamb** was put over the doors of the Israelites as a sign that “marked” God's people and the angel of death “passed over” them.
- † **Ezekiel saw a vision** where God's people were “**sealed and marked**”, and they were not destroyed in the judgment that followed.

That Old Testament image from Ezekiel is now used in the book of Revelation. You are “**sealed and marked**” by God as belonging to Him. You live your life under His authority, in His care, and surrounded by His protection. The Seal of God is not a visible mark – it is simply a figurative way to describe those who belong to God.

Later in Revelation, Satan will mimic God's seal by “marking” his own people with “**666**”. It is NOT a literal, visible mark. It is simply a figurative way of saying that Satan knows who are his; just as God knows who are His with the “seal” He put on them.

Both the “Seal of God” and “666” are figurative, invisible signs of ownership.

Thank the Lord that He has rescued you from 666 and put His Seal on you when He claimed you as His own in Holy Baptism!

God knows whose are His! Holy Baptism was the place where God **sealed and marked** you as His very own. In the Baptismal liturgy we say:

*receive the sign of the holy cross both upon your forehead and upon your heart **TO MARK YOU** as one redeemed by Christ the crucified, one filled with God the Holy Spirit, and as one belonging to God the Heavenly Father*



In Holy Baptism, God marks you; He puts His Name on you --- God put His “seal” of ownership on you. You belong to God; you live your life under His authority, in His care, and surrounded by His protection. Those **baptized and sealed** by God are filled with the **Holy Spirit**¹.

When you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in Christ, you were **sealed with the promised Holy Spirit** EPHESIANS 1:13

You were “sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.” That means that the Holy Spirit is at work in your life, keeping you faithful throughout your life. The Holy Spirit lives within you; He leads you to repentance, He turns you from sin and assures you of forgiveness. The Holy Spirit empowers you to patiently endure any pain or suffering that you must go through. The Holy Spirit works in you to be a bold witness for Christ in your daily life, even if that means you will be ridiculed, insulted or excluded.

The Holy Spirit works through the **Word of God** and the **Sacrament of Holy Communion** to keep you strong in the faith. That is why faithful weekly worship is so important: **worship** is the intersection of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

¹ One of the interesting ways that the Holy Spirit is portrayed in the Book of Revelation is with the phrase “**the seven Spirits of God**”. This phrase is used 4x in Revelation. At first, it might seem like a contradiction to the Holy Trinity (1 God, 3 Persons.) But it is not. This is a figurative way to describe the Holy Spirit that comes out of the Old Testament. It is based on the **sevenfold gifts of the Spirit** outlined in **Isaiah 11:2** --- which is also still used today as the “Confirmation blessing” in the Confirmation service! (Note also the connection of “seven” and the Holy Spirit in Zechariah 4:1-10, especially v.2,6,19.)

The Holy Spirit works in you to give you a **conviction and confidence in God's promises**; you believe that God cares for you and watches over you and listens to your prayers. That is all the work of the Holy Spirit in you!

Worship is the *intersection* of the **Holy Spirit**, the **Word of God**, and the Sacrament of **Holy Communion**.

The Holy Spirit works in you so that you live your life by the **values of the Kingdom of God**: you shape your life and attitudes around the Ten Commandments: you value God's name, His Holy Word, worship, authority, life, marriage, possessions, and reputation.

The Holy Spirit bears His **fruit** in your life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control.

The Holy Spirit equips you to serve the Lord and love other people with **spiritual gifts** that are personally suited just for you.

It is the Holy Spirit who gives you the desire and the drive to become more and more **biblically literate, doctrinally sound, mission minded, and passionately engaged** in His Kingdom.

The Holy Spirit keeps you **aware of the signs of the End**; so that you are ever watching and praying for the Lord's sudden return on the Last Day.

The Holy Spirit works in you as you **battle** your sinful nature: as you struggle with evil thoughts and desires, resist Satan and his temptations.

YOU HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED!

One way to think about your Baptism is that you were
“sealed by God” – marked by Him.

You belong to Him, live in His Kingdom, and are filled with His
Holy Spirit.

God has sealed you in Holy Baptism so that you will safely arrive in heaven. The whole second half of Revelation 7 is a glorious vision of heaven, where untold multitudes are in the immediate presence of God, and there was no trace of sin nor evil, and it was filled with eternal bliss and joy.

"[God's People] are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." REVELATION 7:15-17

This is our goal.

Heaven is the “prize”.

Eternal life is your inheritance from God.

Our loved ones who have died in Christ have “safely arrived in Heaven”; they are already there waiting for us.

The Holy Spirit in you now guarantees that you have been given the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting later.

The Holy Spirit is described as a “down payment” guaranteeing the life to come.

This is called HOPE in the Bible.

This is your HOPE.

Hope is your anchor through life’s storms.

God has sealed you in Holy Baptism so that you will safely arrive in heaven.

As you live your life in these terrible Last Days and these increasingly evil End Times, you do so in the power of the Holy Spirit.

This is your Christian identity ---

This is who you are through faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ!

You have been baptized; you were “sealed by God”; you belong to Him, live in His Kingdom, and are filled with His **Holy Spirit. God is at work in your life so that you will arrive safely in Heaven!**

Amen!