

Title: **SOME THINGS THAT ARE SEALED**

Text: John 6:27

Subject: *Sealed Things*

Date: Sunday Morning — April 12, 2009

Tape: John #47

Reading: *Revelation 5:1-14 and 7:1-17*

Introduction:

I believe the Lord has given me something for your souls' comfort, joy and edification this morning. I want to show you some things that are sealed. I've gone through the Book of God several times this week marking those things we are told God has sealed. Every time I have looked at these things, I've been both instructed in the things of God and blessed in my soul. May God the Holy Spirit be pleased to open the Scriptures to our hearts by his grace and reveal these things that are sealed to us to us, in the fresh experience of his grace!

The title of my message is — **SOME THINGS THAT ARE SEALED**. Let's begin in John 6:27.

A SEALED SAVIOR

(John 6:27) “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

The Lord Jesus here declares that he, as the Son of Man, that One who gives everlasting life to all who trust him, is a sealed Savior. — “*For him hath God the Father sealed.*” What does that mean?

The word that is translated “*sealed*” throughout the New Testament (sfragizw — sfrag-id-zo) means “stamped for security, preserved, or kept secret.” Really, the sentence might be more correctly translated, — “**Him hath the Father sealed, God.**” If that is the case, John is telling here the same thing Peter announced on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:22), — God the Father has demonstrated beyond question that this Man is God.

(Acts 2:22-23) “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye

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yourselves also know: (23) Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

This is one of those many, precious places in Holy Scripture in which we see, in very few words, a huge volume of sacred theology. **Here, in just seven words, our Lord Jesus declares that all three persons of the triune Godhead concur and co-operate in the great work of redemption and grace by Christ Jesus.**

I fully agree with **Robert Hawker**, when he said...

“No doubt, all scripture is blessed, being given by inspiration of God; but there is a peculiar blessedness in these sweet portions, which at one view, represent the Holy Three in One, unitedly engaged in the sinner’s redemption.”

- Who could be the “*him*” here spoken of, if not the Lord Jesus?
- Who, other than God the Father could seal him?
- With whom was Christ sealed and anointed, except God the Holy Spirit?

Who, but God, could give such a full, instructive and blessed testimony to the glorious foundation-truth of the whole Bible in just seven words? — “*For him hath God the Father sealed.*”

Let us ever behold, as the warrant of our faith, the divine authority the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, our Mediator. He (and he alone) is infinitely suited for our poor souls’ needs, in every state and every circumstance. The validity of all his gracious acts and deeds as our Substitute is founded in this: — “*For him hath God the Father sealed,*” — marked and stamped from eternity by his choice, appointment and decree, as the Lamb slain and accepted from the foundation of the world, — and marked and stamped in time by his Spirit.

- By the Spirit of Prophecy (Acts 10:43).
- By the Spirit of His Anointing (His Baptism).
- By the Spirit He has Given (Galatians 3:13-14; Acts 2).
- By the Spirit of Revelation (John 16).

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It was the Spirit of Jehovah that was upon him, when he was anointed to *“preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to give deliverance to the captive, and the restoring of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”*

This great Savior, whom God the Father has sealed, is thus held forth and recommended by the great seal of heaven, to every poor sinner who feels a conscious want of salvation. Every act of his love, every word of his lips, every deed of his hands, every work of his grace proclaims the Lord Jesus as *“Him whom God the Father hath sealed!”* Help poor sinners, O Lord God, by your blessed Spirit, to receive Christ the Savior as the One sealed by God, to rest in nothing short of being sealed by your Spirit.

In every act of faith, in every tendency of our souls, let us live unto our blessed Savior, with those same earnest longings of the church, when she cried out, — *“Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.”*

A SEALED BOOK

First, we have a sealed Savior. In Revelation 5 we are told about a sealed book.

(Revelation 5:1-7) *“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. (2) And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? (3) And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. (4) And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. (5) And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. (6) And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. (7) And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.”*

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This book is the book of God's eternal decrees. It represents God's eternal purpose of grace in sovereign predestination, which includes all things. It is to this book that our great Surely referred when he said, — “*Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God*” (Psalm 40:7-8; Hebrews 10:5-10).

William Hendriksen said of this book, “It symbolizes God’s purpose with respect to the entire universe throughout history, and concerning all creatures in all ages and unto all eternity.”

- The Lord our God is a God of purpose, eternal, unalterable purpose (Isaiah 46:9-11).
- The object of God’s eternal purpose of grace in predestination is the salvation of his elect (Romans 8:28-30).
- Everything that comes to pass in time was purposed by God in eternity (Romans 11:36).
- And the object of God in all that he does is the effectual accomplishment of the everlasting salvation of his elect.

In election, God chose a people whom he would save. In predestination, he sovereignly ordained all things that come to pass to secure the salvation of his chosen. And in providence, he accomplishes in time what he purposed from eternity.

As John saw it, the book of God was closed, a mystery sealed with seven seals. — These seven seals do not represent an imaginary “seven dispensations” of time. The writing within and on the back and the seven seals simply means that God’s purpose is full, complete, perfect and unalterable. Nothing can be added to it. Nothing can be taken from it. — The seven seals also tell us that God’s purpose of grace is unknown, unrevealed, a secret known only to God, until Christ reveals it.

A SEALED PEOPLE

A sealed Savior and a sealed book. — Turn over just a few pages, to Revelation 7, and you will read about a sealed people. There is a vast multitude of people in this world called “*the elect*,” a people chosen in eternity and redeemed at Calvary, who must be sealed by the Spirit of grace.

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(Revelation 7:1-4) “And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. (2) And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, (3) Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. (4) And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand* of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”

(2 Peter 3:9) “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

(Revelation 7:9-12) “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; (10) And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. (11) And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, (12) Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.”

When God saves a sinner, that sinner is sealed by the Holy Spirit, marked as God’s own, secretly preserved and kept by God the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:12-14; 4:30). — **It is this sealing of the Spirit that was symbolized in the Old Testament rite of circumcision.** The sealing of the Spirit is that circumcision of the heart that is made without hands (Romans 2:29; Colossians 2:11-12).

(Ephesians 1:13-14) “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

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(14) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

(Ephesians 4:30) “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

We would be wise to make Ephesians 4:30 the motto of our daily walk.

— Is God the Holy Spirit grieved when a child of God forgets the Lord Jesus, and by indulgence in any sin, loses sight of those sufferings which he endured because of sin? Yes, he is grieved, communion with God the Father is interrupted, and all the agonies and bloody sweat of our dear Savior are forgotten, when any ransomed soul lives a loose and careless life.

Shall I grieve the Holy Spirit, my Divine Keeper, by the allowance of wickedness? God forbid! Would you grieve for me, O Lord, at such a sight? Can it be possible that a poor worm of the earth, such as I am, should excite such regard and attention? **Such considerations** should be enough to keep us from evil. Yet, we will run eagerly after the poisonous ooze of our own depraved hearts, except the Lord Jesus himself keep us from the evil by his blessed Holy Spirit!

Blessed, ever-gracious Lord God, withdraw not your restraining influences; leave us not for a moment to ourselves! If you keep us, we shall be well kept! Blessed Son of God, “*Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me!*” Let me not grieve him by whom I am sealed unto the day of redemption!

This same sealing is spoken of in a very distinct way in 2nd Corinthians chapter 1.

(2 Corinthians 1:21-22) “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; (22) Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

The Spirit of God, who has sealed you and has sealed me, has established me with you and you with me, even as he did Paul and his co-laborers with the Corinthian saints.

God’s church in this world is a sealed fountain (Song 4:12-15).

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(Song of Songs 4:12) “A garden enclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.”

The church of Christ is a garden flourishing with good works, works done for him, works which he has created in us. She is a garden planted by his grace and watered by his Spirit, so thoroughly and effectually watered that she has become herself a fragrant, fruitful fountain of gardens and living waters, with streams flowing out of her into all the world to refresh the earth. That is the picture drawn in the Song of Solomon 4:12-15. — “A garden enclosed *is* my sister, *my* spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. *Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices: A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.*”

Our works, the works of God’s church, those works performed for Christ are never counted by us as being worthy of anything. We know that if we did all things perfectly, we would only have done what we should have done. We constantly repent even of our best, noblest, most righteous works, because “*all our righteousnesses are filthy rags*” before the holy Lord God. But he whom we love and serve looks upon our puny works as his pleasant fruits. They are rich, sweet fragrances, the smell of which ravishes his heart. They are works of faith and love. They are works produced by him and honored by him (Ephesians 2:10). That which is done by faith in Christ, arising from a heart of love for him, is honored and accepted by him. Let us ever rest in his love, walk in communion with him. And let us faithfully serve our Redeemer, who loved us and gave himself for us.

A SEALED VISION

A sealed Savior, a sealed book, and a sealed people. — Fourth, in Isaiah 29, we learn that there are many in this world to whom the Gospel of Christ and the Word of God is a sealed vision.

(Isaiah 29:9-12) “Stay yourselves, and wonder; cry ye out, and cry: they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. (10) For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. (11) And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which *men*

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deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it *is* sealed: (12) And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.”

To every sinner left to himself, not being taught of God, the Book of God is a sealed vision.

(1 Corinthians 2:14) “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.”

A SEALED VENGEANCE

A sealed Savior, — a sealed book, — a sealed people, — and a sealed vision. — If you will turn back to Deuteronomy 32, I will show you a fifth thing that is sealed.

In this place, the word translated sealed (מִתְּכָּסֵּם — khaw-tham) is, of course, a Hebrew word; and the meaning is slightly different. The word means, “closed up, ended, stopped.” In this chapter the Lord God warns the ungodly, those who, because they have no understanding, do not trust Christ and do not worship God, that the vengeance and wrath that he shall execute upon them is a sealed vengeance for the time appointed. — **Sinner, be warned, you shall not escape the vengeance of God, except you take refuge in Christ.**

(Deuteronomy 32:34-35) “*Is* not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? (35) To me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in *due* time: for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.”

(Ecclesiastes 8:11) “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”

A SEALED BAG

All who are taught of God come to Christ and live by him (John 6:45).

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(John 6:45) “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.”

And all who come to Christ find, as they come to him, that their sins are in a bag cast behind God’s back into the depths of the sea of infinite forgetfulness. **So, the sixth thing described in the Scriptures as a sealed thing is a sealed bag** (Job 14:17).

(Job 14:14-17) “If a man die, shall he live *again*? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. (15) Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands. (16) For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? (17) My transgression *is* sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.”

In ancient times, when men died at sea, their bodies were placed in a weighted bag which was sewn together and sealed. Then they were cast into the depths of the sea. That is what God has done with our sins. They are cast “*into the depths of the sea.*” When Christ died, by his one sacrifice for our sins, which were imputed to him, he put away all our sins. They were buried in the sea of God’s infinite forgiveness, put away, never to be brought up again. God almighty will never charge us with sin, impute sin to us, remember our sins against us, or treat us any the less graciously because of our sin. That is forgiveness! — “*Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*”

When Job asks, in verse 16, “Dost thou not watch over my sin?” the obvious answer is “Yes.” And if he finds any, we are forever damned; but that cannot be, because he has cast them away in a sealed bag (Jeremiah 50:20).

(Jeremiah 50:20) “In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”

A SEAL DESIRED

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- (1.) A Sealed Savior
- (2.) A Sealed Book
- (3.) A Sealed People
- (4.) A Sealed Vision
- (5.) A Sealed Vengeance
- (6.) A Sealed Bag

The seventh thing is a seal desired (Song of Solomon 8:6).

(Song of Songs 8:6) “Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death; jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.”

This is a prayer which arises from the earnest hearts of God’s believing children. Yet, it is a prayer any sinner desiring mercy, grace and salvation might make at the throne of grace. — “*Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm.*” The allusion here is to the high priest in Israel. **The prayer is really twofold.**

- We long to know that we have an interest in the love of Christ’s heart.
- And we long to experience the power of his arm (Exodus 28:12, 29-30, 36-38).

Believers know the meaning of this prayer by personal experience. It is the longing, the desire of a sinner seeking grace to know that his name is engraved upon the Savior’s heart. In the language of the psalmist, we say to the Lord Jesus, “*Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.*” I desire an interest in your love; but I want more. I want to know that I have an interest in your love. Write my name in your heart, and engrave it as a signet upon your heart, so that I may see it and know it.

Without question, there are many whose names are written on our Lord’s heart who do not yet know it. Christ has loved them from all eternity. His heart has been set upon them from everlasting. But they have not yet seen the signet with their names written upon it. — In all of his work our great High Priest bears the names that are upon his heart.

- For them he makes intercession (John 17:9, 20; 1 John 2:1-2).
- He bore their sins in his body upon the cursed tree (1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).
- He endured all the unmitigated wrath and horrid fury of divine judgment to the full satisfaction of justice for them (Isaiah 53:9-11).

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- He made atonement for them, putting away their sins by the sacrifice of himself (Hebrews 9:26).
- He obtained eternal redemption for them by the merit of his blood (Hebrews 9:12).
- Upon them he pronounces the blessing of God (Numbers 6:24-27; Ephesians 1:3-6).

We want to know by personal experience the power of our Savior's arm. We want always to see and know that our Redeemer's heart and hand are eternally engaged for us, engaged to accomplish our everlasting salvation. **This is our souls desire. We want to know and be assured that the Lord Jesus Christ is our High Priest, our Advocate, our sin-atonement Mediator before God.** If we can know that we have a place in his heart of love and that his arm is set to do us good, we want no more. All is well with our souls. His arm preserves us, protects us and provides for us. This is the prayer we make. What more could we desire than this? — *“Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm.”*

FOUR PLEAS

Anytime we go to God in prayer, it is wise to not only make our request known to him, but also to offer a plea, an argument, a reason why he should grant the thing we ask. Be sure that you understand this: The only grounds upon which we can appeal to God for mercy are to be found in God himself (See Psalm 51:1-5). Our hope, our basis of appeal with God must be found in him.

Do you see how the spouse here urges her request? She says, “Make me to know your love for me, because I know this concerning your love — It is as strong as death. — It is as firm as the grave. — It is as intense as fire. — And it is as unquenchable as eternity. With these four pleas, we back up and press our suit for mercy.

1. **Show me your love, for your love is strong as death.** — *“Love is strong as death.”* The love of Christ is as irresistible as death; and the love of Christ triumphed over death for us. As death refuses to give up its victims, so the love of Christ refuses to give up its captives. Nothing shall ever cause the Son of God to cease loving his people and let them go.

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2. **Show me your love, for your love is as firm as the grave.** — “*Jealousy is cruel as the grave.*” These words would be more accurately translated, “Jealousy is as hard as hell.” Our Lord is jealous over his people. He will not allow those whom he loves to be taken from him. You will more likely see the gates of hell opened, the fires of hell quenched, and the spirits of the damned set free, than see the Son of God lose one of those who are engraved upon his heart (Romans 8:28-39).

- Those whom God has chosen, he will never refuse.
- Those Christ has redeemed, he will never sell.
- Those he has justified, he will never condemn.
- Those he has found, he will never lose.
- Those he has loved, he will never hate.

3. **Show me your love, for your love is as intense as fire.** — “*The coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.*” These words seem to allude to that fire which always burned at the altar and never went out. Those coals of fire were always kept burning in the typical Levitical dispensation. The flame was originally kindled by God. It was the work of the priests to perpetually feed it with the sacred fuel. The love of Christ is like the coals of that altar which never went out, and more.

- The love of Christ for his own elect is vehement, blazing, intense love that never diminishes.
- The only cause of his love for us is in himself.
- There is nothing, no form of love to compare with his love.
- The love of Christ for his elect is free, sovereign, eternal, saving, immutable love.

4. **Show me your love, for your love is as unquenchable as eternity.** — “*Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it*” (Romans 8:37-39). No other love is really unquenchable, but our Savior’s love is. His love is eternal and everlasting, immutable and unalterable. The love of Christ is infinitely beyond that of a father or a mother, or a brother or a sister, or a husband or a wife. The love of Christ is the one and only love that passes knowledge, the one love that nothing in heaven, or earth, or hell is able to extinguish or cool, the one love whose dimensions are beyond all measure (Ephesians 3:14-19).

Our Redeemer’s love is here compared to fire that cannot be quenched. As such it is affirmed that “*waters,*” “*many waters*” cannot quench it. Christ’s love for us is something the floods cannot drown (Psalms 69:15; 93:3). **The**

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waters of God's wrath could not quench the love of Christ for his people. — *“Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.”* It was our Savior's matchless love for us that made him willing to endure all the horror of God's wrath in our stead.

The waters of shame and suffering sought to quench and drown it. They would have hindered its outflow, and come (like Peter) between the Savior and the cross, but his love refused to be quenched on its way to Calvary. Herein was love! It leaped over all the barriers in its way. It refused to be extinguished or drowned. Its fire would not be quenched. Its life could not be drowned (Psalm 69:1-7).

The waters of death sought to quench it. The waves and billows of death went over the great Lover of our souls. The grave sought to cool, and quench his love; but it proved itself stronger than death. Neither death nor the grave could alter or weaken his love for us. It came out of both death and the grave as strong as before. Love defied death, and overcame it.

Even **the floods of our sins** could not quench the love of Christ for us. The waters of our unworthiness could not quench nor drown the love of Christ for our souls. Love is usually attracted to that which is loveable. When something ugly, unlovely, unattractive comes love (as it is called) withdraws from its object. Not so here. All our unfitness and unloveableness could not quench nor drown the love of Christ. It clings to the unlovely, and refuses to be torn away.

The waters of our long rejection sought to quench it. Though the gospel showed us that personal unworthiness could not arrest the love of Christ, we continued to reject him and his love. We continued to hate him and despise his love. Yet, his love for us rose above our enmity to him, rose above our unbelief, and survived our hardness. In spite of everything we are and have done, his love was unquenched.

Though he has saved us by his matchless grace, **the waters of our daily inconsistency** seek to quench his love, but blessed be his name, without success! Even after experiencing his adorable grace, we are constantly spurning his unspurnable love! What inconsistencies, coldness, lukewarmness, unbelief, worldliness, hardness, and utter ungodliness daily flows from us against the Savior's love like a mighty flood to quench its fire

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and drown its life! Yet it survives all; it remains unquenched, unquenchable and unchanged!

All these evils in us are like “waters,” “many waters,” like “floods,” torrents of sin, waves and billows of evil, — all constantly laboring to quench and drown the love of Christ! They would annihilate any other love, any love less than his. But our Savior’s love is unchangeable and everlasting.

“I ask my dying Savior dear
To set me on His heart;
And if my Jesus fix me there,
Nor life, nor death shall part.

As Aaron bore upon his breast
The names of Jacob’s sons,
So bear my name among the rest
Of Thy dear chosen ones.

But seal me also with Thine arm,
Or yet I am not right.
I need Thy love to ward off harm,
And need Thy shoulder’s might.

This double seal makes all things sure,
And keeps me safe and well;
Thy heart and shoulder will secure
From all the host of hell.”

Blessed Spirit of God, give us each this desire, to be set as a seal upon the Savior’s heart and a seal upon his omnipotent arm, and give us the seal desired.

Amen.