



THE PRIZE INSIDE

God gives believers His Holy Spirit.

by BOB HOSTETLER

WHO HASN'T ATTENDED a professional baseball game and sung the familiar lines, "Buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack"? The song dates back to 1908, by which time the boxed confection of molasses-flavored, caramel-coated popcorn and peanuts had become what some historians consider to be

America's first junk food. First sold in 1896, the tasty treat quickly became a staple not only at baseball games but also of American childhoods because after 1912, Cracker Jack® offered "a prize in every box": a baseball card, plastic figurine, whistle, joke booklet, stickers, temporary tattoos, or a decoder ring.

Many children loved anticipating the prize inside while munching on handfuls of Cracker Jack. Others, too excited to wait, thrust a hand far inside the box to fish for the "free" trinket. Today some of those treasures are nearly priceless, such as a Ty Cobb baseball card that sold in 2017 for \$430,000.

That tiny Cracker Jack prize, infinitely multiplied, is something like the wonderful gift God gives to every human soul who turns from sin and finds new life through faith in Jesus Christ. It's the beautiful treasure which

Colossians 1:26-27 describes as "the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints ... which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." It's the indwelling Spirit of Jesus Christ Himself living in those who trust Jesus to forgive, cleanse, and redeem them. And when Christ comes, He brings with Him a new life. It is an eternal

prize worth more than any earthly fortune.

That prize can be yours today by sincerely praying something like this: "Gracious and generous heavenly Father, I confess I am a sinner. Trusting in Jesus' payment on the cross for my sins,

I turn from all the wrong I have done and ask You to please forgive, cleanse, and control me.

Through Your Holy Spirit, I ask to receive the precious presence of the indwelling Christ, working in me and leading me all the way to glory. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

If you prayed that prayer, tell a pastor or Christian friend or call 888-537-8720.



"Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

BOB HOSTETLER is an award-winning author of 50 books, including the award-winning *Don't Check Your Brains at the Door* (co-authored with Josh McDowell) and *The Bard and the Bible* (A Shakespeare Devotional). He lives in Nevada.