

# Blessings

Paul begins this epistle by identifying himself as an Apostle chosen by God...

**Eph 1:1** 1

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

This is not unusual for Paul, especially in the face of the nay-sayers that seemed to follow him around. He often had to establish his credibility so that he would not be ignored and people would know that what he was writing came from God. Paul then continues...

**Eph 1:3** 2

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ

There are different ways to look at what Paul says here in the first chapter of Ephesians, but it has always struck me as being a beautiful list of the blessings that can only be found in God. Paul speaks of three sources of these blessings...

- 3
- 1) Blessings from the Father
  - 2) Blessings from the Son
  - 3) Blessings from the Spirit

4 In this lesson we are going to take a look at the blessings that Paul enumerates for us. Paul starts his treatise with the Ephesians by stating categorically that the God and Father of Jesus Christ is the source of all spiritual blessings. That doesn't leave a lot room for anything or anyone else to be a secondary supplier, does it. The God and Father supplies all. What Paul then does is expand upon that statement. The key thought in this chapter is the abundance of blessings that, as Christians, we have, spiritual blessings that are ours because we are in Christ. That is what Paul says. He informs us that each of what we think of as the Godhead has blessed us, and then he prays that we might understand these blessings and the power they can bring to and be in our lives.

Our first point then...

- 5
- 1) Blessings from the Father

Note what Paul says...

**Eph 1:3-4** 6

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him.

There is a lot of discussion as to how God chooses His children, but for just a moment think about the bigger picture of that statement...

7 **God *CHOUSES* us**

Do you remember when you were in school or playing games with your friends and choosing up teams? It was a privilege and made you feel good when you were one of the first ones chosen and you really didn't want to be the last one standing there and the captains would flip a coin to see who had to have you on their team. It feels good to have the honor of being chosen, especially if the only other option is to be rejected. God chooses us. Do you feel the honor in that? Do you feel His love? Just the fact the God considers us valuable enough to choose us to be His children is almost unthinkable, yet He does and has gone to great lengths to give us that opportunity.

This is sometimes referred to as...

**8**

## ***The Doctrine of Election***

This is a doctrine that we cannot fully explain, but most certainly one we can enjoy, and we can't forget the importance of the mystery of grace. This we do know though, God did not choose us in ourselves, or because of me being me; He chose us in Christ, by His unmerited favor.

**1 Cor 1:26-29**

**9**

**26** For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; **27** but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, **28** and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, **29** so that no man may boast before God.

Here Paul illustrates the manner that God uses to call people. It is the things that the world despises, looks down upon, considers foolish and weak, it is the things of the heart. We see a glimmer of that in...

**2 Thess 2:13-14**

**10**

**13** But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. **14** It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This calling is to be understood as an acceptance of His own. We call this dynamic, adoption; to bring into our family a new addition, a new member, to adopt as our own. That is the way God chooses us. He adopts us...

**Eph 1:5**

**11**

**5** He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

God takes us as His own, accepts us into His family. Paul also explains this process as predestination. That simply means that it is according to His plan.

**Huiiothesia NT:5206**

**12**

(hwee-oth-es-ee'-ah); from a presumed compound of NT:5207 and a derivative of NT:5087; the placing as a son, i.e. adoption (figuratively, Christian sonship in respect to God):

Think of God's plan; hear, believe, repent, confess, baptism, then live faithful and obedient. That is what God has put into place and He has determined, predestined if you will, that any and all who abide by that plan, who follow it, will be saved, will be adopted to be His children.

Think of it this way...

**13**

A) "Election," the choosing, refers to people

B) Predestination, refers to the purpose (s) for those people

***This can mean either the ultimate destination or what needs to be done to get there***

God elects us, chooses us, to be saints, to be set apart, then predestines that certain purposes in our lives must come to pass. Paul touches on this in...

**Rom 8:28-30**

**14**

**28** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. **29** For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; **30** and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

Interestingly, the Jews, and those of New Testament times, understood that "*Adoption*" referred to the official act of a father who bestows the status of full adulthood on a son of minor status. This is a different understanding than how we typically use the term today, we think of this as bringing someone or something that is not already a part of our family into our circle. The Jews did not think of it as the taking in of an outsider, rather it is the placing of a family member into the privileges and blessings of adulthood. With that understanding it means that even the youngest Christian has everything that Christ offers. To illustrate this principle, Christ tells the parable of the man who hires workers for his field in. He hires some in the morning, some at noon, and some in the afternoon. Then...

**Matt 20:8-10**

**15**

**8** "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first.' **9** "When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. **10** "When those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius.

The idea is that the master considered all of the workers as equal, he had accepted them all. That is the blessing that comes with God choosing us...

**Eph 1:6**

**16**

**6** to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

Now here is the real point of this, in and of ourselves, we are not acceptable to God, but in Christ, we are "made accepted," we have been redeemed.

This brings us to our next point...

**17**

2) Blessings from the Son

**Eph 1:7**

**18**

**7** In Him we have redemption through His blood

Friends, if we get nothing else from this lesson, we need to get this...

**19**

***Christ came to SAVE the World***

**2 Tim 2:10**

**20**

**10** For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.

The blessing offered by God through Christ is salvation from the penalty of our sin. But, please note, that salvation is offered only through Christ and nowhere else.

In a passage that I quote a lot we see this point made as clearly as possibly can be made...

**Acts 4:12**

**21**

**12** "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."

Salvation can be found only in Christ, that is why He came, to save man from his sin. He did this by giving His life on the cross, and in doing so Christ purchased us from the slavery of sin. Paul gives us a summation of this discussion in...

**Rom 3:21-25**

**22**

**21** But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, **22** even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; **25** whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith.

Christ has paid the price that can redeem us all from the burden of the penalty of sin. And make no mistake, we have a redemption right now, in this world, in the knowledge that He has paid that price and delivered us from the penalty and power of sin, we don't need to worry about anymore, and, He has given us a future redemption...

**Eph 1:14**

**23**

**14** who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

In the redemption Christ has brought, He has forgiven us...

**Eph 1:7**

**24**

**7** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

The word "**forgive**" here literally means "to send away." Sin is a terrible burden that is sent away when a sinner turns to Christ. Christ carried the burden on the cross...

**1 Peter 2:24**

**25**

**24** and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness

Christ came to save and He came to reveal...

**Eph 1:8-10**

**26**

**8** In all wisdom and insight **9** He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him **10** with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

The "**mystery**" here was the divine truth known only by God as to how He would implement the salvation of mankind. Christ brought salvation and He brought the revelation of God's plan and just as importantly...

**27**

### ***He revealed God to Man***

He revealed God's power, in the miracles He did and in His resurrection, He revealed God's wisdom in the plan He fulfilled and established, and He revealed God's Love in giving Himself as our sacrifice and showing the world not just what God is but also who. Christ revealed God to man and in doing so revealed that God wants a relationship with man, He wants man to come to Him in faithful obedience to His Word.

This brings us to our last point...

**28**

3) Blessings from the Spirit

**2 Tim 3:16-17**

**29**

**16** All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; **17** so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

God revealed His plan in Christ, and tells man of that revelation in His Word, which was given through the Holy Spirit. Isn't that what we see Paul saying in...

**Eph 1:13**

**30**

**13** In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Here Paul gives, while brief, a rather powerful outline of the plan of salvation. The sinner hears the Word of Truth, puts their faith in Christ and in God, they faithfully obey the Gospel, which transforms them, and they are sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise.

God has given man the promise of eternal life through Christ in heaven. That promise is the Hope of man. To assure man of the validity of that promise God has given a surety, Paul calls it an...

**31**

### ***Earnest***

**Eph 1:14**

**32**

**14** who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

In business, Earnest Money, means money given as a down payment for something. Christ has purchased our future for us, but we have not yet entered into all the blessings. God has given us His Spirit, His Word through that Spirit, as the "**down payment**," if you will, to assure us that we can and will have total redemption through Christ and ultimately receive God's promised blessings in eternal glory.

Paul tells the Ephesians, and us, that as Children of God they receive...

**33**

- 1) Blessings from the Father
- 2) Blessings from the Son
- 3) Blessings from the Spirit

Now note, that at the end of each section, he tells why the Father, the Son, and the Spirit have given us these blessing...

**34**

**6** to the praise of the glory of His grace,

**12** we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.

**14b** to the praise of His glory.

Salvation is by God's grace, through His Love, and for His own glory! God does not have to save anybody, when He does save the sinner, He does so for His own glory.

**Rom 5:8**

**35**

**8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

So I guess the only question that remains is whether or not we want to experience the blessings God offers through Christ and the Holy Spirit both now and in eternity, or we don't.