

Blessings in Christ

Introduction

- Old Song *I am blessed*
- I want to remind you of the blessings we have in Christ
- Soaking in Ephesians letting it speak to me

Message

Audience

Eph 1:1 (ESV) (1) *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:*

- **Saints** - saved
- **Faithful** - walking in the truth
- **In Ephesus** - truth is applicable to all saints and faithful followers of Christ

Current Blessings

Eph 1:3-10 (ESV) (3) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...*

Praise the Lord!

- Praise - blessed be...
- See v6 - to the praise of His grace
- See in 2nd half of the text
- God is worthy of praise

who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

- **Every!** - all that God has, every good things - he has given us
- See **James 1:17 (ESV)** (17) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*

- **In Christ** - this is the key. See the audience - for the faithful in Christ. As we walk with him, faithful to be with him - there is great reward!!
- So easy to lose focus and become discouraged. Paul writes these believers to remind them of Jesus' provision for us

(4) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

- **We have been chosen** - We didn't choose God, He chose us. So powerful. Puts the focus on God, not us. Even when I fail, I have been chosen
- **From the foundation** - before the world was formed.
- Not based on us, or how we've been doing, but God made a **decision** - choice
- He did this before anything else - he chose us!
- **Chosen to be holy and blameless** We have been chosen for Holiness.
- So powerful: God's choice is that we would be holy.
- Enemy is a liar, an accuser - but God's choice prevails
- **Note:** We cannot be that on our own so his choice caused all the rest of this to happen

In love (5) he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, (6) to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

- **Motive: Love** - here we see God's motive. He's chosen us (made a decision about us), and was motivated by love
- God loves us!
- **Predestined** - chosen in advance. Not only chosen (already said) but having the power to make it so!
- **Our choice** (see intro) is that we would him our choice! He will not violate our free will
- **Adopted** - speaks of a choice, but also of belonging. We belong to God
- We are sons as a result of his choice. Not based on our performance, standing, effort or qualification
- **Through Jesus** - Jesus did the work (more in next verses)

(7) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, (8) which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight

- **Because of this, he's given us....** God made a choice about us - to be holy
- He accomplished this through Jesus
- Because of Jesus (in Jesus) we have these things
- **Redemption** Paying the slave price so we can belong to him.
- He did this through His (Jesus') blood
- **Forgiven** - debt erased, cancelled.
- Riches of his grace - there is no limit. *The blood that Jesus shed for me... it will never lose its power!*

(9) making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ (10) as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

- **God's mystery, revealed:** Big picture - God is reconciling us back to him
- God is in the reconciliation business. Everyone. All things
- This is his plan!
- God is not willing that any should perish - but working to bring everyone back to him

Future Blessings

Eph 1:11-14 (ESV) *(11) In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,*

- Started by enumerating our present blessings
- We end the passage by remembering the future
- **Have obtained** - past tense - through Jesus
- **Inheritance** - Future reward - don't lose sight of this - God's given us (past) a future
- **His will** - this is God's will - to reconcile us

(12) so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. (13) In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, (14) who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- **Our job is to give praise:** having understood what he has done - we should give praise
- **Process:** Hear, believe
- See **Rom 10:13-14 (ESV)** *(13) For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (14) How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?*
- The Gospel - everyone who calls, saved.
- Must be preached
- **Sealed with the Spirit** this is how God shows us we are his. His Spirit is the *engagement ring* that shows we belong to Him
- Our earthly reminder of our heavenly reward
- Guarantee of our inheritance
- **To the praise of his glory** - this whole thing - is to result in praise to God

Applications

God is worthy of praise

- all that he has done for us, his goodness towards us, his salvation to us - are to bring Him glory
- It's not about us - it's about him
- Are we praising him

He's chosen you

- before the foundation of the world - we have been chosen
- Will we choose him?
- He will not force us - but he has chosen and called us
- Note - his choice was deliberate and from before the world began

You have been blessed towards that end!

- Because of His choice - we have his blessing
- Sins forgiven, sealed with his Spirit, a future inheritance

Are we facilitating his purpose?

- God's plan is to reconcile mankind to himself
- Are we working towards that end?