

J.J.

(Truth and Love)

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS OF A CHRISTIAN
Ephesians 1:3-14

Ephesians 1: 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, 9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, 12 in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. 13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

INTRODUCTION :

Tomorrow is March Break. I love telling this story. There was this student who was going to university far away from home. When the son was about to go, his dad gave him a Bible as a gift and said, “Read this Bible. Everything you need is in here.” The kid hesitantly placed it inside his backpack. But while in university, he was running out of money and he called his dad and asked for money. The dad said, “Have you read your Bible?” The son did not want to disappoint his dad just said yes, even if he wasn’t reading his Bible. But he also got disappointed that’s the answer to his dad. Next month, he was short of money again and he called his dad again to ask for money and the dad said, “Have you read your Bible?” The son lied again and said “yes” even if he wasn’t reading his Bible. That happened for another month or two and every time he asked, the dad would ask him if he read his Bible. And he would lie and then have a hard time in university simply because he was always short of money. So March Break came and he flew home. When the dad picked him up at the airport, he confessed his feelings to his dad that he was hurt every time he asked for financial help, the dad’s answer was, “Have you read your Bible?”. And the dad won’t even send money. He told him he had was miserable in university because he had to borrow money to pay rent and had to get extra job just to make ends meet. So the dad said, “Remember I told you that everything you need was in the Bible and so I asked you if you were reading your Bible and you said “Yes.”. I knew you were lying to me simply because every time you need money, you would call me.” The son was confused. So the father said, “Where’s the Bible I gave you?” The son got it from his backpack. And the dad said, open it to Psalm 23, the son opened in Psalm 23 and there’s a cheque for \$1000. And then he asked him to open it to Philippians 4:19 and there’s another cheque for \$1000. And the kid opened it in different parts of the Bible and there were a number of cheques inside worth \$1000.

The reason why I’m telling this story is because a lot of Christians are living miserable lives simply because they do not know the blessings that they have in God’s Word.

Today, we'll talk about the Spiritual blessings of a Christian.

The letter of Paul to the Ephesians is what preachers call “the spiritual bank account” of the Christian. It shows the riches we have in Christ.

Let's talk about what “spiritual blessings” mean.

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Two components : “spiritual” and “blessings”

Let's talk about “spiritual” first.

It's simple. There is what you call physical blessings. It's anything that you can see.

For example :

Wealth – money, car, house or Health – healthy body or a job... those are physical blessings.

But spiritual blessings are the ones which are more important... these are the ones that we cannot see. Because it's spiritual.

Now it doesn't mean you can't see it, it's not there.

Etymology : spiritual “pneumatikos” where we get the word “pneuma” – which means “breath”.

Now why are the spiritual blessings more important than the physical blessings?

Question : How important is “love, joy and peace” in your life? These are spiritual blessings!

THINK : The problem is we think that the physical blessings are the ones that will give us the spiritual blessings like “love, joy and peace.”

Now let's bring this up a notch.

You will get \$100M but you and your family will go to hell tomorrow for eternity. Will you still get the \$100M?

This is why Jesus said :

Mark 8:36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?

Remember the Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke Chapter 12

A rich man had an abundant harvest. This means he had so much profit and said, I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones and I will have surplus. In our parlance today, Yes, I can now build a bigger business and I will not have to worry, take it easy and be happy.

What did God say?

Luke 12: 20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

You know the next verses there...It's Jesus saying to his disciples... “Do not worry about anything... OUR FATHER in heaven will take care of us.”

This is the reason why spiritual blessings are more important THAN physical blessings... WHY?
 IT'S BECAUSE PHYSICAL BLESSINGS ARE TEMPORARY AND CAN BE EASILY TAKEN AWAY FROM US.

2 Corinthians 4:18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Now let's look at the second component. The word “blessing”.

ETYMOLOGY : Blessed (praise), blessed, blessing is translated in just one Greek word “eu- logia” meaning “a good word”
 That's where we get the word “eulogy”

That's why KJV or ESV version translated it this way.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, (KJV)

What does this mean that blessing here means “good word”? IT MEANS THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS THAT WE HAVE ARE FOR SURE AND WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BE TAKEN AWAY FROM US.

How are we sure that these spiritual blessings will not be taken away from us?

First, it is GOD WHO SAID IT!

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed (HAS GIVEN US HIS “GOOD WORD” us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Illustration : I remember my daughter when she was still a kid, when she asks me to buy something for her, I will either say “No.” or “let's see” or “Yes” When she hears a “no” answer from me, she will negotiate in order for me to say “let's see” or “yes”. When she hears the word, “let's see” or “yes”, she would then ask me, “Promise?” and when she hears the word, “Promise” from me, she would be convinced because she knows that it's a promise.

GOD IS A PROMISE KEEPER! HE KEEPS AND FULFILLS HIS GOOD WORD!

Isn't that what He said in Isaiah

*Isaiah 55: “My word is like the snow and the rain
 that come down from the sky to water the earth.*

*They make the crops grow
 and provide seed for planting and food to eat.*

*11 So also will be the word that I speak—
 it will not fail to do what I plan for it;
 it will do everything I send it to do.*

Isn't that what Jesus also said,

Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

This is the reason why these spiritual blessings are for sure BECAUSE GOD GAVE HIS GOOD WORD!

Second, GOD SECURED IT.

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Illustration: The most heavily guarded place in the world is Fort Knox in Kentucky. They say no one even dares to try to get inside it because it's the most secure place on earth.

A few examples on how secure this place is.

- Walls are thick and strong. They are made from four-foot-thick granite and lined with cement, steel and fireproof materials. These walls are so tough that they could even **withstand a direct hit from an atomic bomb.**
- **Three layers of security**: outer perimeter has motion sensors; second barrier is 10-foot high electric fence and there's a third barrier with the most advanced security technology. **It is even said there are “mines” around the building.**
- Its location is in Kentucky which is far away from the sea and there's a mountain surrounding it and is in a remote open area, where you can see anything approaching it from miles away.
- There are 30,000 soldiers and tanks and helicopters in the surrounding area and its security is so advanced , that they can flood certain areas to prevent intruders.

Why is it the most heavily guarded place? It's because more than half of the gold reserve of the United States is there.

Significance : Our spiritual blessings are so secure because it is guarded in heaven itself!!!

Do you think anything that is guarded in heaven will be lost? Not even the devil when he tried was successful. He was immediately thrown to the earth when he tried. (Ezekiel 28; Revelation 12)

Now the question is, HOW DID WE GET THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS?

Ephesians 1: 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

That's why the whole passage...all the spiritual blessings, Paul emphasized that is because only IN CHRIST!

What are the Spiritual blessings that we have IN CHRIST?

Remember, all these spiritual blessings can never be taken away from us.

ELECTION, ADOPTION, REDEMPTION, REVELATION, POSSESSION

Election - *For he chose us in him*

Adoption - *he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ*

Redemption - *In him we have redemption through his blood,*

Revelation - *he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,*

Possession - *When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,*

We have God in us and God owns us.

WE HAVE ALL THE SPIRITUAL RICHES HEAVEN HAS TO OFFER NOT BECAUSE OF WHAT WE HAVE DONE!!! BUT BECAUSE OF THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST!!!

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

*6 to the praise of his glorious grace,
14... to the praise of his glory.*

ALL BY GOD'S GRACE FOR HIS GLORY!

Note : A lot of us say, “By God’s grace...” You know what whenever you say that, it’s also another way of saying “All glory belongs to God.”

Next week, we’ll talk about all these spiritual blessings by God’s grace in the next 2 Sundays.

Story : One of the first books I have read which I forgot the title but I remember the story on the last page, I’m sharing with you. A 90-year old Australian preacher was asked, “What is the one thing you have learned in life.” He said that the one thing he has learned in life is this, “It’s all by God’s grace.”

Remember, all the spiritual blessings, us being chosen (election), us becoming God’s children (adoption), us being saved (redeemed), us knowing God’s ultimate plan (revelation), us having God in our lives and God having us (possession)... IT’S NOT BECAUSE OF WHAT WE HAVE DONE OR WHAT WE DO...IT’S ALL BECAUSE OF WHAT CHRIST HAS DONE!

**QUOTE : That’s why this is what G.R.A.C.E. means
GOD’S RICHES AT CHRIST’S EXPENSE.
IT’S ALL BY GOD’S GRACE.**

All Glory To Our Lord Jesus Christ.

S.G.D.

For next week
It starts with election (being chosen by God)

We cannot become children of God, We cannot be saved or forgiven and We cannot have all the spiritual blessings, if GOD HASN’T CHOSEN US!