

“Blessed!”
Ephesians 1:1-14
12/19/21
Message 13

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Blessed!”

- **It's Christmas Time!!!**

- **Christmas is a time for GIFTS!**

- T- Shirt \$16.88
 - Sorry I Missed Your Call Was On Other Line Men Fishing
- Coffee Mug \$18.99
 - Of Course I Talk To Myself, Sometimes I Need Expert Advice
- Coffee Mug \$16.89
 - Great Boss Trump Speech Christmas Gift Mug
- Salami Bouquet \$50
- Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream Pint Combination Lock Protector \$33.95
- Bluetooth Banana Phone \$40
- Flare Hair Visor Cap \$13
- Animal Paws Socks - \$10.95
- Nativity Sets for Christmas \$20.99

- **Christmas Can also be a time of DEPRESSION**

- Some of the Reasons
 - Loss of Loved ones
 - Fractured Family
 - Loss of a job
 - Hurting Financially
 - Disappointments in Life
- We touch on Depression a few weeks ago
 - Is it okay for Christians to battle Depression?
 - We saw 3 great Spiritual leaders who battled with it
 - Yes, it's Okay
- BUT we need to get our FOCUS OFF Ourselves and on to GOD
 - This is the Reason for this message –
 - To Encourage US of the Position we have IN CHRIST
 - To POINT us back to who and what we are IN CHRIST

• **The Purpose for This Message & Book Of Ephesians**

- **To Encourage & Remind Us who and what we are IN CHRIST**
 - This is SO important to do!!!
- **Why – Because we Sometimes can Forget**
 - Illustrations – Not Living in the wealth we have in Christ

- “Crackers and Cheese”
 - There was a man who wanted to emigrate to the U.S. from Europe, he was not a wealthy man, so he spent years saving up so that he would be able to buy a ticket on the boat.
 - After years of saving, he had just enough money to buy a ticket and a little left over to get started when he got here.
 - As he was planning his trip he was thinking of ways to save what little money he had left, so one of the things he had done was to buy a bunch of crackers and cheese.
 - So while on his way over here he would only eat the cheese and crackers, thinking there was no way he could afford the meals on the ship!
 - Well when he was about three quarters of the way here, his cheese was moldy and hard and his crackers were soft and stale.
 - He said to himself, enough is enough I need to eat! And at that time a porter walked by with a cart full of food and he stopped the porter and asked how much for the food?
 - The porter asked do you have a ticket? He said YES! The porter said it comes with the ticket!!!
- Older Couple
 - Many years ago, the L.A. Times reported the story of an elderly man and his wife who were found dead in their apartment autopsies revealed that both had died of severe malnutrition, although investigators found a total of \$40,000 dollars in paper bags in closet.

- How tragic - they had a source of wealth that they didn't use - and consequently died - because of it! Malnourished!
- William Randolph Hearst
 - Once read of an extremely valuable piece of art, which he decided he must add to his extensive collection.
 - He instructed his agent to scour the galleries of the world to find the masterpiece he was determined to have at any price. After many months of painstaking search, the agent reported that the piece already belonged to Mr. Hearst and had been stored in one of his warehouses for many years.
- **These Stories can be example of US – Christians!**
 - We're living off Cheese and Crackers
 - When God would have us feasting at His table!
 - We're Starving to death Spiritual –
 - When we have Great wealth of His Word
 - We're Searching after More (Art)
 - When we already possess everything we need - Christ

● **The Book Of Ephesians**

- **It truly is one of the GREATEST books ever written**
 - This book has been called...
 - “The Pike’s Peak of Scripture”

- “The Grand Canyon of the Scripture”
- “The “Believers Bank Account”
- “Probably one of the most complete books ever written”
- “It truly is a great book and one of, if not my favorite”
- **The book can be given an easy-to-remember division such as:**
 - Wealth - Chapters 1–3
 - Walk – Chapter 3-5
 - Warfare Chapter 6

• **So this Morning we will Remind ourselves of 3 Power ways were Blessed**

- Blessed In The Father vs. 1-6
- Blessed In The Son vs. 7-12
- Blessed In The Spirit vs. 13-14

Blessed In The Father vs. 1-6

• **First: Context vs. 1-3**

- **1st Paul An Apostle vs. 1a**

Ephesians 1:1 (NKJV)

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

▪ **1st Who is Apostle Paul?**

- Paul was born Saul!
 - Saul means “asked”
 - Most likely he was named after King Saul!

- They were both from the tribe of Ben, and from Genesis the tribe of Ben was described as a ravenous wolf! Paul fit that description!
- Paul Responsible for killing many Christians
 - While on his way to kill more Christians, on the road to Damascus!!!!
 - Jesus came to him and appeared to him and asked him why are you persecuting Me? And was there converted!
 - His name was changed to Paul, (means little) he was sent by the Spirit to be an apostle to the gentiles. (Acts 9:15)
- Paul Was a Missionary
 - Paul was later sent out by God on 4 missionary journeys
 - Came to Ephesus
 - On his Second Missionary Trip
 - Briefly Stopped
 - Leaving behind Aquila and Priscilla
 - On his Third Missionary Trip
 - Stayed there for at least 2 or 3 years
- **2nd Paul is an Apostle**
 - Apostle: 652 apostolos (ap-os'-tol-os); from 649;
 - Means:

- A delegate; specially, an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ ["apostle"] (with miraculous powers): KJV-- apostle, messenger, he that is sent.
- A messenger, one who is sent forth by God!
- McGee, give 6 requirements for apostleship!
 - The apostle receives their commission directly from the living lips of Jesus.
 - The apostle saw the Savior after His resurrection.
 - The apostles exercised a special inspiration.
 - They expounded and wrote Scripture (John 14:26, 16:13/ Gal. 1:11-12)
 - They exercised supreme authority. (John 20:22-23/ 2 Cor. 10:8)
 - The badge of their authority was the power to work miracles (Mark 6:13/ Luke 9:1-2/ Acts 2:43)
 - They were given a universal commission to found churches (2 Cor. 11:28)
 - There are men today that have some of these gifts, but I feel that the word "apostle" speaks, the 12 minus Judas, plus Matthias and Paul.
- **3rd By the will of God!**
 - He was called by God Himself
 - What are you be the WILL of God?
 - Construction worker, police, teacher, etc... be the best you can for the cause of Christ.

○ **2nd To the Saints v. 1b**

Ephesians 1:1 (NKJV)

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

- Saints:
 - Greek is Hagios (hag'-ee-os)
- Means:
 - It means holy, to be set apart!
 - To be set aside for the sole use of God.
 - Sacred (physically, pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially, consecrated): KJV-- (most) holy (one, thing), saint.
- Who Are the SAINTS?
 - Some Confusion
 - Have to live a life that is amazing
 - After Death some official says – they are a saint
 - Paul is writing to saints in Ephesus!
 - They are alive
 - Saints are all those that believe in Christ Jesus as their Lord and Savior
 - As you know YOU are a saint if that is you today
 - McGee, “There are only two kinds of people today; the saints and the ain’ts. If you are a saint, than you are not an ain’t. If you ain’t an ain’t then you are a saint.

- **3rd Greetings v. 2**

Ephesians 1:2 (NKJV)

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Grace and Peace:

- Very familiar greeting for Paul... always in that order...
- You know you can't have PEACE without knowing the GRACE of God!!!!

- **4th Blessings v. 3**

Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)

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,

- **A Call to Bless The Father**

- Paul called for a blessing upon the Father
 - Recognizing His glory and honor and goodness
 - Because the Father has already blessed the believer with every spiritual blessing

- **Who HAS blessed us**

- This blessing is ours.
- God's resources are there for us always.
- This speaks of an attitude of certainty and assurance.

- **With every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**

- This describes both the kind of blessings and the location of those blessings.

- These are spiritual blessings, which are far better than material blessings.
- These blessings are ours in the heavenly places in Christ, they are higher, better, and more secure than earthly blessings.

▪ **In Christ**

- NOTE: In CHRIST:
 - This phrase appears 130 times in the N.T.
 - These blessing can only be known if you are 'IN CHRIST'
 - We must know Him, to know His blessings!
 - *Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "If you leave out the "in Christ" you will never have any blessings at all- Every blessing we enjoy as Christians comes to us through the Lord Jesus Christ!*
- Based on being "In Him"
 - Chapter 1
 - Christ's Grace / His Will / His Kind Intention / His Purpose / His Glory / His Call / His Inheritance / His Power
 - Chapter 2
 - His Love / His Workmanship
 - Chapter 3
 - His Spirit
 - Chapter 4

- His Gifts
- Chapter 5
 - His Sacrifice
- Chapter 6
 - His Strength / His Armor
- **So What are these BLESSINGS – Salvation – Victorious Christian Living**
 - BLESSED in the FATHER
 - BLESSED in the SON
 - BLESSED in the SPIRIT
 - The Father:
 - Thought it
 - The Son:
 - Bought it
 - The HS:
 - Brought it
 - We GOT IT

• **Second: Blessed in the Father vs. 4-6**

- **We will look at the 3 riches we have in the Father**
 - Chosen
 - Adopted
 - Accepted
- **1st Chosen before the Foundation of the World vs. 4**

Ephesians 1:4 (NKJV)

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

▪ **Chosen –**

- He knew you
 - Before there was a you –
 - Before there was a world
- Knew you To BE
 - Holy and without blame before HIM
- **Salah – Pause on this for a Minute**

▪ **The Doctrine of lection by theologians –**

- It basically means God picked you!!!
- One of the great mysteries of the Bible –
 - God Chose us –
 - BUT do we have a choice?
 - How can God choose us and yet still offer us a Choice that we make to come to Him

• *Wiersbe; The doctrine of divine election confuses some and frightens others, yet neither response is justified. A seminary professor once told me, “Try to explain election, and you will lose your mind. But explain it away, and you may lose your soul”*

▪ **3 Camps**

- **1st Calvinist**

- Believe the choice is all God's, we have no responsibility in the process that your salvation was predetermined, and you are either in or you are not – it is not your choice, just a luck of the draw
- **2nd Arminianist**
 - Believe: Calvin's view contradict what they know about God and His love for all men! And they go to the other extreme! No it wasn't God choice alone, it was my choice alone! God knew I would choose Him so He choose me, it is really all about me – I'm a good choice
- **3rd Biblicist – What I am**
 - The Bible teaches BOTH are true
 - **First: He chose us**
 - Of which God is the subject and believers are the object. Election is God's sovereign work!!

John 15:16 (NKJV)

16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 (NKJV)

13 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,

- We need to rejoice in this truth!
- He chose you before there ever was a world!
- *Spurgeon said; "I'm so glad that God chose me before the foundation of the world, because he never would have chosen me after I was born"!*

- Educated Choice / His love for us was an educated love!

○ **Second: We have a choice!!!**

- God has given us a choice as well!

John 3:16 (NKJV)

16 *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

Matthew 23:37 (NKJV)

37 *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!*

- Other verses

- John 1:29
- 1 Timothy 2:6
- John 5:40

- **Confusion**

- Most of the confusion comes from the fact that we can't understand with our pea sized brains the vastness of God.

Isaiah 55:9 (NKJV)

9 *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.*

- BE Okay with mystery with God!
- We simply can't understand all of who God is!
- If I could completely understand Him, I would be equal to Him,

- But because His thoughts are higher than mine, He is big enough to take care of me. He is God
- Can we Understand the
 - Trinity?
 - **2nd Adopted v. 5**

Ephesians 1:5 (NKJV)

5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

- Adoption means that we are brought into the place of full-grown sons.
- **It means 2 very important things!**
 - **1st Regeneration**
 - We receive this at the moment of conversion!
 - Made NEW (2 Cor. 5:17)
 - **2nd A place of Position and Privilege!**
 - ALL He has is ours at the very moment of conversion!
 - We don't have to wait to enjoy His riches they are already ours!
 - Not only salvation and personal transformation
 - But also a warm, confident relationship with the Father.
 - In Roman law –

- When the adoption was complete it was complete indeed.
- The person who had been adopted had all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family and completely lost all rights in his old family.
- In the eyes of the law he was a new person.
- So new was he that even all debts and obligations connected with his previous family were abolished as if they had never existed.
- We have all of Christ at the moment of conversion the question is does He have all of you?
- **3rd Accepted v. 6**

Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV)

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

- Accepted – Greek: charito,
- Means - “Highly favored” or “full of grace” as in (Luke 1:28) that is granted to every believer because of God’s grace.
- Jesus was completely accepted by the Father.
 - All His
 - Character
 - His words
 - His work
 - And now we are accepted in the Beloved.
- Lesson
 - Where are you Looking for Acceptance?

- We go to great lengths to be accepted by this world... fashion, competition, always looking for approval from others....
- But in Christ we are accepted by the only One that matters
- It all GRACE and a Christian who truly understands that will never trample on GRACE

Blessed In The Son vs. 7-12

- As we look at the riches that the Son gives us we will see 4 main points!
 - He has Redeemed
 - He has Forgiven
 - He has Revealed God's will
 - He has made us an Inheritance!

First: He has Redeemed Us v. 7a

Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV)

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

- **1st We were imprisoned / We were in the SLAVE PIT OF SIN**
 - No doubt Paul was making a reference back in Roman times
 - Slavery was part of the culture.
 - One of the things that people would do is go to the marketplace to purchase slaves.
 - Now Some would occasionally go into the marketplace
 - Purchase a slave, and buy their freedom for them.
 - This is what's being talked about here—being delivered, having your freedom bought for you.

○ **2nd The word Redeem means to Buy Back –**

- We once belonged to God
 - Changed in the garden - man forfeited that relationship with God
- Jesus came to buy us Back –
 - Jesus came to delivery us from the slavery of sin!!!

○ **3rd Thru His blood**

- The Human soul is such a Precious - That it cost the Son of God His Life!!!!
- HIS BLOOD FLOWED

1 Peter 1:18–19 (NKJV)

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,
19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

• **Second: Forgiveness v. 7b**

Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV)

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

○ **1st Means Forgive - “To Carry Away”**

- Illustrated:
 - “The Day of Atonement” (Lev. 16)
 - What they would do on this day is take 2 goats and they would bring them to Aaron and he confesses the sins of Israel over them and would cast lots over them! And the

one in which the lot was cast that was the Lords. They would take it and sacrifice it too God! A sacrifice for sins

- The other (which was called the SCAPEGOAT) a person would take this goat into the wilderness and let it go never to be seen again!
- This was a sign to them that their sins had been taken away never to return!

Psalm 103:12 (NKJV)

12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Isaiah 43:25 (NKJV)

25 "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

- God is saying that when we confess our sin He forgets!

○ **2nd 2 - Aspects to Forgiveness**

▪ **1st Eternal Forgiveness**

- As Far as God is Concerned – It's Finished
- Forgiven from our past, present, and yes even future sins!

▪ **2nd Restorative Forgiveness**

- What this is: Is known as the Christian bar of soap! (1 John 1:9)
- His Grace is Always There

• ***Charles Hodge "God gives from an unlimited treasure house, Grace is unlimited favor, an overflowing abundance of unmerited love, inexhaustible & freely accessible through Christ"***

- **Third: He revealed His will to us vs. 8-10**

- **1st Which He made to abound v. 8**

Ephesians 1:8 (NKJV)

8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

- Abound (Thrive) Towards US
- In all wisdom and prudence that He gave this to us.
- It brings divinely-bestowed spiritual understanding

- **2nd The Mystery Of His Will v. 9**

Ephesians 1:9 (NKJV)

9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,

- The word Mystery:
 - It means a sacred secret once hidden but now revealed to God's people
 - God's great plan and purpose which was once hidden but is now revealed to us in Jesus.
- What this means is
 - God has included us in His plans
 - We know what He is doing!
 - We see His greater picture!

- **3rd Jesus will gather us to be together with Him forever! V. 10**

Ephesians 1:10 (NKJV)

10 *that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.*

- Dispensation:
 - Can be translated (Administration) (Stewardship)
 - It means an order condition of things!
 - The idea behind the word dispensation also reflects a plan or a strategy.
- Dispensation Of Time
 - Meaning the completion of history
 - There is a dispensation of wrath
 - Which will come in what we commonly call the Tribulation Period.
 - The dispensation of the fullness of the times
 - When He will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth in Him.
 - This is the mystery of His will
 - We've been given insight into the Lord Jesus Christ is going to come back.

• **Fourth: He has made us an inheritance vs. 11-12**

Ephesians 1:11–12 (NKJV)

11 *In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,*
12 *that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.*

- **1st We have an Inheritance**

- This means that we have an inheritance in Him! all the riches of heaven!
- Incorruptible! Won't perish! Can't be destroyed nothing ruin it!

Blessed In The Spirit vs. 13-14

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV)

13 *In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,*

14 *who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

• **First: Sealed**

○ **1st We are sealed by the Holy Spirit!**

- What does this mean?
 - A reference to ancient practices of sealing a letter with sealing wax and impressing the wax with a raised seal worn on a ring, bearing an identifying image!

• **Second: Being sealed with the spirit speaks of 5 things...**

○ **1st Finished Transaction**

- Even today when legal documents are processed they are stamped with a seal to signify completion
- You are sealed signifying
 - It is finished = Salvation is Complete

○ **2nd Seal Speaks of Ownership**

- God has put His seal on us because He purchased us
- His Spirit bears witness to that fact.

Romans 8:16 (NKJV)

16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,*

○ **3rd Seal Speaks of Authentic**

- A seal on a letter was like a signature or - personal letter head
- King's seal - Authentic
- Like a Passport
- Now Probably the Biggest mark of the Spirit concerning a person's authenticity of being a Child of God is the Fruit of the Spirit in their lives

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)

22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*
23 *gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

○ **4th Seal Speaks of Security and Protection**

- Tomb of Jesus - Roman seal = DON'T mess with
- God has put His seal upon us = Don't mess with our salvation
 - Satan can't tamper with us.
 - He can't undo what God has done

John 10:27–30 (NKJV)

27 *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*
28 *And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.*
29 *My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.*
30 *I and My Father are one."*

○ **5th The spirit is a guarantee of our Inheritance:**

- This same idea is presented for us in two other places in the NT.

2 Corinthians 1:22 (NKJV)

22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

2 Corinthians 5:5 (NKJV)

5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

- The Seal of the Spirit given to us as a guarantee speaks of 2 ideas
 - 1st Earnest Money
 - 2nd Carries idea of engagement / like a ring

Closing

- It is good to remind ourselves of our riches in Christ!
- Illustration
 - Navajo Indian who became rich when oil was found on his property.
 - He took all the money and put it in a bank. His banker became familiar with the habits of this old man.
 - Every so often, the man would show up at the bank and say to the banker
 - Grass all gone, sheep all sick, water holes all dry.
 - Without a word the banker knew just what to do, he would take him and show him his money
 - The man would count his money for a while then leave, and when he left he said,
 - Grass all green, sheep all well, water holes full!

- It's amazing the change that will come when we review our resource