

Our Spiritual Blessings in Christ

Part 1 – Praise God for His choice

Ephesians 1:3,4

Introduction:

- A. Blessings rain down upon us every day
1. Physical blessings – name some you received this past week.
 2. Spiritual blessings – Eph 1 names some
- B. Eph 1:3-14 is one lengthy sentence
1. It has a recurring p_____ which divides this sentence into three parts - to the praise of the glory of His grace (vv 6,12,14)
 2. The phrase *in Christ* or its equivalent (e.g. *in Him, in the Beloved*) is found _____ times in this sentence (vv 3,4,6,7,9, 10,12,13).
 - a. Every central t_____ uses this phrase.
 - b. Every blessing is c_____ with Christ.
 3. The sentence opens with calling God b_____ or praised.
 - a. God is called the blessed one in Mk 14:61 and is said to be blessed f_____ in Rom 1:25; 9:5; 2Cor 11:31.
 - b. God is blessed or praised because of the spiritual blessings He pours out on all s_____ (i.e. believer)
- C. The spiritual blessings are in the h_____ places (literally heavenlies).
1. This Greek phrase, *in the heavenlies*, only occurs in Ephesians and occurs _____ times (Eph 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).
 2. This Greek phrase does not necessarily mean heaven
 - a. Eph 6:12 states that spiritual w_____ exists in the heavenlies (KJV – high places), which cannot refer to heaven (see Rev 12 where all wickedness was removed from heaven).
 - b. In other Greek literature, this phrase was used to refer to the un_____ places where gods lived.
 - c. Our spiritual blessings are in unseen places
 - 1) This emphasizes the s_____ of those blessings.
 - 2) Col 3:3 has a similar statement – our life is h_____ with Christ in God. No one can steal it.
- D. The first spiritual blessing – praise God for His choice

Praise God for the object of His choice – us C_____

A. Who are us?

1. Refers back to verse 1, the s_____
2. This statement is only true for a genuine b_____ in Christ.

B. For what did He choose us?

1. The Greek text literally reads, *for us to be holy and blameless before Him* (the NIV translates it this way).
2. Even though we were sinful, He chose to see us as holy and blameless – this is s_____.

C. Your salvation experience

1. Is not to be interpreted by you (I chose Christ by my own free will).
2. Is to be e_____ by God's word
 - a. After Adam and Eve sinned no human being had f_____ will but an enslaved will.
 - 1) Is 53:6 – all of us have turned to our own w_____
 - 2) Rom 6:17 – as unbelievers were enslaved to s_____
 - 3) 1Cor 2:14 – in our naturally born state we are incapable of understanding the things of God and even a_____ them.
 - b. We were not saved by our own choice but by God's choice.
 - 1) We r_____ to God's choice
 - 2) Believers are called the c_____ ones (Rom 8:33; Col 3:12; 1Pet 1:1; Rev 17:14)

Praise God for the realm of His choice – in C_____

A. A common misunderstanding is that God chose us to be in Christ.

1. This passage tells us what God chose us to be – h_____ and blameless in His sight.
2. God's choice was that only in Christ can anyone be holy and blameless in His sight.

B. There are only two spiritual r_____ (1Cor 15:20-22)

1. In A_____
 - a. Everyone is b_____ into this spiritual realm.
 - b. This is the realm of spiritual d_____.
 - c. In Adam, all d_____
2. In C_____
 - a. Came the r_____ from the dead.
 - b. In Christ, all will be made a_____

- C. Eph 1:4 – God chose Christ to be the realm of s_____
1. No one can be saved by their own g_____ (Is 64:6; Mk 10:18)
 2. Jesus is the o_____ way to salvation (Jn 14:6).
 3. Only in Christ is our sinfulness removed from God's e_____ (see 2Cor 5:17; Rom 8:1).

Praise God for the time of His choice – before c_____

- A. God did not plan Adam and Eve's failure, but He planned f_____ their failure before creating them by having a salvation plan.
1. God wanted Moses to be His spokesmen to the people of Israel, but Moses adamantly refused. So God chose A_____ instead (Ex 4:10-16)
 2. God chose Moses to deliver the people of Israel out of Egyptian slavery, but on the way to Egypt it states that God sought to k_____ him because of his refusal to circumcise his son. (Ex 4:24-26)
 3. God would have established Saul's reign forever being passed down from son to son (1Sam 13:13,14). But Saul rebelled against God. So God established David's kingship to be eternal, passed from son to son, (1Sam 13:13,14. 16:12,13; 2Sam 7:16).
 4. When Adam and Eve failed, God revealed His s_____ plan to them (Gen 3:15).
- B. God was not obligated to have a salvation plan for humanity
1. God did not save the a_____ who sinned (Jude 1:6)
 2. We should feel blessed that God had a salvation plan for human beings before creating the world.
- C. Some have wrongly derived a doctrine from this passage that God decided before creation the specific people that He would save.
- a. Paul is not being s_____ (He chose me in Christ before the foundation of the world; on the contrary Paul stated that God chose Him while in his mother's womb – Gal 1:15).
 - b. Paul is being general (He chose us, saints in general, whoever believes in Him, whoever they may be).

Before the creation of the world, God chose that in Christ all believers would be holy and blameless before Him.