**EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN CHRIST**

Ephesians 1:1-14

Key Verse 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.

**Introduction**

 Paul spent three complete years as a pastor in Ephesus and had taken a critical and momentous step to separate the disciples from the Synagogue to raise them up as disciples, which happened at a Tyrannus lecture hall. He must have laboured, watched, and wept for them. (Acts 20:13-38) The book of Ephesians is a letter that was later written by Apostle Paul while he was in prison in Rome in order to encourage Ephesians believers. In this passage Apostle Paul praised God because of the spiritual and heavenly blessings that God gives to all believers in Jesus Christ. Because of the blessings Paul was filled with praise, thanks, and joy even though he was suffering in the prison. Paul wanted the believers to give thanks to God and live a holy life remembering God’s blessings.

1. **Read verses 1-3. How did Paul view himself and the recipients of his letter? (1) How does he praise God and Jesus Christ? (2-3) What can we learn from Paul’s greeting?**

**1-1, Read verses 1-3.**

 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,To God’s holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 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.

**1-2, How did Paul view himself and the recipients of his letter? (1)**

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

* ‘apostle’ means ‘someone who is sent’. Paul had a clear identity as one who was sent by Lord Jesus to preach the gospel of Jesus.
* Paul became an apostle by the will of God, not by his own or by another’s will.
* He was proud of being called to be an apostle
* He became an apostle, not because of his ability, but because of God’s calling
* He couldn’t stop living as an apostle because it was God’s will and his calling.

***God’s holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus***

* God’s holy people : They became holy in Jesus.
* They were called out of a corrupted world to live a holy life.
* They had faith in Jesus and kept faith consistently.
* They were faithful in serving Jesus and trusting in Him.
* Paul reminded them of their identity as God’s holy people.
* We have many titles in this world but our true and ultimate identity is God’s holy people. We have to live with this identity.

**1-3, How does he praise God and Jesus Christ? (2-3)**

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

* Paul reminded the believers of the Spiritual blessings in Christ that they have already received.
* Spiritual blessings are the best blessings, with which God blesses us, and for which we are to praise Him.
* Spiritual blessings can be given to us only in and through Jesus Christ.
* God freely gives these blessings to us.
* Such spiritual blessings are different from worldly blessings such as wealth or good health which are temporary.

 ***who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.***

* These blessings are not from the world. They are heavenly blessings that come from heaven and are designed to prepare men for heaven. These blessings are secure in Jesus.
* Spiritual and heavenly things are the best blessings, without which we cannot be satisfied.
* We should set our heart on things from heaven instead of things on the earth.
* Spiritual blessings are given to us in Jesus through the work of Holy Spirit.
* Paul described spiritual blessings in detail from verses 4-13.

**1-4, What can we learn from Paul’s greeting?**

* Paul was in a terrible prison but his heart was filled with praise and joy because of spiritual and heavenly blessings.
* He comforted and encouraged the believers by reminding them of these blessings.
* If we have no appreciation for spiritual blessing, then we live at the level of animals. Animals live only to eat, sleep, entertain themselves, and to reproduce. We are made in the image of God and He has something much higher for us, yet many choose to live at the level of animals. God wants us to know every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

**2. Read verses 4-8a. When and why did God choose us? (4) For what purpose did he predestine us? (5) How did Jesus show the riches of God’s grace? (6-8a)**

**2-1. Read verses 4-8a.**

 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,

**2-2. When and why did God choose us? (4)**

* He chose us in Jesus before the creation of the world
* It was done through his sovereignty and grace, not depending on our merits.
* The choosing was done in and through Jesus.

***‘before the creation of the world’***

* The choosing was done even before the creation according to his grace and sovereign will.
* He chose us to be holy and blameless in his sight.
* God chose believers to be holy and blameless in his sight by living according to God’s image.
* God chose them not because they would be holy, but because he determined to make them holy.
* They would be blameless not just in outward appearance, but internally and before God.
* Such holiness can be obtained in and through Jesus only.
* We should live our practical lives according to God’s purpose.

**2-3. For what purpose did he predestine us? (5)**

***he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and wil.***

* ‘predestined’ - God started His salvation work for us according to his sovereignty.
* ‘for adoption to sonship’ - God made us his family members to live with him, to inherit his kingdom, and to have his image as his children.
* God predestined us in accordance with his pleasure and will. He was pleased to choose and did all things according to his will.
* According to Roman law, when 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. Even all debts and obligations connected with his previous family were abolished as if they had never existed.

**2-4. How did Jesus show the riches of God’s grace? (6-8a)**

 ***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,***

* God’s grace reflects the glory of God. Through the grace that God gave us through Jesus, we can see God’s glory.
* The purpose of this grace is to let us praise God. God saved us and made us his children so we would give thanks to him and praise him.
* We should live and conduct ourselves in such a manner that his rich grace might be magnified, and appear glorious - worthy of the highest praise.
* All is of God, and from God, and through God. Therefore all must be for God’s glory.
* In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.
* Redemption through his blood. We used be slaves of sin. God set us free from slavery through Jesus’ blood. No freedom without redemption.
* It was by reason of sin that we were made captive. No one can be released from captivity but by the remission of sins.
* The guilt and the stain of sin could be removed only by the blood of Jesus. All our spiritual blessings flow down to us from this stream.
* This great blessing, which comes freely to us, was dearly bought and paid for by Jesus.
* It is according to the riches of God's grace. Christ's satisfaction and God's rich grace are very consistent in the great affair of man's redemption.

**3. Read verses 8b-10. What is the mystery of God’s will? (8b-9, 3:6; Ro 16:25-26) What will be the outcome when the mystery of God’s will is fulfilled? (10, 1Co 15:24-28)**

 **3-1. Read verses 8b-10.**

 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.

**3-2. What is the mystery of God’s will? (8b-9, 3:6; Ro 16:25-26)**

 ***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,***

***This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. (Eph 3:6)***

 ***Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith (Romans 16:25-26)***

* The mystery was hidden but revealed through Jesus.
* The mystery is the salvation of God that was achieved and revealed through Jesus Christ.
* The mystery unifies Jews and Gentiles in Jesus so that even Gentiles may become heirs of the kingdom of God together with the Jews.
* The mystery was fully revealed through the gospel of Jesus.
* True wisdom and understanding is to understand the mystery of God, the gospel of Jesus.
* God planned to redeem sinners from the slavery of sin through the blood of Jesus and reveal the mystery to the Gentiles.

**3-3. What will be the outcome when the mystery of God’s will is fulfilled? (10, 1Co 15:24-28)**

***to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.***

 ***Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25 For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 27 For he “has put everything under his feet.” Now when it says that “everything” has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. 28 When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Co 15:24-28)***

* Created beings had been separated without order because sin and Satan had ruled over the world.
* God would bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.
* Union in and with Christ is a great privilege, a spiritual blessing, and the foundation of many other blessings.
* Jews and Gentiles were united to each other by being united to Christ.
* Things in heaven and things on earth are gathered together in him; peace made, correspondence settled, between heaven and earth, through him.

**4. Read verses 11-14. What is God’s purpose in choosing and predestining us? (11, 12) When were we included in Jesus? (13a) Describe the Holy Spirit’s work. (13b-14)**

**4-1. Read verses 11-14.**

 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.

**4-2. What is God’s purpose in choosing and predestining us? (11, 12)**

 ***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, In order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory***

* God saved us so we would praise him and reveal his glory through our lives.
* The goal of God's ultimate plan is to glorify Him.

**4-3. When were we included in Jesus? (13a)**

 you also were included in Christ **when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation**.

* When we heard the gospel, the message of salvation and believed it, we were included to be children of God.
* It is crucial for one person to hear the gospel of Jesus to be saved.
* God's sovereign choice works, but it does not exclude human responsibility or cooperation. We should also trust, hear the word of truth, and believe.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHiuLC0rYNU>

* This is the clear reason why we should preach the gospel of Jesus in season and out of season.

**4-4. Describe the Holy Spirit’s work. (13b-14)**

 ***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.***



* The Holy Spirit confirms our salvation and guarantees our inheritance of kingdom of God.
* The seal is from the Holy Spirit Himself. His presence is our security. This is not an emotional feeling or some mysterious inward experience.
* The Holy Spirit is our only downpayment of coming glory.
* · He is called the Spirit of promise, as he is the promised Spirit. By him believers are sealed; that is, separated and set apart for God, and distinguished and marked as belonging to him.
* · The Spirit is the deposit of our inheritance. The deposit is part of the payment, and it secures the full sum.
* · He is said to be the deposit because this deposit makes it as sure to the heirs as though they were already possessed of it; and it is purchased for them by the blood of Christ.

**Conclusion**

 Throughout this short passage the words “in Christ” are repeated several times. Apostle Paul praised God for the spiritual blessings given in Christ. When we think about temporal or earthly things too much, we end up losing our spiritual eyesight, and fail to give thanks for what God has already blessed us with. But Paul reminds us of God’s blessings in the heavenly realm. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in and through Jesus Christ. This passage is not about God predetermining which individuals will be in Christ. Rather it is about God predetermining what will become of those who are in Christ through belief in His truth. (13) God genuinely desires all to come to Him. And all who do come will be trained and sanctified into his image and guaranteed to be adopted and glorified at the end, because that is what our God has predetermined for all who believe in Him through hearing His words. Amen.



**One word: Every Spiritual blessing!**