

Every Spiritual Blessing

Ephesians 1:1-6

5/26/02

Intro

- Memorial Day
 - To remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.
 - To remember those who are in harms way now even as we worship in freedom.
 - That freedom to assemble is being challenged and those who risk their lives to protect it should be honored.

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This letter was written to the church in Ephesus, a coastal town on the western edge of Turkey. The church was founded by Paul on his third missionary journey. He had stayed in Ephesus for about two years and many wonderful and miraculous things happened through Paul during that time.

This letter was written by Paul while he was under house arrest in Rome. He had been captured in Jerusalem and appealed to Caesar, so he is a prisoner in Rome waiting to discover what will come of him.

In the meantime, he is meeting with people and writing letters to the churches he loved and cared for. This letter and many more are the result.

Though it was written to the church at Ephesus, it is also an open letter, to all “who are faithful in Christ Jesus.”

Here Paul begins by summarizing some of the greatest spiritual blessings that God has for us.

<p><i>Intro.</i> There is much to learn here, just in the introduction of this letter.</p>

Their letters commonly began with who wrote the letter and to whom it was sent. We do this in formal letters.

Vs 1 A. An apostle by the will of God.

- Some say that being a pastor, or an evangelist, is the highest calling of God. But the highest calling of God is whatever He has called you to.
 - The hardest thing in the world is to try to be something that God didn't make you.
 - That's also true in what kind of a pastor a person is – what am I called to be? Not what is something else called to be that I would like to imitate!!

B. Grace and peace go together over and over in the New Testament, and always in this order.

- We cannot know the peace of God until we know the grace of God.
- If we have a work relationship with God we will never know peace because we are just not that perfect.

C. From the Lord Jesus Christ.

Vs 2

- Some people believe that this is His name, first, middle and last.
- Jesus is His name, Lord and Christ are titles. Lord refers to His relationship to us and Christ refers to His relationship to God (chosen One of God.)

- If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you will be saved. Confess what? That Jesus is Lord.

Illus – Jesus said, “Why do you call me ‘Lord’ if you don’t do what I say? It can’t be an empty confession.

I. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

Vs 3 A. Notice the emphasis on spiritual blessings.

- In contrast to material blessings. The prosperity gospel says that God has blessed us with every material blessing and we just need to recognize this.
- Material things are not always a blessing. In fact, sometimes, they may well be a curse.
- No, Paul here is emphasizing the fact that in Christ we are blessed with every spiritual blessing.

B. If we walk in the Spirit, we are interested in things of the Spirit.

- Are you interested in spiritual things?

Illus – You can tell what a person is interested in by the things he talks about. Some talk only of sports, or of cars, or of computers, or of stocks, etc.

But out of the abundance of a man’s heart – he speaks.

C. We shouldn’t miss the powerful point that Paul is making.

- Spiritual blessings come first.
- We then respond.

Illus – Sadly, many teachers today place too much emphasis on the responsibility of man. They beat the sheep and make them feel guilty as they respond to this.

We should know with certainty that God is blessing us with every spiritual blessing and then respond out of a heart filled with love and thanksgiving.

We can’t be what we ought to be without that which God has already done for us.

II. Spiritual blessings of the Father.

Vs 4

A. God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.

- God has given us the capacity to choose.
- But does not God have the right to also choose us?
- He chose us first, before the foundation of the world.

B. In love, He predestined us to adoption as sons.

- Pre-destiny. Like prophecy, the outcome is certain.
- According to the kind intention of His will.
- He is committed to us!!

Illus- Elisha and his servant.

Illus- This has confused many, but one statement should help clarify it for all. There won't be anyone in hell that will be able to say, "I wanted to be saved, but you but me on the wrong list." Anyone who wishes to be saved; will indeed be saved!!

Conclusion

What has God chosen us for? that we should be holy and blameless before Him (vs 4).

"I know in Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep me from falling and to present me faultless on that great day."

How is this possible? Because He has chosen us in Christ Jesus. We are holy because we have been given the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus!!