



THE GOSPEL TRANSFORMS

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

EPHESIANS 1

**Ephesians 1:7-14:
The Blessed God
Blesses for His Glory:
Part 2**

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Our text for today is Ephesians 1:7-14. In these verses, Paul finishes the thought he began in verse 3: The Blessed God blesses for his glory. In verses 3-6, we learned that God is blessed and that he blesses his people with election and adoption: two amazing blessings. He does this for the praise of his glory (6). This week we will learn that God blesses his people with three other unexpected and



incredible blessings: redemption (7-10), an inheritance (11-12), and being sealed by the Spirit (13-14). Like the first two blessings, God blesses us with these for his glory. We see this explicitly stated in verse 12, and 14 and alluded to in verse 10.

The main idea of this passage is “The blessed God blesses for his glory.” Paul’s explanation of these important spiritual blessings is not meant to merely to communicate information, but the purpose is to move his reader to praise God, so that is my hope today. My hope today is that we would understand the blessings of redemption, our future inheritance, and our current sealing with the Spirit more fully for the sake of deeper and more profound joy that overflows to deeper praise of God.

SPIRITUAL BLESSING #3

REDEMPTION (7-10)

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7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known[a] to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. - Ephesians 1:7-10



The third spiritual blessing that God's gives his people is redemption. Now, the word "redemption" is not restricted to a spiritual sense. Hebrews 11:35 refers to Christian martyrs refusing to accept "release" from their unjust suffering. The word redemption simply means "release." Now, when the biblical authors speak of our spiritual redemption, they are describing one aspect of our salvation; namely, the fact that when God saves us, he releases us from spiritual captivity. He sets us free from the bondage of our sin (Romans 3:24; Hebrews 9:15). Sin enslaves, and non-Christian friend, I want you to know that you can be released from the bondage of your sin. Church family let me remind you and myself again, just as Paul is reminded the Ephesian church, we have been released from the bondage of our sin. This release has happened in Christ.

Redemption – release from spiritual captivity – is found only in Christ (7). We have already learned that election is in Christ (4) and adoption is to Christ (5). Redemption, similarly, is in Christ (7). Redemption is found in nothing else and in no one else. Only Christ can break the spiritual bounds enslaving sinners; yet, generation after generation tries and generation after generation fails. Friends, things of this world can never liberate you. Money is powerless to break these spiritual chains as is good looks, prestige, fame, and



power. Nothing of this world can set a spiritual prisoner free; yet, Christ can. Christ can release spiritual captors because Christ has defeated our spiritual foes. Redemption is found in Christ. Not only is redemption in Christ, but redemption is through the blood of Christ (7). Sin is the bounds of the spiritual captive. In other words, a sinner not in Christ is enslaved by their sin. What you and I need, then, is forgiveness. We need someone to take our sins away, and praise the Lord, this is exactly what Jesus does. This is the point of Hebrews 9:15 – Christ has redeemed us from sin through his death. What is necessary for our forgiveness is Jesus’ death. Without his death, we are lost; we are not redeemed. And what is sufficient for our forgiveness is Jesus’ death. Nothing can be added to Jesus’ death to make it more powerful. Redemption is through Jesus’ blood.

Redemption is in Christ and through Christ and flows from the riches of God’s grace (7). God redeems sinners – that is, he releases us from our spiritual captivity – by forgiving us of our sins, and this is gracious of God. Notice that verse 7 does not say, “according to our good works;” it says, “according to the riches of his grace.” God’s grace truly is abundant. God has a lot of grace, and let’s rejoice that he loves to share it. God loves to give favor as a gift to those who do not deserve it. This



is our God. He is blessed – that is, he is good – and he shares his blessing – that means he shows grace to sinners. This is our God.

Redemption is also wise. God’s act of extending an abundance of grace to us is wise, and the idea here seems to be this: “God’s act of causing grace to abound on us is according to plan and accomplishes the best reality.” That reality is abundant praise to God; that reality is the extension of God’s glory over the entire planet for this reality – grace abounding to sinners – causes intense joy and delight in the hearts of sinners. Extending abundant grace to sinners enlarges the hearts of sinners so that only a life of enjoying and praising God satisfies, and nothing else (Psalm 119:32). Redemption is wise.

Paul further points out that redemption is on purpose. As just discussed, God’s plan to redeem sinners is on purpose. The purpose is to extend the glory of God over the planet. We read about that in verse 6, verse 12, and verse 14. A related idea is discussed here in verse 10. God blesses his people with spiritual blessings so that God might unite all things in Christ. Of course, uniting all things in Christ leads to the praise of God’s glorious grace; and yet, here we see a different facet of God’s purpose. God glorifies himself in Christ. God’s glory is,



therefore, inherently other centered. Yes, it is God-centered. God seeks to glorify himself; and, because God is Trinity, it is also other-centered, but notice, that it is not you and I centered. The Father glorifies himself in the Son; the Son glorifies himself in the Father, and the Spirit works for the glory of the Father in the Son. Do you see the amazing glory of God? Each person of the Trinity works for the glory of the other; in other words, we are seeing in Ephesians 1:9-10 a glimpse of the trajectory of the universe, and we see that the aim of the universe is a loving, glorious gift exchange between the members of the Trinity.

Remember, John 17:24-26. We see here the love that the Father had for the Son from eternity past to eternity future. We see it here, and we glorify God for it. We glorify God for it because it is lovely and because we get to participate in it because we are in Christ.

SPIRITUAL BLESSING #4: INHERITANCE (11-12)

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11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. - Ephesians 1:11-12



The fourth spiritual blessing is an inheritance. The inheritance that God gives us as a gift is not physical; it is not of this world. Hebrews 9:15 tells us that our inheritance is eternal. 1 Peter 1:4 tells us that the inheritance of God's people is imperishable, undefiled, unfading, and kept in heaven for us. In other words, there is no threat to our truly satisfying inheritance.

Paul discusses our inheritance in Galatians 3 and connects it to the promises of Abraham. God's promise to Abraham is that he would establish his kingdom through Abraham (see Genesis 12, 15, 17). Our inheritance then is that we get to partake of God's kingdom. However, God's people do not merely live in God's people as a servant, we partake of God's kingdom as God's children for children get an inheritance, servants do not. Revelation 22 describes our inheritance as the privilege of reigning and ruling with God in the new earth. This is our future inheritance. We get to be with God doing what God made us to do, and we must know throughout our earthly sojourn, this future is guaranteed – it is kept in heaven for us. Eternity joy awaits those in Christ. Praise be to God.



God gives us this inheritance for his glory, and God giving an inheritance to his prior enemies is incredibly glorious.



God gives us this inheritance for his glory, and God giving an inheritance to his prior enemies is incredibly glorious. This is our God's reputation. Our God takes rebels like us, and he makes us his children. Church family the more immense the blessing the more profound the delight; and thus, the more glorious the praise. Luke 7:41-50 discusses this concept. A woman comes to Jesus and washes his feet with her tears and hair. Unlike Jesus' proud hosts, this woman loved Jesus. Jesus replies by saying, "Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little. Let's gaze into this concept together. The act of taking enemies and transforming them in Christ into children evokes profound love greater love. The result of experiencing profound love is profound praise. We have experienced profound love; and thus, we profoundly love and profoundly praise (12).

SPIRITUAL BLESSING #5: SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (13-14)

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13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee[a] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,[b] to the praise of his glory. - Ephesians 1:13-14



The fifth spiritual blessing is that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. The concept of being sealed with the Spirit indicates that the Spirit protects us and proves that we are indeed children of God. Notice that this is a blessing for all believers. This blessing is not just for some Christians. If you have believed in Christ, then God the Spirit is protecting you from all evil.

Now protection is important in a broken world. People spend hundreds of dollars on home security systems and thousands on weapons. People prize the skill of self-defense, and the Payment Protection Program cost the US government trillions of dollars. Protection is important yet costly in this broken world. Our God though promises to bless his people with the greatest source of protection – himself – and this is a gift. The blessing of being sealed with the securing and protective power of God is not earned; it is freely giving to those who believe.

This brings us to our next point: we are sealed with the Spirit after hearing and believing the gospel. The means of spreading God's blessings and glory over the planet is our preaching of the gospel. Thus, we should expect this speech, this conversation topic, to be the most attacked by the devil, and it is. When preaching the gospel, all kinds of fears and hindrances appear.



Strangely, we second, third, and fourth guess ourselves, yet a fourth guess never enters our mind when we talk about the weather. Satan whispers all kinds of lies in our ears and distracts us with lesser ideals. When trying to preach the gospel, we quickly begin to wonder if maintaining a relationship with that person is better than preaching the gospel. We sometimes think that the possibility of offense warrants silence. Brother and sister, God decided in his freedom that his blessings – election, adoption, redemption, an inheritance, and being sealed with the Holy Spirit – would spread through the preaching of the gospel by the redeemed. Your words and lips, my words and lips, are the means that God blesses the world. Therefore, and I am speaking to myself, let's preach so that all might hear and so that some might believe.

Church family, 2 billion people have never heard the name of Jesus Christ before. Therefore, they have experienced none of these blessings. There are 2 billion people on this planet who have no idea who Jesus is – 1.5 billion of these people live in South Asia – Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. These people are not sealed with the Spirit. Therefore, we must think of the implications. If they



are not sealed with the Spirit, then they have no spiritual protection from the demonic forces of this world. Remember, the concept of being sealed implies protection. We see this in Revelation 7:3 where God puts his seal on his people to protect them from future wrath. Thus, these 2 billion people are vulnerable to all kinds of destructive forces. In fact, outside of Christ – and these 2 billion are outside of Christ – these people are in the dominion of darkness (Colossians 1:13-14) and have no power to resist the schemes of the devil since the devil and his demons only flee before Jesus (Acts 19:15).

Church family we have incredible protection: God the Spirit, but the lost lack this protection. Therefore, let's do two things. Let's take seriously the protection we have in the Spirit and resist the worldly desire to find protection and safety ultimately in our status, job, or money. Let's also pray that for the lost – especially for those who have never heard the name of Jesus. They lack protection from the demonic forces; yet, there is a God who delights in protecting them. Therefore, let's preach since hearing the gospel always precedes believing the gospel.

Church family the pathway to these blessings is belief. This is how a sinner gets in Christ. So here is an



important point: how do you know that you have experienced these blessings? If you believe Christ, then you are elect, you are adopted, you are redeemed, you have an inheritance, and you have the guarantee of eternal life with God. In God's sovereignty the means of experiencing these blessings is faith in Jesus. By nature, faith is not a work – it is an anti-work – because we are not doing anything. Thus, God's plan of extending his blessings through faith evokes within us immense joy and leads to a glorious display of praise for God.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

God has a purpose in blessing his people. Let's recall the blessings of Ephesians 1:3-14: election (4), adoption (4-5), redemption (7-10), the gift of an inheritance (11-12), and the seal of the Spirit (13-14). God's purpose is described in two complementary ways in this passage. First, God's purpose is that God's grace might be glorified (6, 12, 13). Second, God's purpose is that God's grace might be glorified in Christ. We see the phrase in Christ in verses 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. It is not in verse 5, 8, 14 although a related phrase is found in verse 5. Moreover, we see in verse 10 that God's grace is glorified in Christ because God unites all things in Christ. This means that the trajectory of the universe is



making a new humanity where Christ reigns as sovereign King. The Father is glorified in this; the Spirit works toward this, and then when this happens, the Son gives the Kingdom to his Father. God is working on purpose in this universe. Will you work for the purposes of God or against them?



CONCLUSION

Church family let's rejoice in the character of our God and praise his glorious grace. Let's praise his grace by preaching the gospel to the lost. You see, these blessings encourage mission. Election encourages mission since election takes seriously that the means to saving the world is the preaching of the gospel! Let's spread the reputation of God as the Blessed God who blesses his people.

Non-Christian friend, you have heard the gospel today. Believe that Jesus can and will take your sins. Believe and experience these blessings. Enjoy your election, your adoption, your redemption, your future inheritance, and the seal of the Spirit. And we would ask that if you were a non-Christian before this service, but now you believe that Christ is your salvation, we'd ask that you reach out to us at eleventhstreetbaptist@gmail.com so that we can disciple you for your joy and God's glory.





LET'S PRAY

God you are blessed and because of that, we are blessed. Help us to know your blessings and to be affected by them as we should. Move us to praise you for the time is short. And please, save the lost today, for the time is short. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

