

Ephesians: Fullness – Blessed Beyond Measure

Dr. John Carmichael

[Eph 1:1-14 NASB95] 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are at Ephesus and [who are] faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 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, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 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 on us. In all wisdom and insight 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, [that is,] the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of [God's own] possession, to the praise of His glory.

- Paul opens Ephesians not with commands, but with celebration. Before he tells the church what they should do, he reminds them of who they already are.
- Notice that verses 3–14 are one continuous sentence in the Greek text—a breathtaking doxology overflowing with praise. Paul cannot stop long enough to catch his breath because he is overwhelmed by the riches of God's grace.
- The Christian life always begins with God's initiative before our response.

What spiritual blessings has God already given every believer in Christ, and how should those blessings transform the way we live?

Paul answers that question by revealing six incredible blessings that belong to every person who is in Christ.

I. We Have Been Chosen by the Father – Election

- a. **[Eph 1:4-5 NASB95] 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,**
- b. **[Jhn 15:16 NASB95] 16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and [that] your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.**
- c. **[2Th 2:13 NASB95] 13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.**
- d. **[1Pe 1:1-2 NASB95] 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure.**

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- e. [Rom 8:29-30 NASB95] 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined [to become] conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.
- f. Before we chose Christ, God graciously chose us in Christ.
- g. Election is not merely about privilege; it is about purpose.
- h. Paul says we were chosen: before the foundation of the world, to be holy, and blameless before Him.
- i. Paul's intent in this verse is to magnify God's initiative as the God of infinite love in giving us as his finite creation every spiritual blessing through the redemptive work of his Son. (LITSBC) SIMPLY: God chose to save us, all humanity.
- j. From a Pentecostal perspective, election should never diminish evangelism or human responsibility. Scripture consistently holds together God's sovereign initiative and humanity's responsibility to believe the gospel (John 3:16; Romans 10:9–17).
- k. Application: Stop defining yourself by your failures, your family history, or your past. Your identity begins with God's choice, not your performance. Live like you know God chose you.

II. We Have Been Adopted into God's Family - Adoption

- a. [Eph 1:5 NASB95] 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
- b. [Rom 8:15-17 NASB95] 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with [Him] so that we may also be glorified with [Him.]
- c. [Gal 4:4-7 NASB95] 4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.
- d. [Jhn 1:12 NASB95] 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, [even] to those who believe in His name,
- e. Adoption is more than acceptance.
- f. In the Roman world, adoption gave a person: a new family, a new name, a new inheritance, and full legal rights.
- g. God did not merely rescue us from sin. He welcomed us into His household.
- h. We no longer relate to Him merely as Creator or Judge. We cry, "Abba! Father!"
- i. Application: Many believers live like spiritual orphans. God invites us to live as sons and daughters. Healthy prayer flows from relationship rather than fear.

III. We Have Been Redeemed and Forgiven - Redemption

- a. [Eph 1:7-8 NASB95] 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 on us. In all wisdom and insight
- b. [Col 1:13-14 NASB95] 13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.
- c. [Heb 9:12 NASB95] 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

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- d. [1Pe 1:18-19 NASB95] 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, [the blood] of Christ.
- e. [Isa 53:5-6 NASB95] 5 But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being [fell] upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.
- f. Redemption refers to paying the price to purchase freedom for a slave. The price was the precious blood of Jesus.
- g. Because Christ paid the price: our guilt is removed, our debt is cancelled, our shame is covered, our sins are forgiven.
- h. Grace is not merely enough.
- i. Paul says it has been lavished upon us.
- j. Application: Quit carrying guilt Jesus already carried to the cross. Walk in freedom. Forgive yourself because God has forgiven you. Extend that same forgiveness to others.

IV. We Have Been Entrusted with God's Eternal Purpose - Our Inheritance

- a. [Eph 1:9-12 NASB95] 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, [that is,] the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.
- b. [Rom 8:17 NASB95] 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with [Him] so that we may also be glorified with [Him.]
- c. [1Pe 1:3-4 NASB95] 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to [obtain] an inheritance [which is] imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,
- d. [Col 3:1-4 NASB95] 1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.
- e. God has revealed His mystery: His plan is to unite all things in Christ. Our inheritance is not merely heaven someday. It includes participating in God's Kingdom purposes today.
- f. Believers are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.
- g. Our future is secure, and our present has meaning.
- h. Application: Live with eternity in view. Temporary trials cannot compare with eternal inheritance. Invest your life in what will outlive you.

V. We Have Been Sealed with the Holy Spirit - The Spirit's Seal

- a. [Eph 1:13-14 NASB95] 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of [God's own] possession, to the praise of His glory.
- b. [Act 1:8 NASB95] 8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

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- c. Act 2:1-4 NASB95] 1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.
- d. [Rom 8:14-16 NASB95] 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,
- e. [2Co 1:21-22 NASB95] 21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also sealed us and gave [us] the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.
- f. [2Co 5:5 NASB95] 5 Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.
- g. The Holy Spirit is not merely an experience.
- h. He is: God's seal, God's guarantee, God's abiding presence.
- i. The same Spirit who seals us also empowers us.
- j. The baptism in the Holy Spirit does not replace His indwelling work—it builds upon it by empowering believers for witness and ministry (Acts 1:8). The Spirit who secures our identity also equips us for God's mission.
- k. The seal signifies: ownership, authenticity, security, authority.
- l. The guarantee (arrabōn) is God's down payment that the fullness of our inheritance is yet to come.
- m. Application: Do not settle for occasional encounters with the Spirit. Cultivate a daily relationship with Him. Walk in His guidance. Yield to His gifts. Minister in His power. Live with the confidence that God finishes what He begins.

VI. We Have Been Blessed for God's Glory - The Purpose of Every Blessing

- a. [Eph 1:3, 6, 12, 14 NASB95] 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, ... 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ... 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. ... 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of [God's own] possession, to the praise of His glory.
 - b. [Mat 5:16 NASB95] 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
 - c. [1Co 10:31 NASB95] 31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
 - d. [Col 3:17 NASB95] 17 Whatever you do in word or deed, [do] all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.
 - e. Three times Paul repeats the refrain: "to the praise of His glory."
 - f. God blesses us so our lives become worship. Every blessing ultimately points back to Him.
 - g. Our salvation is about more than our happiness. It is about displaying God's glory to the world.
 - h. Ask each day: "How can my life magnify Christ today?" Use every blessing as an opportunity to worship and witness.
- The Christian life is not lived striving for God's blessing but standing in the spiritual blessings already given to us in Christ.

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- Paul begins Ephesians with praise because the believer's identity rests on God's completed work rather than human achievement.
- Notice the movement of the passage: The Father chose us. The Son redeemed us. The Holy Spirit sealed us.
- The entire Trinity is actively involved in our salvation.
- Everything God will ask us to do in chapters 4–6 rests upon everything He has already done in chapters 1–3.
- You are not working for God's acceptance. You are living from God's acceptance. You are blessed beyond measure because you are in Christ.