

Theme: The Church is the community of blessing, where those who are in Christ and walking in unity receive every spiritual blessing promised by God.

I. Intro - Blessed to Be A Blessing

- A. I end almost every meeting with this phrase
- B. It is on our mission map - it is our mindset
- C. Blessed to be a blessing - a Trinitarian reality
- D. This week - the overwhelming blessing we have been given by the Trinity
- E. Next week - the mission we have been given to spread the blessing to the world

II. The Trinity and Blessing

- A. The Trinitarian structure (again!)

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... ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised **Holy Spirit**, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:3, 13–14

 - 1. God and Father, Lord Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit
 - 2. The blessings discussed in this passage flow from the Trinity
 - 3. We can therefore expect that the blessings will have both a diversity and a unity.

B. The centrality of blessing in this passage

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... ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is **a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance** until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory. Ephesians 1:3, 13–14

- 1. The section begins and ends with blessing
- 2. We are blessed with every spiritual blessing
- 3. Paul enumerates some of these spiritual blessings
- 4. The Spirit guarantees our blessing until eternity
- 5. The Trinity has promised and given blessings so that the Church is the beautiful community of blessing.

III. A People Blessed by the Trinity

- A. We have been given a variety of blessings by the Trinity
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. Ephesians 1:3
 - 1. We have been blessed with **every** spiritual blessing
 - 2. We are blessed by being chosen in eternity past
For he **chose us** in him **before the creation of the world** to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵he **predestined us** to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will — Ephesians 1:4–5

- a. Chose us, predestined us, before the creation
 - b. Our blessing is not based on our worthiness but God's choosing us before the world even existed
 - c. Because our blessing is rooted in eternity past no one can remove it from us
3. We are blessed by being redeemed in the present
In him we have **redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins**, in accordance with the riches of God's grace Ephesians 1:7
- a. Redemption, the forgiveness of sins
 - b. In this present life we experience the blessing and joy of being redeemed and forgiven of all of our sins
 - c. Because we have been redeemed and forgiven by God we do not need to fear or feel shame over our sin. We are forgiven and free!
4. We are blessed by knowing the final end of history
And he **made known to us the mystery of his will** according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, **to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.** Ephesians 1:9–10
- a. Made known to us His will, put into effect when time is fulfilled, bring everything under Christ
 - b. We do not know what tomorrow holds, but we do know how this story ends - Jesus is Lord over all!
 - c. We have the blessing of knowing that the battle is not in doubt, that God's will is going to be done, and Jesus is going to be head over everything!
 - d. Christians should not give in to conspiracy theories, nor live in fear of tomorrow - we should be eternal optimists, for we know the end of the story!

5. We are blessed because our future inheritance is secure
And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having 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. Ephesians 1:13–14
- a. We have been marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit
 - b. The Spirit is a GUARANTEE that we WILL receive our full inheritance
 - c. Our future is as secure as our past, because the Spirit dwells in us, keeps us, marks us, and guarantees we will receive the full inheritance of the people of God!
6. We are blessed from eternity past, through this present life, and into eternity in the future - that is full and secure blessing!
7. Do I live as if my life is defined by blessing that is given and secured by the Trinity - no matter the current circumstances?

- B. To receive the blessings given by the Trinity we must be in Christ
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.** Ephesians 1:3
- 1. We are blessed 'in Christ' - key theme in Ephesians
 - 2. v4 - chosen in Him
 - 3. v5 - predestined through Jesus Christ

4. v6 - grace is given in the One He loves - Christ
5. v7 - redemption through His blood
6. v11 - chosen in Him
7. v12 - hope in Christ
8. v13 - included in Christ through the Gospel
9. v13 - marked in Him (Christ) with a seal (the Spirit)

10. There are NO spiritual blessings or promises apart from being 'in Christ'. Every promise of God is given ONLY in Jesus Christ

For **no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.** And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 2 Corinthians 1:20

- a. Every single covenant promise of God is given to anyone who is in Christ.
- b. NO covenant promise of God is given to anyone who is not 'in Christ'
- c. The ONLY way to receive any promised blessing from God is by being in Christ

11. Am I in Christ - or trusting in myself for blessing and salvation?

C. To fully receive and experience the blessings given in Christ we must walk in unity in a local church

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. ⁴ 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** to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will — Eph. 1:3–5

1. Our, us, us, us - all plural pronouns
2. Not a singular pronoun (or verb) in the entire passage!
3. God commands blessing on those walking in unity
How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! ² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. ³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. Psalm 133
 - a. Trinity - oil (Spirit); High Priest (Jesus); Yahweh blesses
 - b. This is when brothers live in unity!
 - c. There - where we are walking in the unity of the Trinity in the local church - is where God commands a blessing.
 - d. Those who will not do the hard work of walking in unity in a local church will never experience the full blessing God has for them in Christ.
4. The Trinitarian structure of all reality DEMANDS that blessing is only found and experienced in the community of a local church.
5. Am I consciously pressing into the community of blessing - or trying to experience it in isolation?

IV. Applying the Word

- A. I have really applied the Word as we moved along
 1. Blessing in ONLY in Christ - am I 'in Christ'?
 2. We are blessed - am I living as a blessed one?

3. Blessing is experienced in community - am I pressing in or refusing the God-given context for blessing?

B. We have been blessed to give praise to God

to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves...¹² in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory...¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory. Eph 1:6,12,14

1. All of this is for the praise of God, His grace, His glory
2. The blessing is ultimately focused on God
3. Next week - we are sent to pass the blessing on
4. Today: are we giving praise to God for His blessing?
5. How often do I specifically praise God for His lavish, overwhelming, eternal, secure, overflowing blessing?

C. The Doxology

The Beautiful Community - Blessing

Ephesians 1:3-14

August 2, 2020

Prayer

Deuteronomy 1:11

Teaching keywords: Church; Trinity; blessing; unity

May the Lord, the God of your fathers, increase you a thousand times and bless you as he has promised! Deuteronomy 1:11

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.⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons 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 grace⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.⁹ And 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 will have reached their fulfillment — to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.¹¹ 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 hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having 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. Ephesians 1:3–14