

LECTURES ON EPHESIANS

by

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

AS WE enter upon the study of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, let us pray that God will do for us what Paul prayed that He should do for the saints at Ephesus:

Wherefore I . . . cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints (Ephesians 1:15-18).

Without the aid of the Holy Spirit we shall not be able to discern the great truths revealed to us in this Epistle.

Reading rapidly through this great letter, we see that the key words are "**church,**" "**body,**" "**mystery.**" As we shall see later, all three words refer to the same thing and present the purpose of God in this present age. The key verses are: "**And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all**" (Ephesians 1:22, 23).

Paul, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote this Epistle from Rome in the year 64 A. D.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ROMANS, EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS, AND PHILIPPIANS

In order to comprehend the great truths to be studied in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, we must first grasp the doctrinal connection set forth in this Epistle with the apostle's letters to the Romans, Colossians, and Philippians.

Paul's letter to the Romans sets forth the foundation of all church doctrine in justification by faith. This Epistle answers the question: How can a sinner become righteous before a sin-hating and a holy God?

The Holy Spirit, in Romans, shows that this is made possible by God, who, in grace, provided a Substitute, a Saviour who died a vicarious death in our behalf. By simple faith, belief in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the guilty sinner is made righteous.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians the Holy Spirit shows how all who have been reckoned righteous through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are being formed into one Body, the church. This Body began to be formed at Pentecost, and will be completed at the Rapture. It is formed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and is composed of people who have been washed in the shed blood of the Son of God.

In the Colossian letter, the Spirit reveals Christ as the Head of that Body. It sets Him forth as the second Person of the Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with the other members of the Godhead.

The inspired writer exposes the heresies at work in his day, heresies which have continued to the present time. They strike at the Person of the Son of God. Christ is set forth as the Antidote for such systems of teaching as asceticism, Judaism, and Unitarianism. How sadly the professing church today needs the message of the Epistle to the Colossians.

Such modernists as Harry Emerson Fosdick blatantly deny the deity of Christ and the fundamentals upon which the Christian faith stands. Having addressed a congregation on this subject, I received a letter from a Baptist preacher, stating that he believed that Fosdick was the greatest preacher in this day. Had we received a letter like that from a Unitarian we would not have been surprised, but from a Baptist preacher!

The curse of Protestantism today is that too many parasites similar to the above receive their bread and meat from Christian people. The difficulty with that preacher was that he had not read the Epistle to the Colossians.

The Holy Spirit, in the letter to the Philippians, sets forth the rich experience of joy which is the portion of every believer when Christ (the Head), and the church (the Body), are in perfect union. This is the “**joy**” Epistle, though written from an inner prison in Rome where the apostle was a captive. The prisons in that day were terrible places in which to be, not having comforts and entertainments for the prisoners, such as are found in our jails and penitentiaries. Yet, in the midst of such circumstances, Paul writes, “**I . . . do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.**” This is the Epistle of Christian experience, spiritual and practical.

I was asked by a woman in the Church of the Open Door to pray that she would die, for she was weary of the struggles and battles of life and desired that Christ would take her home. She was full of gloom; her circumstances overwhelmed her spirit. I asked her to spend one entire evening reading the Epistle to the Philippians. She did so, and returned with the joyous testimony that she desired to continue living. She had found and become acquainted with the joy of the Lord. From this brief survey, it can easily be seen that Romans is the foundation Epistle for all of these wonderful truths.

Note the order of progression for the believer revealed in these four Epistles.

In the first we are seen as poor, lost, human beings, wrecked by sin, as low as one can fall. But God, in His mercy, grace, and love, sent His own precious Son to die for us, thereby making righteous all who believe.

This would seem sufficient for a God of love to do for a sinner who had turned his back on his Creator, but this wonderful love lifts us higher and makes us “**sons**,” members of the mystical Body of His Son. This brings us into union with Christ as “**heirs**” of God and “**joint-heirs**” with Jesus Christ.

EPHESIANS — GOD’S GREATEST REVELATION

The revelation which God has given in the Ephesian letter is by far the greatest He has ever given, even more wonderful than that unfolded in the letter to the Romans.

- In Romans we are seen crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, raised with Christ;
- In Ephesians we are seen ascended and seated “**in heavenly places in Christ**,” and united to Him who is “**head over all things to the church**.”

The Old Testament saints were not in these plans, not even Abraham, the “**friend of God**,” nor David, “**the man after God’s own heart**.” Nor was the purpose of God concerning the church, the Body, revealed to them.

They with others of the Old Testament dispensation were saved by grace, but not made members of the “**church, which is his body**.” In the economy of God, the people living in the ages previous to the dispensation of grace were given a twofold revelation, “**the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow**” (I Peter 1:11). In other words, they saw the cross and crown.

These were like two great mountain peaks, one rising higher than the other. What lay between these two great mountain peaks they did not see or know. That was the mystery hidden in God and not made known until after the crucifixion of Christ.

The dispensation of grace has already lasted two thousand years, and, during this time, the Holy Ghost has been calling out from among Jew and Gentile saved men and women, and has been baptizing them into the Body, one living organism. This organism God has called the Body of Christ, and is, in the economy of God, now seated “**in the heavenly places in Christ, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come**” (Ephesians 1:20, 21).

This Body is to be the Bride of Christ and will reign with the Lord in His millennial glory. Such a marvelous revelation of the goodness and greatness of the love of God is not to be found in any other epistle. What God is doing for saved men and women as described in the Epistle to the Ephesians cannot be excelled.

THE THEME OF THE EPISTLE— “THE CHURCH, WHICH IS HIS BODY” 1:22, 23

Ephesians 1:22, 23 gives the theme of the Epistle.

We see that Paul is, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, unveiling the mystery, the secret which was hidden with God, kept secret from former ages. How much the average child of God lacks in the knowledge of these things.

When one mentions the “**church**,” which is Christ’s Body, many people think only of a church building. They picture lovely carpets, a pipe organ, and expensive stained glass windows—nothing more. Others think of definite organizations, a Presbyterian denomination, a Baptist, a Congregational, a Lutheran, or a Catholic denomination. But, my friend, when the Word of God speaks of the church, there is no reference to church buildings, or denominations.

The Spirit of God has in mind a living organism, the members being made part of that living organism by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ” (I Corinthians 12:12). This organism is composed of all believers, regardless of spiritual maturity, from the various denominations. It is appalling to know how few people have grasped this great truth concerning the church.

Some years ago while journeying to fill an appointment to preach; I met a man having a Bible under his arm. As we conversed he asked me, “To what church do you belong?”

I replied, “You tell me to which church you belong.”

He answered, “I am a Methodist; my father and grandfather were Methodists, and I would not be anything else.”

He turned and I said, “I belong to the ‘**church, which is His body.**’”

The man looked at me and said, “My friend, I never heard of that denomination. When did it begin, and where are its headquarters?”

“It began on the day of Pentecost, and its head-quarters are in the heavens,” I answered.

The dear old man was more confused than ever.

He was a true child of God, having received Christ, who died for his sins and rose again for his justification, but, like many others, he had never grasped the significance of God’s plan and purpose for this age. I trust therefore, that our study of this great Epistle to the Ephesians will give us a marvelous insight into this truth.

THE INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE 1:1-3

LET US LOOK now at the introduction to the Epistle. Let us read the first three verses:

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

In the first part of Ephesians 1:1 Paul makes himself known to the saints at Ephesus.

I. PAUL INTRODUCES HIMSELF, (1:1).

“**Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God . . .**” At the beginning, our attention is called to the name of the writer, Paul. Paul had two names—Saul of Tarsus and Paul, the Apostle. Saul of Tarsus was his pre-Christian name while Paul was his Christian name.

In the study of Romans we see the significance of the changing of Saul’s name to Paul, for Saul means “*great*,” and Paul means “*little*” or “*insignificant*.” Although his parents probably expected him to become a great man in the eyes of the world, we see that after he had met the risen Christ on the Damascus road, he lost his self-importance, and became more and more a humble follower of the Lord.

From the order in which the Pauline Epistles were written, it is clearly seen that the author’s opinion of himself decreases as his reverence and love for his Lord increase.

(1) “*An apostle*.”

After stating his name, Paul called himself “**an apostle**.” “**An apostle**” is a messenger, a “*sent one*.”

In this sense David Brainerd is called an apostle to the North American Indians, and David Livingstone, an apostle to the tribes of central Africa. Many other faithful missionaries are also called “*apostles*.”

There is, however, a higher sense in which the word is used. We have already pointed out in our study of the Epistle to the Romans that Paul was not one of the twelve apostles. The election of Matthias to the place vacated by Judas was in accord with the Holy Spirit’s direction. The election was not irregular, as some would have us believe.

On the day of Pentecost we read that Peter stood “**up with the eleven**.” Matthias was included in that instance. When Paul was writing his first letter to the Corinthians, giving proof that the Lord’s resurrection had been witnessed, he said; “**And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve**” (I Corinthians 15:5).

The difference between the apostleship of the twelve and that of Paul was this: The twelve disciples were sent to the house of Israel. They were associated with the Jews and according to prophecy will administer government over the twelve tribes during the millennial reign of Christ, as the Lord promised in Matthew 19:28: “**Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**”

Paul was called “**an apostle**” to the Gentiles and was not linked with the twelve.

He was given the message concerning the church; consequently, he was chosen of God to write the great church epistles. The books of the New Testament, having other authors than Paul, have a distinctly Jewish character.

The one qualification of an apostle, in the distinctive sense, was that he had to be an eye witness to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead (cf. Acts 1:21, 22). The twelve disciples, apostles, could witness to that fact, even as Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles could, because while journeying on the Damascus road, he saw the Lord resurrected in life and glory.

(2) *“An apostle of Christ Jesus.”*

Note next the manner in which our Lord is addressed: **“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ.”** The Lord is addressed in the church epistles as Christ Jesus, or as the Lord Jesus Christ. Very seldom is He addressed as Jesus. Jesus is His human name, but He was more than human; He was the eternal Son of the eternal God; therefore true believers always give His complete title, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dr. W. B. Riley was once given a word of exhortation by Sir Robert Anderson: “Never address our Lord as Jesus. It suits the Unitarian too well. It is well to employ the proper title, the Lord Jesus Christ. Defend His claims, decry His critics, and declare His deity.”

Have you noticed that Judas never addressed the Saviour as Lord? He called Him **“Master.”** At the Last Supper, when the Lord told the disciples that one of the Twelve would betray Him, the eleven asked, **“Lord, is it I?”** When Judas asked the question, his words were, **“Master, is it I?”** (cf. Matthew 26:21-25).

That is the title given Him by Christian Scientists, Russellites, Modernists, and Unitarians, but how the Holy Spirit loves to give our Lord His complete title.

(3) *“An apostle . . . by the will of God.”*

The next declaration Paul makes about himself is that he is **“an apostle . . . by the will of God.”** Why does Paul call himself **“an apostle . . . by the will of God”**? As we shall see, the emphasis of the Epistle to the Ephesians is placed upon the sovereignty of the will of God, (1:9): **“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself,”** and, (1:11): **“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”**

Dr. A. C. Gaebelein has pointed out the significance of Paul’s introductions of himself to the different churches, showing that each introduction is in keeping with the theme of the Epistle.

1. The Epistle to the Romans begins: “Paul . . . an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.”

The book of Romans is concerned with the gospel. We learn therein that God has provided a Substitute for the sinner and that the Lord Jesus Christ imputes righteousness to the man who accepts Him as Saviour.

2. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians we read: “Paul, called . . . an apostle . . . to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus.”

This church was composed of carnal Christians and Paul's concern was to straighten out their walk.

He called to their minds the standing which they possessed in Christ Jesus, and pointed out how far removed their walk was from that position.

3. *The introduction to Galatians* reads: "**Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father . . .).**"

The Galatian Christians had been challenging Paul's apostleship; therefore, he set out to defend his God-given prerogative.

4. *In the Epistle to the Hebrews* there is no introduction.

Paul completely effaced himself for two reasons:

- First, because he was the minister to the Gentiles, not to Israel;
- Second, in order that the Jews, in spite of their prejudice, might have his message concerning the Son of God.

5. *The Letter to the Philippians* merely begins: "**Paul and Timotheus.**"

This letter deals with happy fellowship.

6. *In Ephesians*, we have already mentioned, that Paul calls himself "**an apostle . . . by the will of God,**" because the sovereignty of the will of God is emphasized throughout.

The will of God is traced to the past eternity and we become members of the Body of Christ, and by the gracious will of God we are to share in the coming glory of the Sovereign.

II. SALUTATION, (1:1, 2)

(1) "*. . . To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.*"

We are not to suppose from this that there were two classes of believers in the church at Ephesus. Commentators tell us that this Epistle is addressed to the saints which are at Ephesus, even to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Paul was about to unfold the greatest mystery God ever gave believers; consequently, he used the words, "**to the faithful at Ephesus.**"

Only the faithful could comprehend this revelation.

Carnal believers, such as those at Corinth, could not grasp the great truth concerning "**the church, which is his body.**"

Paul in writing to the carnal believers had to say, "**I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able**" (I Corinthians 3:2).

- The “**milk**” of the Word is the message of redemption through the blood of Christ.
- The “**meat**” of the Word comprises the deeper truths referring to the great plans and purposes of God.

The Corinthian Christians could not grasp these great truths because of their carnality, but the Holy Spirit, through Paul, revealed them to the faithful at Ephesus. Faithfulness is an attribute which must characterize the child of God if he is ever to understand God’s secrets, for “**The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him**” (Psalm 25:14).

Only that can be said of people who pattern their daily living according to the Word of God.

It is only the faithful people who can be fed with the “**meat**” of the Word. And so this great revelation concerning the mystery is addressed to the “**saints . . . at Ephesus, even to the faithful in Christ Jesus.**”

(2) “*Grace be to you . . .*”

When Paul says, “**Grace be to you,**” he does not mean the grace that saves. The Ephesians were already saved.

It is a great thing to have the matter of salvation settled. With the Ephesians it was settled, for in 2:8 Paul says, “**For by grace are ye saved through faith.**” You, too, my brother, may be possessor, or may have possession of that blessed knowledge.

A story was told in the *Sunday School Times* concerning Queen Victoria. On one occasion, she was attending St. Paul’s Cathedral, and having listened to the sermon, asked the chaplain if one could be absolutely sure of eternal safety in this life. His answer was that he knew of no way by which one could be absolutely sure. This was published in the church news and read by one John Townsend. After much thought and prayer, the godly man took it upon himself to write to the Queen. In these terms:

To her most gracious Majesty, our beloved Queen Victoria, coming from one of her most humble subjects:

With trembling hands and heart-felt love, and because I know we can be absolutely sure even now of our eternal life in the home that Jesus went to prepare, may I ask your most gracious Majesty to read the following passages of Scripture: John 3:16, and Romans 10:9, 10? These passages prove that there is full assurance of salvation by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ for those who believe and accept His finished work.

Signed,

Your Servant, for Jesus’ sake,
John Townsend

This man and some friends went to prayer. In about a fortnight he received a notice containing the following:

To John Townsend:

In your letter of recent date received, would state that I have carefully and prayerfully read the passages of Scripture referred to. I believe in the finished work of Christ for me, and trust by God's grace to get into that home of which He said, "I go to prepare a place for you."

Signed,
Victoria

My friends, are you sure that you are saved; do you have that certainty?

The grace here to which reference is made is the grace for daily living. A believer has to "**fight the good fight of faith**," and Paul writes, "**Grace be to you**," in order that the Ephesians might have grace to make them victorious in daily living.

(3) "*Peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

This is not peace with God; it is the peace of God. Every believer has peace with God because this was made for us on Calvary's cross. In Colossians 1:20 we read: "**And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself . . .**" Every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, has that peace with God. To have the peace of God in our hearts when all the elements about us are raging, when there is persecution, loss of friends, loss of money, is quite another matter. There are many people who have peace with God but who do not know what the peace of God is.

Years ago when a lad; I knew an old man who had been saved many years. I enjoyed going to his home because he had many chickens and other kinds of birds. I arrived one Saturday afternoon to find the place filled with people. An auctioneer was standing on the bench selling various pieces of furniture to the highest bidder. Wondering what the scene meant, I went into the yard and found the old man walking up and down, singing the Lord's praises.

He said that he had had some financial reverses and that everything was being sold in order to pay the debts. That which made the deepest impression on my young mind was the calmness which characterized that man's life. That was an exhibition of the peace of God, so lacking in many Christian lives. So many of God's people "go to pieces" when trials come. The walk of faith is the one which steps out on the Word of God, the believer having an unshaken faith in the Lord regardless of what the surrounding circumstances may be.

My brother, if the trials of the way seem heavier than you can bear, if you often wonder what will become of you, remember that you are in His hands, God will take care of you.

You may have His peace which will serve as a military buttress saving you from doubt and fear. He gives peace to the believer who is in fellowship with Him.

III. DOXOLOGY, (1:3).

Coming to verse 3, Paul the Apostle bursts forth into a great doxology of praise: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”**

This is the doxology which will be forever on our lips and in our hearts if we grasp the content of the great Epistle to the Ephesians. It stands at the beginning of the Epistle and has a wealth of meaning. Paul expressed his heart-feeling thus as he considered the wonders revealed to him and which we see revealed in the Epistle.

In fact, there are two doxologies in Ephesians: Chapter 1:3 and 3:21 closing the third chapter: **“Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.”**

Between these two doxologies there is the great revelation concerning the mystery of the Body of Christ.

The way Paul bursts forth into the doxology in verse 3 reminds us of the way the book of the Revelation opens, when John was given a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, too, burst forth into a doxology as he considered the marvelous revelation: **“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen”** (Revelation 1:5, 6).

So, my brother, the way to have a singing heart is to have a heart understanding of the mystery of the Body of Christ, and of the revelation of Christ in glory at His second coming, at which time the church will be revealed with Him.

In the doxology (cf. 1:3) the Apostle Paul praises God as the Author of all spiritual blessings: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”**

Here is the declaration that we are blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings. I may, therefore, draw the conclusion that I obtained everything that God had for me when I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour.

Suppose a person would place into my hands a bag of coins, the mouth of the bag being closed. All that was in the bag would be mine though I would not know what was inside until I opened it and turned the coins out to count them. Having done so, I would then intelligently understand what was mine though I possessed the whole before I knew of the entire contents of the bag.

In like manner when a sinner comes to Christ, God puts into his hands a bag filled not with coins, but with blessings.

In this letter to the Ephesians, He opens the bag in order that we might intelligently understand and know all of the riches that it contains. These blessings are called **“spiritual blessings”** because they are blessings for the spirit. Yet how few people realize what spiritual blessings are.

I fear that we are like the old lady in Scotland who had been to church where they had sung,

“Count your many blessings;
name them one by one.”

While she cleaned her house the next day, she was singing this song. Suddenly she decided to write down her blessings on paper. First, she thought of her cottage, remembering that it was hers and that she had no rent to pay. Then she thought of her good health and that she did not have to wear glasses. Her health was blessing number two. Remembering her little savings in the bank, she considered them as blessing number three. Fourth, she thought of her son who was a good boy and had not forgotten her though he had a home of his own. Finally, she added her insurance policy.

Having thus listed her “blessings,” the little lady decided that she was very rich indeed.

That afternoon her pastor, a man of God acquainted with the Word of God, came to call. In the course of the conversation the woman said, “I have been making a list of my blessings. Would you like to see the list?” When he answered in the affirmative, she said, handing it to him, “How rich I am!”

The pastor reviewed the list carefully, then said, “My dear lady, you have not named one blessing. These are mercies. There is a difference between mercies and blessings. Mercies are bestowed upon unconverted and converted people alike.

“**He . . . sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust**’ (Matthew 5:45). Mercies are those things which we have on this earth. When life is over, we shall be through with them. Blessings, however, are those things which will last forever; when life is over, we shall know a deeper and fuller enjoyment of them. As for mercies, there are thousands of unsaved people who own their homes, have good health, do not have to wear glasses, have larger insurance policies than yours, and who have bank accounts that far exceed what you possess. You have not listed one blessing. Now take your pencil and we shall count blessings.”

Then the man of God turned to Ephesians 1:3 saying, “Read this text. We will go through God’s Word and see what God has done for us through Christ. Note the word **‘hath,’** in the verse. We shall follow that word through the Bible, and find what we have in Christ.”

My reader, let me pause here and urge you to make use of your concordance and follow the references on the word **“hath”**; it will be rewarding.

Leaving Ephesians 1:3, the man went on to Ephesians 4:32. “Forgiveness of sin is your first blessing,” he said, “for we read, **‘And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.’**”

Turning to II Thessalonians 2:13, he read, “**But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.’**”

Addressing the woman, he said, “Please write as your second blessing, ‘Answering the call of God of you unto salvation.’”

The dear old lady said, “Don’t we sing, ‘O happy day, that fixed my choice on Thee, my Saviour and my God’?” In answer the pastor said, “You were known by God before the foundation of the world was laid. Is not this blessing better than any you have written on your first list?

“Colossians 1:12, 13 is our next reference. **‘Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.’** Please put down as blessing number three, **‘He hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance’**; fourth, **‘He hath delivered us’** out of darkness; and fifth, **‘He hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.’**”

By this time the lady was beginning to smile, for she realized the difference between mercies and blessings.

“Justification by faith is the next on the list. Let us read Galatians 4:6, **‘And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.’**”

Finally the man turned to I Corinthians 1:30 and read, **“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”**

When the uninformed woman saw that through Christ she already possessed **“Wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,”** she saw clearly what God had given her and that her blessings were far more wonderful than her mercies. She then understood that she should not gauge the goodness of God by material things.

My friends, we shall be finished with mercies when we leave this world, but we shall continue to enjoy the **“blessings”** when we enter glory.

After I was converted, I sought righteousness and sanctification, not realizing that my Saviour was made righteousness and sanctification for me. I attended meetings where I was told that I would receive sanctification. But one day I awoke to the fact that righteousness was mine in Christ and that all I had to do was to appropriate my blessings. I read, **“He was made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption”** for me.

Many people are absent-minded in spiritual things. They do not realize what the Lord Jesus Christ is to them. It would be profitable for all of us to circle the word, **“hath,”** with a red pencil line in Ephesians 1:3, for it is the key to a storehouse of treasure.

Now let us note the exact reading of this verse again: **“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”**

Many people misquote this verse, saying, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies with Christ.” But remember that it says, “**in Christ.**” We are not yet seated with Christ, but we are blessed “**with all spiritual blessings . . . in Christ.**”

He is our representative in heaven now, but one day we shall be seated with Him. We are everything in Christ; He is everything to us.

This verse does not mean that we are blessed only in spiritual meetings, when our hearts have been stirred by fervent preaching. Some people believe that when they have enjoyed a service and their hearts have been moved that they have been seated “**in heavenly places.**”

I have heard people say, at the close of a service, “We thank Thee, Lord, that we have been seated in the heavenlies.” The truth is that we are just as much “**in Christ**” when we are gloomy and depressed as when we are happy.

Our position in Christ is not dependent upon our feelings; it is a fact. God sees me “**in Christ,**” and I am blessed in Him. All of the treasures of heaven are at my disposal; my business is to rejoice as I go forth in service for Him.

~ end of chapter 1 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>
