

- Value of Preaching Entire Books of the Bible
- A Profound Lesson in How to Count Blessings (Part 1)

Ephesians 1:1-2

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessing Lessons:

- Paul: a challenge to our assumptions
- Where we look for blessing
- The source of blessing matters
- Beware of some “blessings”

Ephesians 1:3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth in him.

¹¹In 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, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In 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, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Paul's Praise:

- Confrontation & Redirection
- Calling:
 - Live above our physical location
 - Live out of touch of our enemies

1) Provision to live (way) above the law of averages

“...blessed ... in Christ with every spiritual blessing ...”

Understanding this Provision:

- Connection & Location = **IN CHRIST**
- **Spiritual** nature // “heavenly places”
- No longer searching FOR → **going deeper INTO**
- **Praise** is part of appropriation

2) **Knowledge** of how God **looks at us**

“ ... chose ... *holy & blameless ... predestined ... adoption ...*”

Such Knowledge is Empowering:

- God: our **best interests** in mind for the **longest** time
- Life trajectory: **privilege with responsibility**
- Whose **opinion** ...?? Whose **honor** ...?

3) **Foresight** of eternity’s **horizon** → “*to unite all things in Christ*”

Blessing of Perspective & Certainty of Outcome

- Overcome **slavery of the mind**
- God’s purposes: **unfailing, unified, victory**

4) **Coram Deo** now! → “*sealed ... guarantee ...*”

Indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit:

- **Cherish & Cultivated**
 - Active presence & Real participation

The Universe of the Soul:

- Designed by God and for Him
- Destiny far beyond & better than anything “*in Ephesus*”
- Direction of soul ...?