

Sermon Reflections

Praise to the Triune God for Spiritual Blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14)

Summary: Praise God and live lives in light of the truth that He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ in the heavenly places to the praise of His glory!

Sometimes it can seem like the handles on a passage like this are too big for us to grasp, or the doors to its riches are too heavy for us to open, but read Paul's prayer in the second half of the chapter in verses 15 through 21 before you start these questions. These verses can give us confidence that God will help us grab hold of these truths and hang on to them and that His Spirit will give us the grace to understand it all better and better.

1. God's Plan of Election in Christ is Cause to Praise Him. vv 3-6

- When did God choose you to be His? How much good or evil had you done at the time of His choosing? How much credit can you take for your election? Who gets all the praise and glory for your salvation?
- Having elected you, what is God seeking to make of you? (ref verse 4) How can remembering that we are seen as holy motivate us to live lives that are more and more holy now?
- Adoption into God's family is one of the ultimate treasures of our election. How can remembering your identity in Christ give you hope and confidence when your heart and conscience might try to condemn you? (see 1 John 5:4)

2. God's Work of Redemption in Christ is cause to Praise Him. vv 7-10

- What did God redeem us from? See Ephesians 2:1-3. What were our chances apart from His grace? What expectation could we have apart from His mercy? Take a moment to thank Him!
- Our redemption is one small part of God's plan. How would you describe the important factors in these verses involved in "God's plan for the fullness of time"?

3. God's Guaranteed Future Inheritance in Christ Through the Sealing of the Holy Spirit is Cause to Praise Him. vv 11-14

- The Holy Spirit is a deposit, a down-payment, the bond, the earnest money, the assurance of our salvation. Knowing this, what effect does seeing evidence of His Spirit at work in us have on our confidence? Be eager for evidences of the Spirit! (Gal 5: 22-23)

For further study: Read the entirety of Ephesians in one sitting. It's really a letter, although it is set up as a chapter-book in our English Bible. Get the whole picture of Paul's message and observe how chapters four through six tell us how to live in light of the truth in chapters one through three.