

Blessings & More Blessings

Ephesians 1:3

Pastor Jeremy Cagle, October 6, 2019

Please turn to the Book of Ephesians. And as you're doing that, if you're joining us for the first time today, we're on the front end of a series on the Book of Ephesians called the "All of God" series because that's what Ephesians is about. It tells us that our salvation is all of God, all the blessings and riches and treasures of the Christian life come from His hand and not from us. We sang about that just a moment ago.

This is actually the sixth book that we've studied together as a church. If you've been with us for a little while, it might interest you to know we've looked at five other books before this one. We've looked at First Peter, Romans, the Gospel of John, the Book of Titus and the Book of Jonah. And now, we're in our sixth book - the Book of Ephesians, and it kind of stands out among the rest in a sense.

It sits in a category by itself because it says what the rest of those books say. It tells us that salvation is all of God just like they do (that's the theme of all these other books we've studied), but it goes into greater detail. It goes into much more clarity on our salvation than these other books, which is why we're studying it on Sunday mornings and going through it verse by verse.

And with that said, I want to begin our study this way today, I want to introduce our passage like this. In one of the preaching magazines that I read, the story is told of a little boy who was found on the streets of Chicago starving and malnourished. He was about to die. So they rushed him to the hospital where the nurses bathed him, dressed him, treated his wounds, and after all of that, they fed him. He was starving, so they gave him some food.

And as they did, the first thing that caught his attention on the tray of food was a big glass of milk. His eyes just lit up when he saw it. It was like he'd never seen one before. And before he started to drink it, he asked them a question which made everybody cry. It broke all their hearts because he said, "Can I drink all of it?" He was so poor, this little boy had never had a glass of milk before. He had never drank the whole thing.

And I mention that story (it's a very touching story), but it drives the point home that I think a lot of Christians are doing this today with their salvation. I think a lot of believers are doing this with the blessings of the Christian life. They're looking at all of them and saying, "Can I drink all of it?" They're looking at what all Christ has done for them and saying, "Is this all for me? This is too good to be true. This is too much. I know that I'm saved, I know I've been forgiven, but can I be forgiven of everything? I know God has made me new, but can He make me new in every area of my life?" I think this is a real problem for us today. A pastor friend of mine said, "We believe God can save us from the big things but not the little things." We think God can save us from big events like trials and tribulation, but we don't believe He can save us when we're in a trial and we're in a tribulation. Our faith breaks down at that point.

Just to show you what I mean, I did some research on it this week, and it might interest you to know that Bible scholars believe there are more than 5,000 promises in the Bible. More than 5,000 of them. Which means if you boil it all down, it comes to about 75 promises per book.

It boggles the mind, but every time you read a book of the Bible, you could be reading as many as 75 promises on it. There's promises on every page. Promises in every corner, and they talk about everything. There's all sorts of promises in there.

The Bible has promises to overcome and promises of victory. It gives us promises of help and promises of deliverance. We have promises of mercy and grace and lovingkindness. You read in here that Jesus is coming back soon and He will take us with Him. And He will go and prepare a place for you and on and on and on and on. The Bible is one big book of promises, one giant book of blessing.

But the sad reality is that most of us only cling to one or two of those promises. Don't we? Of the thousands of promises in here, most of us only have our minds around just a few of them, because we think we're not good enough for the rest. And the Bible says that's not what it's about. A promise is a promise. A gift is a gift, and you can't take it back. Once it's given, it's given. Now it is yours, you just need to reach out and grab it.

And this is all leading to our passage, but I think this affects our lives in so many ways. This impacts us in so many areas of life. I mean, just think about your prayer lives for a minute. Just think about the things that we pray for. We pray for a new building. We pray for a new place to meet on Sunday morning, which is good. That's a good thing, there's nothing wrong with that. I've prayed for that as well. But you know what we should really be praying for? You know what our minds should really be focused on? We should be praying for new Christians, amen? We should be praying for new life in Christ. Let me tell you, you get that coming in here, it'll take care of the building, right? It'll take care of those other things.

You've been promised that God will help you make disciples. So pray that way and He'll bless that. Or we pray for our children to behave on Sunday mornings. We pray that they'll act better so we won't be embarrassed and have to ride home in silence. Don't look at me like that, you guys know what I'm talking about. Tell me somebody knows what I'm talking about. We pray that God will make them into angels all of a sudden when we pull into the parking lot. You know what we should pray for? We should pray for God to make them into Christians, right? We should pray for God to give them a new life, save them. But my point is that we do that because we forget about the promises of God. We forget what's important to Him.

Jesus told Peter in Matthew 16:23 very strongly, He said, "Get behind Me, Satan!...For you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of man," and I'm afraid many of us are doing that as well. God has given us all these promises, all these blessings, and we only think about one or two of them. Charles Spurgeon said,

As you read over the promises, one after the other, you should say to yourself: "This is my chequebook. I can take out the promises as I need them, sign them by faith, present them at the great Bank of Grace, and then come away enriched and ready with help for my time of need. God will take care of everything.

And I mention that because the Book of Ephesians was written to help us understand that. It was written to help remind us that God will take care of everything for us. I told you before, Ephesians has been called the "believer's bank" and the "Christian's Chequebook" for this reason, because it shows us all we have in Christ. It tells us all the promises that He has given us; more than we could ever ask for, more than we could ever want. All we have to do is sign

them in faith and they're ours in Christ. It's also been called the "Grand Canyon of Scripture" and the "Himalayas of blessing" for this reason, because it shows us how far and how deep our blessings go. And you see this in several ways in the book. You see this in key words that are used.

Words like "glory" and "riches" and "fullness" tell us this is what you have in the Lord. He's made you rich and full of His glory. I meet Christians all the time that tell me they feel dry in their spiritual life. They feel empty. Ephesians says God has made you full.

You see this in the outline as well. And this is some review, we've talked about this before, but chapters 1 through 3 of Ephesians talk about our position in Christ. In the first three chapters Paul says, "You're predestined and made alive and seated in the heavenlies with Christ. That is your position. That is where God has placed you." And then chapters 4 through 6 talk about the practice of all that. And they tell how this should impact your marriage and your family and your home and all of these things. Chapters 1 through 3 tell you you're seated in the heavenlies. Chapters 4 through 6 talk about your walk and the Christian life. That's kind of a neat analogy, isn't it? You're in the heavenlies and you need to walk it out. That's what this book is about - practicing your position in Christ, which is why we're studying it. We all need to grow in this area.

And with that said, this morning, I want to introduce you to some more of the blessings that are in here. I want to tell you more about the promises of God. I say "introduce them" because that's all we're going to do this morning like we did last week. We're just kind of scratching the surface of these blessings and promises. We're just kind of getting our feet wet in this. They're more than we can get into here.

But this morning, I want to introduce you to three more blessings in the Book of Ephesians. So if you're taking notes, that's our outline for today. I want you to see in Ephesians 1:3, three more blessings in the Book of Ephesians. I don't know about you, but I came to church this morning because I wanted a blessing. Amen? Let's just be honest, you didn't come in here because you wanted to have a bad time. You want to be blessed by God, right? You want to experience His favour and His promises. And you get a taste of that at the beginning of the book. Paul just starts kind of loading it on in the front end here, and you see it in the introduction with three more blessings.

The first one is this: the blessing of God. Paul begins our list this morning in verse 3 by telling us about the blessing of God, or by telling us how we need to bless God, because that's where the blessings come from. All the blessings flow from Him. They come from His hands. So this is where Paul starts. And if you read starting in verse 1, he says it this way - it says,

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.

We've looked at verses 1 through 2 in the previous weeks. But after telling us about himself and how he was an apostle of Christ, giving us his credentials, Paul gives us the audience. He says, "This was written to the saints who are at Ephesus. This was written to the Ephesian church." After giving us all that information and background, in verse 3, Paul does something unusual. He does something strange, which doesn't really come across in English, but it does

in Greek. Because he writes a sentence that starts in verse 3, and if you look in your Bibles, it goes all the way down to verse 14.

In English, it's hard to figure out how to translate that, so in your English versions (and mine as well) you're going to see different sentences and breaks in here. But in the Greek language, this is a sentence that begins in verse 3, it goes all the way almost halfway through the chapter. There are 200 words in it and more prepositions and commas than I could even count. Some say, this is the longest sentence in the Bible, and maybe the longest sentence in the Greek language. I mean, I don't know what grade all the young people are in this morning, but this is like the worst run-on sentence in history.

And just to tell you why, you read a sentence like this and you think, "Why would you write a letter like this, right?" Well, the idea is this, Paul often dictated his letters to a scribe when he wrote. This was common practice at the time. Writing on a scroll with a quill was a very difficult thing to do. So you had people that were professionally trained in this. And what they would often do, is the letter writer himself would speak out loud and someone would write. And apparently, all this talk about blessings and our position in Christ and all He has done for us got Paul so excited that he just kept going and going and going. He kept talking and talking and talking, and the scribe kept writing and writing and writing, until he had written a sentence that was 12 verses long. It was like he didn't take a breath until he got down to verse 14. I think it would be interesting to hear Paul preach, wouldn't you? He would probably keep talking until he passed out. This is one enormous sentence.

And it begins by saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." That's how the sentence begins - by talking about blessing. It's mentioned three times in verse 3, so this is what the sentence is about. As a matter of fact, verse 3 is kind of the summary of this whole sentence. Paul gives you the summary and then he just unpackages it for you in the rest of it.

But just to explain this a little bit, the word "blessed" here is the Greek word *eulogeo* from which we get the word "eulogy." Some of you come from a church where the minister said a "eulogy" at the close of the service. He just kind of gave a blessing to everyone to wrap it up. That's where this word and idea comes from (from this word). It means "blessing or favour" as we see here. But it can also mean "praise or worship" depending on the context. Depending on how you use it, *eulogeo* can refer to God giving us a blessing or our giving a blessing to God. It depends on how it's used. And here it refers to our giving a blessing to Him. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

I'll say a little more about that in a minute, but I also want to tell you this word was never really used in Greek literature because the gods never blessed anyone. It was never really used in reference to Zeus or Hades or Poseidon because they didn't show favour. They only gave you what you deserved. And so this was a Jewish idea, or this was a Christian idea. And you didn't bless them either, you only gave them what they deserved.

So what that means is this was probably maybe the first time the Ephesians had ever seen this word in print before. It might've been the first time they'd ever heard of it in a document. And Paul uses it three times to say, "You are blessed, blessed, blessed in the Christian life. God has shown you favour, favour, favour, and now you need to bless Him back for it. You need to give Him all your worship and praise because He deserves it, because He is worthy of it."

Paul begins this way, he starts this long sentence like this, because all this stuff in the book, all the things you're going to read about in Ephesians come from the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". They don't come from you, they don't come from our good works. As matter of fact, the first time we're really described is in chapter 2:1, where it says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins". This is all from God. Unlike the gods of Greece and Rome, our God is a gracious God. Unlike Zeus and Hades and the gods the Ephesians worshiped, our God shows favour to us, He delights in that and we should praise Him for that.

You can see this for yourself if you kind of look through chapter 1 a little bit, if you want to get a taste of the blessings that you can experience in here. Let me just walk you through a few of them that are mentioned right here in this passage. One of them is predestination. If you look in verses 4 through 5, this is the first blessing that's mentioned in the list. Verse 4 says, "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us." And we're going to talk about that next week (that's a big word) and get into the concept and all that.

But let me just ask you on the front end, can anyone else do this for you but God? Can anyone else choose you before the foundation of the world but Him? I mean, of course not, right? It doesn't even make sense. So how should you respond? You should praise Him for this. That's the idea here. You should give Him glory. Your blessings are so secure, your blessings are so safe in Christ that they have been chosen and you have been chosen before the foundation of the world. And all you can do with that is just give Him worship.

Same thing goes for the next blessing in the list. If you look down in verse 5 it says, "In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself." Now, Paul says that you're adopted. You are placed into the family of God. Other passages talk about unbelievers or sons of Satan. We're in His family. Now you're in the family of God. Now let me ask you, can anyone else do that for you? Can anyone else change your family, spiritually? No, so you should praise Him for that as well.

You see it with another blessing in here. You see it with the blessing of redemption in verse 7. In Him, we have redemption through His blood. Then there's another blessing, "the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace". You see it with the blessing of inheritance in verse 11, being sealed with the Spirit in verse 13. But the point in all this Paul is making is nobody can do this for you but God. Nobody can bless you like this but Him, and so you should respond by blessing Him back. He should receive all the glory for the blessings you receive in the Christian life.

There's a common saying in the first century that all roads lead to Rome. No matter where you went in the empire, you always find your way back to the capitol. Paul is saying the same thing about God. All blessings lead to God. No matter where you go in your salvation, no matter where you go in the Christian life, if you have been blessed, it always goes back to Him every single time. We've had a lot of children born in the church in the last year or so. That's a blessing from God. You can't make that baby born, right? They always go back to Him. The blessings always go to Him. Theologians tell us that God always precedes. That's the basic tenant of theology. God always comes before, and you see that here. God comes before your blessings.

It's like Paul couldn't even talk about blessing without talking about God first. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". Paul calls God the "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" because Jesus is the one through whom the blessing come to us. If it were not for Christ, you would never have a blessing. If it were not for the Son of God, there's no way God would do this for you. Which means a couple of things. There're several ways we could apply this to our lives.

For one thing, this means that our blessings are certain. That's one reason you should praise Him. Your blessings are certain, they are a sure thing. You don't have to stand around saying, "I hope I'm going to be blessed today. I wonder if God's going to do something nice for me." Paul says he's already done nice things for you to do. They're all in the list here. You've already experienced it. The glass of milk is sitting right in front of you, you just need to take it and drink it. He's already blessed you like this because He chose you in Him before the foundation of the world. You couldn't get any surer than that - you can't get any more certain than this.

Which leads to another way this applies to us, and that is that this is for everyone who is saved. This is for every single Christian. Every Christian in this room and every Christian on this planet has experienced everything in Ephesians chapter 1. This is all for all of us. If you are in Christ, you are chosen, predestined, adopted, redeemed, forgiven. You have an inheritance, you are sealed with the Spirit, no questions asked. This is for the Christians in Canada and this is for the Christians in America, and this is for the Christians in Africa, in Asia and all across the planet. Everything from verse 3, all the way down to verse 14 is yours. You don't have to earn it, you already have it. You don't have to work for it, it's already yours. If you're a Christian, you don't even have to ask for it. God has given it to you. It's like money in the bank. You just have to take it by faith now.

D. L. Moody once said that God never made a promise that was too good to be true. Ain't that good? God never made a promise that He wouldn't keep. He will keep all of these for you. As a matter of fact, the way it's worded, a lot of this is in the past tense, which means He's already kept it. Which is why we need to worship him for it, today. This is all yours because of God.

Paul Brand was a medical doctor in India who did a lot of work with lepers in the country. He was the first one to discover that leprosy did not rot away tissue as was originally thought. The rotting of the tissue and the disfigurement of the body was caused by something else. But this was the first guy to discover that. But right before he graduated medical school and started his work there, Paul Brand received a letter from his dad that gave him some advice for being a doctor. And the advice said this, it said,

God means us to delight in His world. That's our job. It is not necessary for us to know everything about botany or zoology or biology in order to enjoy God's creation, just observe and watch. And be always looking for ways to show thankfulness to God and worship Him for having placed you in such a delightful corner of the universe as the planet earth.

And I mention that because I think a lot of us are forgetting this today. I think a lot of us are forgetting to thank God for putting us on the planet earth. We're forgetting to thank Him for the way He's blessed us. Thank Him for all these things in this chapter, and it's impacting the way we worship. It's impacting the way we praise Him. We don't sing like we should because

we're not thankful like we should be. We don't pray and praise and give like we should because we don't recognize all God has done for us. It's been said, all worship begins with thankfulness and we need to remember that today. We need to be thankful for all of this stuff in this chapter. That's how Paul starts off this passage. In fact, he's so thankful that he can't stop talking until he gets down to verse 14 and takes a breath.

Which leads to the next point we're going to look at this morning. It leads to the next blessing in our list. The first one is that Paul begins by talking about the blessing of God or by telling us we should bless Him because He's the one who has given us all these things. None of us would be predestined or adopted or redeemed or given an inheritance or any of this if it were not for the Lord and Jesus Christ, so we should praise Him in response. Bringing us to the next point we're going to look at. A second blessing in our list, and that is that God has "blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places". That's a long phrase there, but it comes right from verse 3. If you look in verse 3, it says, "God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places," which is another way of saying He has done everything for us. He has given us every blessing.

You see the word "every" in here and the phrase "in the heavenly places" to say, it would take heaven itself to contain all the blessings God has given you. It would take as far as east to west to hold all the treasure you have in Christ. It's going to take all of eternity to sort it out.

And if you read on in verse 3, it just says it this way - it says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." Just a few thoughts on this, but if you notice (I mentioned this a moment ago), but Paul puts this in the past tense to say this has already occurred. In other words, the blessings have already been given to you. It doesn't say, "God will bless us with every spiritual blessing," or "He may do it, might get to it someday when He has time." It says, "He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing." It's a done deal. It's as sure as anything. And to show us what kind of blessing he's talking about, Paul says, "God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing."

In other words (and you see this in the list), God is not blessing us with every physical blessing or material blessing - these are spiritual blessings. This is not the kind of blessing that you see on TV where you say Jesus' name and you get a new car. (I don't want a new car, I just want the car I have to be clean, right? That's all I want. Why doesn't it rain on Saturday night? I parked the car outside and put soap on it...) That's not what he's talking about here. It's not the word of faith movement where you speak a word of faith and then God gives you a bigger house, more money, more clothes, more stuff like that. I remember teaching PE on the playground and a kindergartener got hit in the head and they used a lady from a charismatic background, came up and put her hand on the child and said, "Lord Jesus, heal this child." That's not what this is referring to here. This is a spiritual blessing. You can see this in chapter 1 with all of these things. Redemption, forgiveness, adoption - those are spiritual blessings. They bless your inner man, they bless your soul and your spirit.

And you see this in the latter part of the Book of Ephesians when Paul starts talking about your marriage and your home and your relationships, and those kinds of things. All that impacts that this is a spiritual blessing. That's what he's referring to here. The verse also says (if you notice in verse 3), "Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places," which is a way of saying in the highest places imaginable, in the greatest places you

can think of. Someone told me last week, you can't get any higher than the heavenlies, and you can't get any higher than these blessings. These blessings are so much greater than your car or your house or your money. They're so much greater than getting healed from getting hit in the head with a dodgeball. I don't know about you guys, but I would rather be redeemed than have a new house. Amen? Any day of the week - any day of the week. I would rather be forgiven than have a new car. That's what Paul is talking about.

Heavenly places also refers to eternal places, places of eternity. These are blessings that you will take with you when you die. These are blessings that will go with you to the grave. God has blessed us in the heavenly places. Which has a couple of applications as well, some ways this applies to us.

For one thing, this means that no one can touch your blessings. No one can reach out and take them away. Ain't that encouraging? They're in the heavenly places. They're in places where nobody can get them. They're beyond the reach of mortal man. The world can take your physical blessings, the world can reach out and take your money or your cars or your house - it can't do that with this. They are eternally secure. I remember when my dad's tire factory shut down in my hometown and a thousand people were laid off, and they lost everything. Some of these guys did. They lost their homes, they lost their cars. They couldn't make the payments. Their earthly blessings were gone. The earthly blessings of the town were gone. It's a town of, I don't know, 10,000 people. A thousand people lost their jobs, it about bankrupted the town. Paul says, "You can't lose these blessings because they are in the heavenly places."

This also means you can enjoy these blessings for all of eternity. That's another way to apply this. You can enjoy these blessings for all of eternity. You will never be done enjoying the blessings of Christ. You will never be through with them. You'll worship God for them now, you'll worship God for them tomorrow, and you will worship God for them for a billion years in heaven. You will thank Him for them now, thank Him for them then and thank Him for eternity. You can't do that with earthly blessings. Earthly blessings have a shelf life. You can have a new car today, but you drive it off the parking lot and it loses like \$5,000 in value as you're driving off the dealership. Your earthly blessings don't last, these blessings last forever. They're heavenly blessings.

I've told you this before, but this is something the Ephesians needed to hear because they were rich. They had lots of earthly blessings. The bank of Asia was located in Ephesus. All the money for miles around was kept in their hometown. The bank was actually right behind the statue of Diana in the great temple of Diana, the goddess of hunting. And so, the idea is it was the richest bank. Ephesus was the richest town from Rome to Babylon. It was one of the richest cities in the ancient world. And so it's almost as if Paul is saying at the beginning of this letter, "Don't focus on that. Don't worry about that, focus on your spiritual blessings," which is kind of similar to our situation.

We're a pretty rich area, aren't we? I read somewhere that Vancouver is one of the richest cities in North America, and the average family in BC has a net worth of \$344,000. I guess that's all of our stuff put together. It comes out to \$344,000. Which means it would be easy for us to do what the Ephesians did. It would be easy for us to focus on our earthly blessings as well. And Paul reminds us not to do that. Focus on the things that really matter.

Let me say it this way, we've all known people who had a lot of money and they were miserable, right? You guys know anybody like that? People who had all kinds of possessions and they were terribly unhappy. Their family was a wreck, their marriage was a wreck, they had no friends. Paul says, "Learn a lesson from this and pay attention to the blessings that really matter." Which leads to one more point in the list here, one more blessing to consider.

Just to review these other ones. The first one is the blessing of God. And Paul begins by telling us about the blessing of God or how we should bless Him for all He has done for us. All these blessings come from His hand, they come from His grace. It leads to a second blessing - that is that God has "blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places". He's done everything for us. He's held nothing back from us. He's given us blessings that no one can touch. And all this brings us to one more blessing in the list, the last one we're going to look at. And that is that all of this is possible because we are in Christ.

That's the third blessing in the list, the last one we're going to talk about this morning - and that is that we are in Christ. We are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies because God has put us in His Son. We talked about this last week in verse 1, but God has taken us out of the world, put us into Christ. And if you read all of verse 3, this is how Paul says it: "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."

That phrase "in Christ" may be the most important one in the book. It's repeated over and over again in here. You see it 19 times in the Book of Ephesians to say, "This is where our blessings come from. This is where they occur, they occur in Christ. They come to you in relation to your proximity to Him," which means that the closer you get to Jesus, the closer you get the blessing. Amen? The closer you get to Him, the closer you get to experiencing all of this.

And just to explain this a little bit, if you notice the phrase "in Christ" is a personal one here. And what I mean is it doesn't say, "Your placed into Jesus' cross" or "Your placed into His resurrection," although that's true. That does happen. But this says, "You are placed in Him, into Christ's person." It's kind of a strange thing to think about because we don't say, "I'm placed into my wife" or "I'm placed into my husband" - that's kind of an odd thing to say, but that's how Paul starts off here. The idea is you're put into Him in such a way that what is His is yours, and what's yours is His. There's a sharing going on here.

And also if you notice, this is a locative term, which means it's a term of location. Because when you're saved, your location changes, your soul goes from the world to being in Jesus. We can say it this way, when you came into church today, you walked into this building, right? You changed your location. You went from outside where it's a little bit cold and windy and that kind of thing, and you came in here where it's warm and nice. You enjoyed all the benefits this building provides. You enjoyed the shelter and the protection and security. In a similar way, when you're saved, God does that with you. He takes you out of the world outside where it's cold and windy, and He puts you in His Son where it's warm and dry. And you enjoy all the benefits of Christ.

Which means nothing can harm you without going through Him, Nothing can touch you without His protection. The circumstances of this world can't change that. Nothing can change your position in Him. Martin Lloyd Jones says, if you leave out the "in Christ" in verse 3, you will never have any blessings at all. Every blessing we have as Christians comes

to us through the Lord Jesus Christ. There are no blessings for us apart from Him. Which makes this a very important doctrine. This is everything for us. Every part of our salvation hinges on this. This is the foundation of everything. We can go to God and experience these blessings because we are in Christ.

I heard that the Rugby World Cup was going on right now, and I was a little bummed out about it because Tennessee didn't make it this year. (We don't play rugby, so we couldn't make it.) But one thing about rugby and a sport like that, is if you're on the team, if the team scores, you score, right? The team wins, you win. As long as you wear the jersey, you can sit on the bench and never even go on the field, but you still experience the joys of the game with your team. The Bible says, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became a member of the human race. He joined our team, He put on our Jersey so that if He scores, we score. If He wins, we win. If He's right with God and perfect with the Father, we experience all of that in Him. This is not a performance thing. He has performed for us. We go to God through Him. Which is something that we're going to see over and over again in this book. This is a phrase and a concept we're going to be continually getting our minds around.

But it leads me to ask, do you believe that today? Do you understand what it means to be in Christ? Do you have all these blessings because you've left the world and come into Him? Are you experiencing the joys of all of these things because you've left the world outside and come into the Son of God?

And going back to the way we started this, are you drinking the whole glass of milk? Are you resting in all the promises of God? That's what this book is about, that's what Paul wants for you. And the best way to wrap your mind around this is to continue to study this with us and to learn what it says about the salvation we have in Christ.

I mentioned D. L. Moody to you a moment ago, but Moody tells a story of a poor shop girl who came into his office one day loaded with cash. All of a sudden, she was rich and she had new clothes and new jewelry and new shoes. He said she looked like a brand new person. And so he asked her, he said, "Well, what happened to you? Where did you get all the money?" And she said, "I married a rich husband. I'm married a wealthy man." Paul says you did the same thing when you became a Christian. You did the same thing when you believed; you married a rich husband, you married a wealthy God. He owns the cattle on a thousand Hills. The earth is His and all it contains. And He has given you all of this, every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places so you can have a new life in Him. Let me pray for you now that you would know that and be blessed by that, and be overjoyed by what He has done for you in Christ. Let me pray.

Father, we thank you, Lord, for what our Saviour has done for us. We can approach a subject like this and never even plumb the depths of it. We can only just scratch the surface, Lord. But we thank you for the blessings we have in Your Son.

And Lord, I pray for those who are here this morning that they would feel this in their spirit, they would feel it in their soul if they're in Christ, they would be blessed. Lord, our minds are so small to comprehend these things. This world is so alluring to us and it pulls us so far away from what You have for us. But Lord, help us to come back to the Scriptures and understand.

If there're any here this morning who are not in Christ, Lord, as we come to the time of the Lord's Supper, I pray You would convict their hearts of their need for salvation. Convict their hearts that they read all this stuff in chapter 1 and they don't have it. Lord, would You draw them to faith in Your Son.

Thank you again, Lord, for all You've provided, and would You be glorified as we go out now and worship You in light of what Christ has done. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.