

## **With every spiritual blessing in Christ, Ephesians 1:1-14, 28012018**

The Epistle to the Ephesians is, in many ways, the crowning glory of the New Testament. But perhaps this letter ought not to be called "Ephesians" for we do not really know to whom it was written. The Christians at Ephesus were certainly among the recipients of this letter, but undoubtedly there were others. In many of the original Greek manuscripts there is a blank where the King James translation has the words "at Ephesus;" just a line where the names of other recipients were apparently to be filled in. That is why in some bible versions it does not say, "To the saints at Ephesus," but simply "To the saints who are also faithful in Christ Jesus..."

In Paul's letter to the Colossians there is a reference to a letter he wrote to the Laodiceans. Our Bible does not include an epistle called "A Letter to the Laodiceans," but many have felt that it is the same one we call "The Letter to the Ephesians." The reason is that the Revelation of John (the last book in the Bible) begins with letters to the seven churches of Asia, the first being to Ephesus and the last to Laodicea.

These cities were grouped in a rather rough circle in Asia Minor, and it evidently was customary for anyone who wrote to one of the churches to have the letter sent along to each of the others in turn, continuing around the circle until it came at last to the church at Laodicea. This may account for what would otherwise seem to be a lost letter from the Apostle Paul to the Laodiceans. At any rate, this letter sets forth, in a marvelous way, what **no other book of the New Testament describes so completely -- the nature of the body of Christ, the true Church.**

The first four letters of the New Testament -- **Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians** -- are the development of the phrase, "**Christ in you,**" teaching us what the indwelling life of Christ is intended to do. But beginning **with the letter to the church at Ephesus,** we are to learn and understand what it means **for us to be "in Christ" and to share the body life of the Lord Jesus Christ -- "you in Christ."** Here is the **great theme** of this letter -- **the believer in Christ, or the nature of the Church.**

### **Every spiritual blessing in Christ**

V3, is the great theme of this chapter, *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.***

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There is the work of the Father, **V3-6**. Work in relation to the Son, **V7-12**. The work of the Holy Spirit, **V13-14**. These are all available to us in the realm that Paul calls “the heavenly”.

### **The heavenly realm**

What are the heavenly realms?

Paul uses this phrase frequently in his epistles. Some of us may think that he is speaking here about a far away place where we go to after we have died. However, if we consider it like this, we may miss the whole meaning and intent of Paul’s letter.

The heavenly places are not off in some distant reach of space or on some planet or star; they are simply **the realm of invisible reality in which the Christian lives now, in contact with God, and in the conflict with the devil in which we are all daily engaged**. It reaches on into eternity, yes, but it is something to be experienced now, in the inner life. That is what he is talking about -- your thought-life, your attitudes, your inner life where you live, where you feel conflict and pressure, struggle and disaster -- that is part of the heaven lies.

It is where we are exposed to the attack of the principalities and powers which are mentioned in Chapter 6, those dark spirits in high places who get to us, and depress us, and frighten us, and make us anxious or hostile or angry.

The heaven lies is the realm of conflict, but also the realm where God can release us and deliver us, where the Spirit of God reaches us at the seat of our intellect and our emotions and our will.

It is the realm of those deep, surging urges which rise within us and create either a restlessness or a sense of peace, depending on the source from which they come.

So, don't consider this as though it were something out in space somewhere. **These blessings are yours in your inner experience, now, if you are in Jesus Christ.**

All of these come to us exclusively when we are “in Christ”. There is no other way! But when you are “in Christ” there is nothing to keep you from having all of them, every moment of the day. That is why it is so important to discover what they are.

These are much more than mere theological ideas. They are facts, foundational truths that undergird us in every moment of our life. And unless we understand those facts, we can't utilize or benefit from them

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### God chose us

God chose us to experience the spiritual blessings in Christ before the world was created.

**V3-4,** <sup>3</sup> *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. <sup>4</sup> For **he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.***

1. The starting point is always God and Father of our Lord Jesus. When we start to speak from this position, we know that we will touch reality and the truth.  
If we speak from our point of view, a partial truth will be the result. Then the difference between the thinking of natural man and spiritual man will be exposed. Spiritual thinking will always be God centered.
2. The aim of the work of God is to bless us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. His goal is to bring about a world, a universe, filled with blessing.

So, what are those spiritual blessings then?

### Spiritual Blessings in Christ

1. *V4, He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.*
2. *V5-6, He<sup>[b]</sup> predestined us for **adoption to sonship**<sup>[c]</sup> through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*  
We are members of the family of God.
3. *V7-8, In him we have **redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins**, in accordance with the riches of God's grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding,*  
Our guilt has been removed, think about that!
4. *V9-10, He<sup>[d]</sup> **made known to us the mystery of his will** according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*  
We have been taken into the secret councils of the Almighty. We have been told something of the details of this plan.

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5. *V11-12, In him we were also chosen,<sup>[e]</sup> having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,<sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.*

God has appointed us to be a demonstration of all great truths for the praise of His glory.

6. *V 13a, And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

We are in a position to get the truth from the real source.

7. *V13b-14, When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,<sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.*

Without these great facts, life is unbearable to man, desolate, dull, boring and we can hardly stand ourselves or each other. Actually, this is a list of the incompetence of man.

No political party or government could introduce them. They come from God, and God alone – God at work.

### **In Christ**

All this comes to us in Christ, in the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Himself.

The only spiritual blessing that can ever come to you from God must always come in Christ. There is no other way! (Catholics or ancestors ..?)

### **Locality**

Where all this occurs- "in the heavenly realms".

Paul refers to it in **2 Cor. 4: 18**, *So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

Do you remember the story in the OT about Elisha and his servant?

**2 Kings 6:15-17**, *When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked.*

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<sup>16</sup> *“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.”*

<sup>17</sup> *And Elisha prayed, “Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

Or even the message that the apostle John had to write to the angels of the churches in Asia, Revelation 1: 4, 11; 2:1, 8, 12, 18?

Even in **Eph. 6: 12**, *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

### **Conclusion**

We live in a world where most of the important things of our lives are not visible. We must recognize that fact. It is also in this realm that these great spiritual blessings are to be found. It is here that our life can be changed and we can become different people, by God’s grace.

It is God who does all this. It is not something that God is going to do, but something that He has already done. Therefore, it is available to you the minute you understand it and grasp it.

Are you part of this scheme?

Are you part of this family?

Have you joined the family of God through Jesus Christ our Lord?

If not, you can become a part of it right now.

You can say, Lord Jesus, here I am. I respond to your appeal. Enter my life and make me part of your family.

And if you are already part of it you can give thanks to God.