

# THE BLESSINGS OF GOD

## EPHESIANS 01:03–14

### *Introduction*

Among all the great passages of Scripture, this is one of the greatest. Its importance can never be overstated. It deals with God's plan for the world, His eternal plan; it deals with the great blessings of God which He pours out upon those who trust His Son Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

- I. God's blessings are heavenly blessings, not material (v. 3).
- II. God has chosen us to be holy and blameless (v. 4).
- III. God has adopted us as his sons (vv. 5-6).
- IV. God has redeemed us — forgiven our sins (v. 7).
- V. God has given us wisdom and understanding (v. 8).
- VI. God has revealed the mystery of His will to us (vv. 9-10).
- VII. God has chosen us, given us an inheritance, that is, made us the heritage of God (vv. 11-13).
- VIII. God has sealed us with the Holy Spirit (v. 14).

### **I. *Ephesians 01:03 God's Blessings***

God's blessings are spiritual and heavenly, not material blessings. Throughout history God has used two methods of blessings to deal with man. Before Christ, God dealt with man by blessing him with material blessings. He promised Abraham and Israel land, wealth and fame. (See *Israel, God's Special People*, Jn. 4:22; *Jews, the Seed of Abraham*, Rom. 4:1-25. See Gen. 12:1f; 13:14-17; 15:1-7, 15-19; 22:16-18; 26:2-5, 24; 28:13-15; 31:13; 35:9-12.) But Israel misused and hoarded the material blessings. Instead of sharing its blessings with other nations, Israel isolated itself and claimed superiority and God-given rights over other nations of the earth. However, since Christ, God deals with man spiritually, blessing him with spiritual blessings.

Five things should be noted about this.

1. Spiritual blessings *are of the Spirit*. It is the Spirit that controls man and the circumstances that surround him. A man may feel bad; he may be down, depressed and oppressed; but if his spirit is strong, he arises and conquers his feelings. He controls and overcomes the oppressing circumstances, and he lives a victorious day. But if his spirit is weak, whether at work or at play, he often wallows around in self-pity, grumbling and griping and living a defeated day. And too often the days stretch into weeks and months until a person's life is down more than it is up — all because the spirit is too weak to conquer. Thus, the major blessings of God are bound to be blessings that are spiritual — that enable a person to control his life.
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2. Spiritual blessings are the very opposite of temporal blessings. They are the *blessings of the inner man*, the blessings of the immortal. But of all blessings, they are the most glorious and satisfying. They are the blessings that erase the loneliness, alienation and purposelessness of man. They are the blessings that give man an overabundance of life.
3. Spiritual blessings are vastly superior to material blessings. They are *permanent and perfect and eternal*, lasting forever. They are of the very same nature as God Himself. Spiritual blessings exist and can be experienced both upon earth (the physical dimension of being) and in heaven (the spiritual dimension of being).
4. Spiritual blessings are found only *in Christ*. Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God the Father. He is in heaven, surrounded by all the heavenly atmosphere and blessings. All heavenly blessings are His; He is Lord and Possessor of all blessings. Therefore, if a person is to experience the spiritual blessings, he must be *in Christ*. If a person is *in Christ*, then he sits in heaven with Christ. How is this possible? When a person believes in Christ, truly believes, God takes his faith and counts it as righteousness. God counts the person to be the same as Christ, righteous and acceptable. In God's mind *faith in Christ* makes a person just like Christ: holy and righteous and acceptable for heaven. Therefore, when a person believes in Christ, God's mind sees the person in Christ; God sees the person identified with Christ, seated in heaven. And being seated in heaven, the person can experience all the blessings of heaven. Simply stated, to be *in Christ* means to believe in God's Son so much that God becomes elated — elated so much that He counts the person to be just like Christ: acceptable and worthy to be blessed with all the blessings of heaven. (See *Justification*, Gal. 2:15-16.)
5. God dealt with man in material blessings first because man had to learn several things.
  - a. An earthly inheritance does not last. It is subject to being lost or stolen. We either watch our material possessions deteriorate or else we leave our material possessions behind for others.
  - b. An earthly nation and material inheritance cannot bring peace and security. Peace and security are of the spirit. Earthly nations and material things are of the earth, of a corruptible nature. Thus nations and material things do not solve the spiritual struggle that man senses within his own being. Neither can nations and material things erase the spiritual divisions between men and between man and God.
  - c. Man has within his *inner being* a basic selfishness and greed. Man finds a tendency, an unregulated urge, that desires and seeks the material and hoards the corruptible to the neglect of the spiritual.
  - d. Man must undergo a basic change of character to be freed of this urge, this tendency that causes so much bondage, disruption and division within one's self and between men. Man must be *born again*, made into a *new creation*, created into a *new man* —

spiritually, permanently, perfectly, eternally. And such a spiritual creation must be performed by Someone much greater than himself. Man must be recreated by the hand of God Himself.

## II. *Ephesians 01:04 Holy and Blameless*

The first blessing: God has chosen us to be holy and blameless. This is a wonderful verse. Just imagine! God determined before the world was ever created that He would have a people...

- who would be “in Him,” that is, in His Son, Jesus Christ.
- who would be “holy and blameless.”
- who would live “in His sight. In love” — forever and ever.

This means a most wonderful thing; God wants us to be with Him. God does not want us separated from Him, gripped by sin and shame, sorrow and pain, death and hell. God wants us to live forever and ever with Him. In fact, note that God has determined that some will live with Him and Christ. He has “chosen us” — chosen believers — to live with Him. No amount of rebellion and rejection, cursing and denial of Him will stop His purpose and plan. God will have a people who will live with Him, and He will continue to choose us until He has the number He has purposed.

Now, note the great blessing of God: that we should be holy and blameless in His sight.

1. The word *holy* (hagious) means to be set apart and consecrated to God. It is the same word that is used for “saint” in verse one (see *Saint*, Eph. 1:1-2).

*2 Cor 7:1* Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

*Eph 4:24* And to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

*Heb 12:14* Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

*1 Pet 1:15-16* But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.”

*2 Pet 3:11* Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives.

2. The word *blameless* (amomous) means to be free from sin, dirt and filth; to be above reproach and without blemish; to be without fault and defilement.

*Phil 2:15* So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.

**Col 1:21-22** *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.*

**1 Th 3:13** *May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.*

**1 Th 5:23** *May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**2 Pet 3:14** *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

Simply stated, the great blessing of God is perfection; God has chosen the believer to be perfect. But note: the believer's perfection is *in Christ and in Christ alone*. No man — not even a believer — can live a perfect and sinless life. No man is righteous or ever will be. Jesus Christ is the only Person who has ever lived a sinless and perfect life; therefore, He is the only Person who has the right to live with God. Our only hope of ever living with God is to *believe in Jesus Christ* — believe so much that God will take our faith and count it as the righteousness of Christ. This is the glorious gospel: God loves us so much that He has accepted us in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He has taken our *faith in Christ* and counted it as the righteousness of Christ. Therefore, we are acceptable to God because we trust in Christ and in His righteousness — accepted as being perfect in the perfection of Jesus Christ. (See *Justification*, Gal. 2:15-16; *Faith and Works*, Gal. 2:16; see 2:19-21.)

### III. *Ephesians 01:05–06 Adoption as a Child of God*

The second blessing: God has adopted us as children. How unbelievable — what a glorious privilege to be adopted as a child of God! And note:

=> It was predestined, that is, *foreordained* (proorisas).

=> It was the pleasure of God to adopt us — the good pleasure of His will. And it was His purpose to adopt us, and His purpose and His pleasure and His will were all good.

This is most striking when we consider how sinful and depraved we are and how much we have cursed, rebelled and rejected God. The fact that God wills and finds pleasure in adopting us and that He counts it as good is too much to believe. Yet, it is exactly what He says. Now note two significant things.

1. The word *foreordained* does not mean that God chooses some persons for salvation and everyone else for eternal punishment. Scripture teaches the exact opposite.

**John 3:16** *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

**Rom 10:13** For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

**1 Tim 2:3-6** This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.

**2 Pet 3:9** The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

**1 John 2:2** He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

The word *predestination* (proorisas) means to destine or appoint before, to foreordain, to predetermine. The basic Greek word (proorizo) means to *mark off or to set off* the boundaries of something. The idea is a glorious picture of what God is doing for the believer. The boundary is marked and set off for the believer: the boundary of being adopted as a child of God. The believer shall be adopted, made just like Christ and conformed to His very likeness and image. Nothing can stop God’s purpose for the believer. It is predestined, set and marked off. The believer may struggle and suffer through the sin and shame of this world; he may even stumble and fall or become discouraged and down-hearted. But if he is a genuine child of God, he will not be defeated, not totally. He will soon arise from his fall and begin to follow Christ again. He is predestined to be a brother of Christ, to worship and serve Christ throughout all eternity. And Christ will not be disappointed. God loves His Son too much to allow Him to be disappointed by losing a single brother. Jesus Christ will have His joy fulfilled; He will see every brother of His adopted and conformed perfectly to His image. He will have the worship and service of every person chosen to be His by God the Father. The believer’s eternal destiny, that of being an adopted brother to the Lord Jesus Christ, is determined. The believer can rest assured of this glorious truth. God has predestined him to be delivered from the suffering and struggling of this sinful world. (See *Predestination*, Jn. 6:37; 6:39; 6:44-46 for God’s part and man’s part in salvation. See *Predestination*, Acts 2:23; Rom. 8:28-39; 9:11-13; 9:14-33.)

**Eph 1:4-5** For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will.

**Eph 3:11-12** According to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

2. The word “adoption” means to place as a son (see *Adoption*, Gal. 4:5-6).
3. Adoption is by Jesus Christ and by Him alone. God accepts us because we believe and trust His Son Jesus Christ. He tells us plainly that He wants His Son to have

many brothers and sisters who will love, worship and serve Him both now and forever. Therefore, when a person wants to live for Jesus Christ — wants to live for Him so much that he *entrusts all he is and has to Christ* — God takes that person's trust and adopts him, makes him a brother or sister to Jesus Christ (see Rom. 8:29).

**Rom 8:28** *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

4. God's purpose in adoption is that we might live forever — live to the praise of the glory of His grace.

**Eph 2:7** *In order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.* (see Eph. 1:18)

#### **IV. Ephesians 01:07 Redemption and Ransom**

The third blessing: God has redeemed us and forgiven our sins. The word *redemption* (apolutrosin) is one of the great words of the Bible. It conveys the idea of deliverance or setting a man free by paying a ransom. For example, a prisoner of war or a kidnapped person is ransomed or redeemed: or a convicted criminal is freed from the penalty of death. In every case the man is powerless to free himself. He cannot pay the penalty demanded to liberate himself from his situation or bondage. Note several significant facts.

1. Man has been captivated or kidnapped by several forces.
  - a. The force of sin. All men sin and cannot help but sin. Man is sold under sin. Sin has captivated him (Rom. 3:23; 7:14).
  - b. The force of corruption and death. The whole creation is corrupt (Rom. 8:21). Everything wastes away; it deteriorates, decays, ages and eventually dies. Corruption and death have captivated man. (See 1 Cor. 15:42, 50; Gal. 6:8; 2 Pet. 1:4; 2:12, 19.)
  - c. The force of Satan. All unbelievers are under the power and influence of Satan. He has blinded their minds to the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4). He works in the those who are disobedient (Eph. 2:2). They are captivated by him (1 Jn. 5:19).
2. Three key ideas are included in the concept of redemption.
  - a. Man needs to be liberated, delivered and set free.
  - b. Man is unable to liberate himself. He has no energy, no power, no ability to free himself.
  - c. God has redeemed man by the blood of His Son Jesus Christ. God Himself has paid the ransom for man's release — the ransom of a life for a life. God gave His own Son so that man might be set free. Man has been redeemed through the blood of Jesus Christ (see Lev. 17:11; Mt. 20:28; Rom. 3:24; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Col. 1:14; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:18f; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9; 14:3-4). This is extremely important to note: when a man *truly* calls upon the Lord to save him, God buys him right out of the marketplace of this corruptible life (Rom. 10:13). God redeems him

once for all, purchases and removes him from further sale. He is redeemed eternally (see Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Col. 4:5).

3. God redeems man because of the riches of His grace (see *Grace*, Eph. 2:8-9). He loves man with an unbelievable love — a love so great that it spurs Him to do whatever is necessary to save man.

**Lev 17:11** *For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.*

**Mat 20:28** *“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

**Rom 3:24** *And are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

**1 Cor 6:20** *You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.*

**1 Cor 7:23** *You were bought [redeemed] at a price; do not become slaves of men.*

**Eph 1:7** *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.*

**Col 1:14** *In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

**1 Tim 2:5-6** *For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men — the testimony given in its proper time.*

**Heb 9:15** *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

**1 Pet 1:18-19** *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

**2 Pet 2:1** *But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves.*

**Rev 5:9** *And they sang a new song: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.*

**Rev 14:3-4** *And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb.*

## EPHESIANS 01:07 FORGIVENESS

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. **Ephesians 01:07***

The word forgiveness (aphesin) means to send off, to send away, to release, to let go. The word for sin (paraptomaton) means transgression, trespass, a falling by the way, or deviating from the way. All men...

- have transgressed the law of God
- have deviated from God
- have fallen from the way of God

Therefore, all men stand guilty of having broken the law of God. and the penalty for breaking the law is death. However, the blood of Jesus Christ brings forgiveness to men. How? Jesus Christ died *for man*. He took the penalty of sins and bore the punishment Himself. He was able to do this because He was the Perfect and Ideal Man, and as the Ideal Man, He could stand for and represent all men. When He died, He died as the Ideal Man, as the Representative for all men. Any person who really believes that Jesus Christ died for him is forgiven his sins. God takes his faith and counts it as the death of Jesus Christ. God sees the man as being *in Jesus Christ*, as being in the death of Jesus Christ. God counts the death of Jesus Christ for the death of the man. Therefore, the guilt and penalty for breaking God's laws are completely removed. The man's sins and guilt are sent away or washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ.

*Acts 5:31* God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

*Acts 13:38* "Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you."

*Acts 26:18* To open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me [Christ Jesus].

*Eph 1:7* In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. □

## V. *Ephesians 01:08 Wisdom and Understanding*

The fourth blessing: God has given us wisdom and understanding. Again, note that both blessings come to us through Jesus Christ. Common sense tells us that God will give His wisdom and understanding only to those who honour Him and His Son.

1. The word *wisdom* (*sophia*) means seeing and knowing the truth. It is seeing and knowing what to do. It grasps the great truths of life. It sees the answers to the



problems of life and death, God and man, time and eternity, good and evil — the deep things of God and of the universe.

This wisdom is found only in Jesus Christ and is promised only to those who search after Him with all their heart (1 Cor. 1:30; 2:10-16; Eph. 1:8; Phil. 2:5f; Jas. 1:5).

**Rom 11:33** *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!*

**1 Cor 1:24** *But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

**1 Cor 1:30** *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God — that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

**1 Cor 2:9-16** *However, as it is written: “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” — but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man’s judgment: “For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*

**Eph 1:8** *That he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.*

**Col 2:3** *In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

2. The word *understanding* (*phronesei*) means seeing how to use and do the truth. It is seeing the direction to take. It is understanding, insight, the ability to solve day to day problems. It is a down-to-earth practical understanding of things.

**Eph 1:17-18** *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.*

**Col 1:9** *For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to All you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.*

**Col 2:2** *My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ.*

**2 Tim 2:7** Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.

**1 John 5:20** We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true — even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

**Prov 2:6** For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

**Prov 8:14** Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power.

## **VI. Ephesians 01:09–10 Mystery of God’s Will**

The fifth blessing: God has revealed the mystery of His will to us. This is the key thought and great theme of Ephesians. (William Barclay has an excellent description of this point and he should be consulted by the person who wishes to study the point in depth. *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 96f.) Remember: in the Bible a mystery is not something mysterious and difficult to understand. Rather, it is a truth that has been locked up in God’s plan for ages until He was ready to reveal it to man. When the time came, He unlocked the truth and opened it up to man. A mystery is a truth revealed by God that had never before been known. (See 1 Cor. 2:7 for a list of all the mysteries of the Bible.) The mystery of God’s will can be simply stated: God is to gather together and unify all things in a spirit of peace and harmony — all things, both visible and invisible. All things are to be brought to a peaceful and eternal state under the authority and glorification of Jesus Christ. God is moving history toward that climactic consummation.

Paul’s great thought in verses 9-10 says several things.

1. God has an eternal purpose and plan for the world, and it is His pleasure to bring it about. He joys and rejoices to bring it about, and what He does is good. It is all good.
2. There is terrible division throughout the universe. The need for God “to bring all things in heaven and on earth together” indicates division (see Eph. 6:12). And the fact that God’s primary concern through all the ages has been to harmonize the divisions shows how devastating and horrible the division really is.
3. There is to be a consummation, a climax of history — when the times will have reached their fulfilment, a new order — in which all things will be unified and harmonized and brought to a peaceful state under the authority of Jesus Christ. History is in the hands of God. The phrase Paul uses is *put into effect (oikonomia)* which literally means, “household arrangement.” The idea is that the universe is a house under the management of God. God is handling, planning, arranging and administering all things toward a climactic consummation for Christ and His followers. In that climactic day all disharmony and division and evil will be subjected and *harmonized (anakephalaioo)* under Christ. A new and perfect and eternal creation will be established for the Lord and His followers throughout the universe.

**Gal 4:4-6** *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”*

**Eph 1:4** *For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love*

**Eph 3:9-11** *And to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Phil 2:9-11** *Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**James 1:18** *He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.*

4. Jesus Christ is God’s appointed Head over the new creation and new order. He is God’s *Head over the church*, which is God’s new creation in the present world and order of things (Eph. 1:22-23). And He is to be God’s *Head over the new creation* in the future world and order of things (Jas. 1:18).

**Eph 1:22-23** *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

**Eph 4:15** *Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.*

**Eph 5:23** *For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.*

**Col 1:18** *And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*

**Col 2:19** *He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.*

5. The church is the Lord’s instrument of reconciliation and peace. His representative body upon the earth. As the instrument of the Lord, the church is to do two things.
  - a. The church is to take Christ and His message of reconciliation and peace to the world. Through “His body, the church,” all division and disorder among men are to be condemned, and His message of harmony and peace is to be proclaimed.

- b. The church is to practice reconciliation upon the earth. “In the church” all laws, barriers and divisions are to be done away with. They are to be nonexistent. The church is to be a speck, an embryo of heaven upon the earth.

*2 Cor 5:19-21* That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

*Eph 4:11-12* It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

## VII. *Ephesians 01:11–13 Chosen for an Inheritance*

The sixth blessing: God has chosen us and given us an inheritance, that is, made us the heritage of God Himself. Note several significant points.

1. The inheritance or heritage was predestined, that is, foreordained. God works all things out after the counsel of His own will. He must, for only God knows what is best. And nothing could be better than to be given the greatest inheritance possible: that of being made the very heritage of God, the very possession of God. (See *Foreordain*, Eph. 1:5-6.)
2. The inheritance is clearly stated in the words “that we...*might be*,” that is, that we should exist eternally. God gives the believer an eternal *state of being* — an eternal existence. In fact, the phrase “we were also chosen” (*eklerothemen*) means *heritage*. God takes the believer and makes him His own heritage and possession. The believer himself is made the inheritance of God. He is given the glorious privilege of *being*, of living and existing forever as God’s most *cherished possession and heritage*. He becomes the most precious gem and treasure of God. This is the believer’s inheritance, his heritage.

*Deu 9:29* “But they are your people, your inheritance that you brought out by your great power and your outstretched arm.” (see Exo. 19:5)

*Deu 32:9* For the Lord’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted inheritance.

*Exo 19:5* Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine.

*Psa 135:4* For the Lord has chosen Jacob to be his own, Israel [believers] to be his treasured possession.

*Isa 43:1* But now, this is what the Lord says — he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.”

**Mal 3:17** “They will be mine,” says the Lord Almighty, “in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him.

**2 Cor 4:7** But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

**Eph 2:19-21** Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

**1 Pet 2:9** But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

3. The reason God chooses us or makes us His inheritance is that we should exist to the praise of His glory. We will live forever in the new heavens and earth as the perfect demonstration of His glory. The fact that God would take sinners — totally depraved sinners — and save them will cause praise upon praise to be heaped upon His name. His unbelievable love will be seen and glorified forever and ever by all creatures — both of heaven and of earth, both visible and invisible, both now and yet to be. All shall stand in stark amazement at God’s spectacular glory — the glory of His eternal grace and love shown to the world in His dear Son, Jesus Christ.

**Eph 1:6** To the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

**Heb 13:14-15** For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name.

**1 Pet 2:9** But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

**Rev 5:11-12** Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!”

**Rev 7:9-12** After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs

*to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: “Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!”*

**Rev 19:1** *After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting: “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.”*

4. How does a person receive the inheritance? This verse says there are two ways (v. 13).
  - a. By hearing the Word of God. A person has to hear the Word of God before he can ever know the truth, the glorious gospel of salvation. He cannot believe in Jesus Christ unless he first hears about Christ.

**Rom 10:17** *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

**1 Pet 1:23** *For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.*

- b. By believing and trusting in Jesus Christ.

**John 5:24** *“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”*

**Rom 10:9-10** *That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.*

### **VIII. Ephesians 01:13–14 Holy Spirit, Seal and Guarantee**

The seventh blessing: God has sealed us with the Holy Spirit. The word *deposit* (*arrabon*) means pledge, guarantee, a down payment. The Holy Spirit is given to the believer to give the believer perfect assurance of his salvation. We know that the Holy Spirit who lives within us redeems us — that we are God’s cherished possession.

Again note: Why does God give us such a glorious guarantee as His own wonderful presence? That His glory might be praised eternally.

**Rom 8:16** *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.*

**2 Cor 1:22** *Set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

**Gal 4:6** *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” ■*