"God is Worthy of our Praise"

Ephesians 1:1-7
1-18-2023

INTRODUCTION:

***God is worthy of our praise (blessing) because of what He has done for us in Christ.**

What has God done for every Christian?

I. He <u>BLESSED</u> Us (v. 3)

A. The <u>Amount</u> of our blessings - "All"
B. The <u>Quality</u> of our blessings - "Spiritual blessings"
C. The <u>Location</u> of our blessings - "In heavenly places"
D. The <u>Source</u> of our blessings - "in Christ"

II. He <u>CHOSE</u> Us (v. 4)

A. The <u>Plan</u> of God's Choosing - "in Him"
B. The <u>Time</u> of God's Choosing - "before the foundation of the world"
C. The <u>Goal</u> of God's Choosing - "that we should be holy and without blame before Him"

III. He <u>ADOPTED</u> Us (v. 5-6)

A. The <u>Pre-determined Plan</u> of our Adoption - "having predestined us"
B. The <u>Means</u> of our Adoption - "by Jesus Christ . . . in the beloved"
C. The <u>Motive</u> of our Adoption - "the good pleasure of His will"
D. The <u>End Result</u> of our Adoption - "to the praise. . . of His grace"

IV. He <u>REDEEMED</u> Us (v. 7)

A. The <u>Source</u> of our Redemption - "In whom" = in Christ
B. The <u>Means</u> of our Redemption - "Through His blood"
C. The <u>Meaning</u> of our Redemption - "Forgiveness of sins"
D. The <u>Measure</u> of our Redemption - "According to the riches of His grace"

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INTRODUCTION: The miracle of miracles occurs when someone believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. When someone trusts Jesus as Savior, they are born again and need to grow in their faith. Ephesians is a good book to ground you, grow your faith and mature your walk with Christ.

v. 1

An "apostle" = a sent one; one commissioned with a special task.

Paul's special task was to reveal the mystery of believers being united in Christ to the Gentile world.

Paul calls himself the apostle to the Gentiles (Gal. 1:15-16; 2:7-8)

"of Jesus Christ" - Paul was commissioned <u>by</u> Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:17).
Paul was commissioned <u>for</u> Jesus Christ (Acts 9:15)

"By the will of God" - Paul was not a self-made apostle; he did not usurp this high and holy office independently. His office and message was not his choice but God's. The reason why this Ephesian epistle has authority is because it came from God through His selected Apostle. The idea of apostolic succession is erroneous. They were the foundation builders of the Church (Eph. 2:20). The foundation has been laid; therefore, there are <u>no</u> more apostles.

"Saints" - holy ones; set=apart ones. Paul, writing to saints, was not writing to some elite group of clergy, etc., but to common believers at Ephesus.

"At Ephesus" - the Ephesian church was started by Paul (Acts 18:19-20)

Strengthened by Apollos and Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:24-28)

Paul returned and ministered for 3 years on his 3rd missionary journey (Acts 19:1-20)

He then went back to give a final admonition to the Ephesian pastors (Acts 20:16-38).

Ephesus was a major commercial, political, religious, cosmopolitan area.

Cities need the Gospel today!

Paul now writes this letter while in jail in Rome. (his first Roman imprisonment).

The letter was delivered by Tychicas (Eph. 6:21-22; Col. 4:7-8); and because this letter was spread around to other churches after it reached Ephesus, it is perhaps called the "Epistle from Laodicea' in Coloss. 4:16.

"Faithful" - another word to describe a true saint.

NOTE: Our faithfulness to Christ is because of our union in Christ.

You are either "in" or "out". If you are "out, you can get "in." And if you are "in Christ," you cannot get out, but you will remain faithful.

V. 2

"Grace be to you" - even saints need grace. Grace to live the Christian life. Grace to please God. Grace to bear fruit. We are saved by grace and we must have God's continual supply of grace to live for Christ.

Paul usually introduces his letters and concludes them by wishing God's grace to be upon the brethren.

"Peace" - not "peace with God" (Rom. 5:1) which they already have, being "in Christ," but the "Peace of God" (Phil. 4:7).

NOTE: We must have God's grace before we have His peace.

"From God...and...Christ" - Grace and peace come from both the Father and Son. This fact shows the equality of both, and the divine nature of Christ.

"Lord" - He is Master
"Jesus - "He is Savior
"Christ" - He is Messiah

Two questions most people have:
Who am I?
What is my purpose in life?

Ephesians answers these:
The Book of Ephesians shows me Who I am in Christ and then shows me what my purpose is?

The 2-division of Ephesians:
Chap. 1 - 3 - doctrinal (our position in Christ) deals with the spiritual wealth of believers
Chap. 4 - 6 - duty (our practice in Christ) deals with the spiritual walk of believers.

V. 3
Verses 3 - 14 are actually just one sentence in the Greek N.T. The main clause is "Blessed

be the God . . ." The following clauses are subordinate (relative and adverbial clauses), all modifying our God and describing why He is blessed.

V. 3-6 -Our past: The Father's plan in our salvation
7-11 -Our Present: The Son's Provision in our salvation
10-14 -Our Future: The Spirit's Preservation of our salvation

- He chose…predestinated (Past)
- We have redemption…forgiveness (Present)
- You were sealed… until the day of redemption (Future)

"Blessed" = worthy to be blessed, praised, adored, thanked, applauded, honored, etc.

"Blessed be the LORD, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our Salvation" (Psalm 68:19)

2 Corinthians 9:15
Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

The ultimate gift, the most sacrificial gift, the most costly gift was that of God giving His Son, so that we might have the gift of eternal life!
"Unspeakable" – Indescribable;

***God is worthy of our praise (blessing) because of what He has done for us in Christ.**

What has God done for every Christian?

I. He BLESSED Us (v. 3)

SEE: ILLUS: Elderly man and his wife (MacArthur, p. vii)
Hetty Green (MacArthur, p. vii)

A. The Amount of our blessings - "All"

The believer lacks nothing that God intends to give. The moment you believed, He gave you everything you would ever get.

(Our gifts--through perhaps unrealized--and our spiritual blessings which are on reverse in Heaven are already ours!)

We are complete in Christ (Col. 2:10); we lack nothing; we should not quest for anything more, but rather enjoy what we already have.

B. The Quality of our blessings - "Spiritual blessings"

Not necessary material or visible blessings (though God's children never fail to have their needs met).

"Special blessings" are blessings that cannot be stolen, lost, corrupted, etc.

C. The Location of our blessings - "In heavenly places"

"In heavenly places" - In the heavenlies. In the eternal, non-visible, heavenly realm. We see our spiritual wealth through Holy Spirit inspired faith (I Cor. 2:9-10 - "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God").

I may not have much "here" but I have more than enough over "there"!

This wealth is more valuable anyway! Because it is eternal! (II Cor. 4:18 - "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

D. The Source of our blessings - "in Christ"

God has no spiritual blessings outside of Christ!

Reason: God's blessings are a result of His grace and there is no saving grace outside of Christ (Eph. 2:7, 8)

NOTE: the repeated phrase "in Christ" (Chap. 1 & 2)

Who do you identify with? If you identify with Christ and view yourself as united to Him, you will gain a glimpse of your spiritual plenty.

II. He CHOSE Us (v. 4)

A. The Plan of God's Choosing - "in Him"

"Chosen" - to elect, select, pick out

(Cp. John 6:37, 39, 44, 65; 17:2; Acts 13:48; II Tim. 1:9; Rom. 9; Rom. 8:29; I Pet. 1:2; II Thes. 2:13)

In context, the emphasis is not merely on the people whom God elected, but on the plan He elected. The emphasis is not so much on the word "us" but on the phrase "in Him."

Both the choosing of "us" and the choosing of "us in him" was predestinated (determined in advance). He chose the persons and the plan of salvation.

B. The Time of God's Choosing - "before the foundation of the world"

There are no afterthoughts with God.

Just as, in God's mind, Jesus was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

So He wrote the names of those who would believe in Him in "the book of life from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 17:9)

And He prepared a place in Heaven for believers from before "the foundation of the world" (Mt. 25:34).

C. The Goal of God's Choosing - "that we should be holy and without blame before Him"

"Holy" - set apart from all impurity

"Without blame" - free from all disqualifying blemishes

"Before Him" - lit. "in front of His eyes"

As God sees the blood-bought sinner, He does not see our sin, but He sees us "in Christ"; therefore He sees us as absolutely pure and blameless.

III. He ADOPTED Us (v. 5-6)

A. The Pre-determined Plan of our Adoption - "having predestined us"

The phrase "in love" points to God's motive in predestinating us.

The text should read: "In love having predestinated us. . ."

"Adoption of children" - under Roman law an adopted child was every bit as much a child of the parents as natural children (SEE: Rom. 8:15-17).

"Adoption" is the legal process by which someone who is not blood related, becomes related to someone and thereby gains all of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a literal son.

God who formerly was not our Father (but we were "children of wrath" - Eph. 2:3; and "children of disobedience" - Col. 3:6-7); but now God is our dear Heavenly Father.

The idea of "adoption" would have been fully understood by the Romans, since Roman law observed certain facts concerning adoption:

1. He lost all rights in the old family and gained all rights of a legitimate son in the new family.

2. He became an heir to the new father's estate.

3. His old life was forgotten.

4. He was considered the son of the new father.

(Stitzinger, Romans notes, p. 51)

"Abba" = Aramaic term used in addressing one's father. "O Father" "O Daddy" or "Papa".

An intimate expression; cp. Mk. 14:36. A term of endearment.

God is not an alien to His children.

The term "Father" is primarily a N.T. term, frequently used by Christ to

emphasize the closeness we have with God (EX: Lord's prayer - "Our Father...")

This adoption is what God means by the phrase "born again" (Jn. 3:3, 7)

B. The Means of our Adoption - "by Jesus Christ . . . in the beloved"

"By Jesus Christ" = by means of; through

Jesus is our link to adoption.

C. The Motive of our Adoption - "the good pleasure of His will"

"The good pleasure of His will" - the satisfaction of God's desire

D. The End Result of our Adoption - "to the praise. . . of His grace"

"The praise of . . . His grace" - God's glorious grace, not man's works, will be praised throughout eternity! (SEE: Eph. 2:7, 9)

"Wherein" - It is by God's grace that we are accepted in the beloved (i.e. in Christ).

[NOTE: the critical text does not have the word "accepted" but "bestowed"]

We are a trophy of God's grace forever!

IV. He REDEEMED Us (v. 7)

In the ancient Roman empire there were approximately 6 million people who were slaves of someone. When someone wanted to purchase or free a slave they would pay a ransom or the price of redemption. We too were slaves. Slave of sin and Satan. However, we have been redeemed (bought) by the shed blood of the Messiah.

"Redeemed" - Fanny Crosby's testimony about redemption (P. 15)

"Redemption" (apolutrosis) = to release or free someone by paying a price (this word emphasizes the freedom, actual deliverance, or liberty that is received - cp. Vine, p. 263).

Redemption is forever (Heb. 9:12 - "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

A. The Source of our Redemption - "In whom" = in Christ

"In whom" = in the beloved (v. 6) - in Christ (via our union with Christ, we have redemption)

"We have" - redemption is a present reality. We already have been redeemed.

B. The Means of our Redemption - "Through His blood"

"Through His blood" - by means of Christ's shed blood. The price of redemption was the blood of Jesus

I Pet. 1:18 - "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers"

Acts 20:28 - "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Col. 1:14 - "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins"

Heb. 9:12 - "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Rev. 5:9 - "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation"

"His blood" - refers to that one time act of Christ whereby He shed (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22) His literal, human blood (Heb. 2:14) on Calvary's cross (Col. 1:20).

C. The Meaning of our Redemption - "Forgiveness of sins"

"The forgiveness of sins" - this phrase is in apposition to the phrase "redemption through His blood." Redemption and forgiveness are conveying synonymous ideas.

("Redemption . . . [even] the forgiveness of sins")

"Forgiveness" = release, pardon, cancellation of an obligation, punishment, or guilt.

"Sins" (paraptoma) - to overstep a boundary, transgression

D. The Measure of our Redemption - "According to the riches of His grace"

"Riches" - God's grace imparts spiritual riches (EX: the high price to bail some people out of jail)

"Grace" - God's Riches At Christ's Expense

Thank You Lord For Saving My Soul,
Thank You Lord For Making Me Whole,
Thank You Lord For Giving To Me,

THE ART COLLECTOR'S SON

Author Unknown

Years ago, there was a very wealthy man who, with his devoted young son, shared a passion for art collecting. Together they traveled around the world, adding only the finest art treasures to their collection.

Priceless works by Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet and many others adorned the walls of the family estate.

The widowed, elder man looked on with satisfaction, as his only child became an experienced art collector. The son's trained eye and sharp business mind caused his father to beam with pride as they dealt with art collectors around the world.

As winter approached, war engulfed the nation, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, his father received a telegram. His beloved son was missing in action. The art collector anxiously awaited more news, fearing he would never see his son again. Within days, his fears were confirmed. The young man had died while rushing a fellow soldier to a medic.

Distraught and lonely, the old man faced the upcoming Christmas holidays with anguish and sadness. The joy of the season, a season that he and his son had so looked forward to, would visit his house no longer.

On Christmas morning, a knock on the door awakened the depressed old man. As he walked to the door, the masterpieces of art on the walls only reminded him that his son was not coming home. As he opened the door, a soldier greeted him with a large package in his hand. He introduced himself to the man by saying, "I was a friend of your son. I was the one he was rescuing when he died. May I come in for a few moments? I have something to show you."

As the two began to talk, the soldier told of how the man's son had told every one of his, not to mention his father's, love of fine art.

"I'm an artist," said the soldier, "and I want to give you this."

As the old man opened the package, the paper gave way to reveal a portrait of the man's son. Though the world would never consider it the work of a genius, the painting featured the young man's face in striking detail. Overcome with emotion, the man thanked the solider, promising to hang the

picture above the fireplace.
A few hours later, after the soldier had departed, the old man set about his task. True to his word, the painting went above the fireplace,
pushing aside thousands of dollars of paintings. And then the man sat in his chair and spent Christmas gazing at the gift he had been given.
During the days and weeks that followed, the man realized that even though his son was no longer with him, the boy's life would live on because of those he had touched. He would soon learn that his son had rescued dozens of wounded soldiers before a bullet stilled his caring heart.

As the stories of his son's gallantry continued to reach him, fatherly pride and satisfaction began to ease the grief. The painting of his son soon became his most prized possession, far eclipsing any interest in
the pieces for which museums around the world clamored. He told his neighbors it was the greatest gift he had ever received.

The following spring, the old man became ill and passed away. The art world was in anticipation! Unmindful of the story of the man's only son, but in his honor, those paintings would be sold at an auction.
According to the will of the old man, all of the art works would be auctioned on Christmas Day, the day he had received his greatest gift.

The day soon arrived and art collectors from around the world gathered to bid on some of the world's most spectacular paintings.
Dreams would be fulfilled this day; greatness would be achieved as many would claim, "I have the greatest collection."

The auction began with a painting that was not on any museum's list. It was the painting of the man's son. The auctioneer asked for an opening bid. The room was silent.

"Who will open the bidding with $100?" he asked. Minutes passed. No one spoke.

From the back of the room came, "Who cares about that painting? It's just a picture of his son."

"Let's forget it and go on to the good stuff." More voices echoed in agreement.

"No, we have to sell this one first," replied the auctioneer. "Now, who will take the son?"

Finally, a friend of the old man spoke, "Will you take ten dollars for the painting? That's all I have. I knew the boy, so I'd like to have it."

"I have ten dollars. Will anyone go higher?" called the auctioneer.

After more silence, the auctioneer said, "Going once, going twice. Gone." The gavel fell.

Cheers filled the room and someone exclaimed, "Now we can get on with

it and we can bid on these treasures!"

The auctioneer looked at the audience and announced the auction was over. Stunned disbelief quieted the room.

Someone spoke up and asked, "What do you mean it's over? We didn't come here for a picture of some old guy's son. And what about all of these other paintings? There are millions of dollars of art here! I
demand that you explain what's going on here!"

The auctioneer replied, "It's very simple. According to the will of the father, whoever takes the son gets it all."

Just as those art collectors discovered on that Christmas Day, the message is still the same - the love of a Father, a Father whose greatest joy came from His Son, who went away and gave His life rescuing others.

And because of that Father's love, whoever takes the Son, gets it all!