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C0417 -- April 28, 2004 -- Ephesians 1:3 -- Every Spiritual Blessing

Last time we finished the Prologue which included the Author, the recipients, the destination and the greeting. First the

Recipients (1:1b):

We found that Paul was writing to “saints” and that “saints” are those who have been “set apart to God”. “Saints” are not a special class of believers but it is a title that refers to all believers. It doesn’t mean without sin. The Bible does not teach perfectionism.

Destination (1:1b)

These “saints” were living in western Asia Minor in the major city of Ephesus. Some scholars claim that the words “in Ephesus” are not in the original since 3 manuscripts do not contain the words. But, this has so little manuscript support that the Holy Spirit sure did a poor job of preserving the text if that were so. Thus, the letter is a local letter, written in such a way that these more advanced believers would be able to learn to creatively apply doctrine. We also know that this church in Ephesus was primarily Gentile, about 98%. Paul had been accustomed to working with Jews who already had a strong OT background but in Ephesus Paul ran into the problem of a mass of Gentiles becoming believers who had little to no OT background. So, Paul had to find a place, somewhere firm, to ground them. What Paul found was that Gentile believers have to be grounded in the eternal counsels of God. Jews had the grounds of Abraham and the extensive history of the nation of Israel, but here Paul is dealing with a mixed up history of pagan idolatry. So, Paul goes all the way back to the eternal counsels of God in order to ground Gentile Christianity. On this ground Gentiles could move forward in the Christian life. The particular truths Paul is going to emphasize in the coming verses are predestination and selection of the Father, the sacrifice of the Son, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit. So, Paul is going to ground Gentile Christianity in the work of the Triunity of God.

The Explanation of Saints (1:1b)

We found that Paul calls these saints “believers”. Paul is not making two groups, one larger or smaller group of saints and then one smaller group of faithful, but rather he is saying that the saints are believers “in Christ Jesus” not OT saints like Apollos had been. It should be translated “to the saints who are in Ephesus, that is, believers in Christ Jesus”. The word for “faithful” and “believers” is the same Greek word *pistois*. It can be translated either way. To become a Christian one must “believe” in Jesus Christ is identical to saying one must have “faith” in Jesus Christ. The context determines that what Paul meant here was “believers” not a select group of “faithful”. This has to do with the epexegetical *kai*. Further, the question was raised as to who was “in Christ Jesus”? Was it the “believers” only? Or was it both the “believers” and the “saints”? We concluded that it was both the “believers” and “saints” for two reasons: 1) the grammar identifies saints as believers so they both have to be in Christ since they refer to the same group and 2) because there is a definite article before “saints” but not before “believers” indicating that both are of the same group. So, if you are a believer here tonight you are a saint and you are “in Christ Jesus. What does it mean to be “in Christ Jesus”? It means to be put in union with Christ. It means you are now united to Christ. Who or what is Christ Jesus? Well, “Christ” is the Greek equivalent of *mashiach* or “Messiah”, the promised Redeemer of Israel. Christ is the anointed one of God sent to set the captives free. You and I are born into the world held captive to sin and Christ came to set us free from the captivity of sin. That makes Christ a Redeemer. Well, who then is “Jesus”? Jesus is the human name of the Redeemer. Christ is not Jesus’ last name but it is properly a title.

The Greeting (1:2)

Paul then gives the greeting which comes from early church liturgy and used in 8 of Paul’s other epistles. He begins with the words “grace and peace”. “Grace” is “unmerited favor”, “peace” is that which results. Even though you were an enemy of God He extended “grace” to you and your reception of that “grace” results in “peace”. You are no longer God’s enemy (**polemos**) but His ally; you’ve been bound to Him in an unbreakable treaty. “Grace and peace” are always without exception in this order in the NT. Grace is the cause of peace, they stand in proper order.

Where do grace and peace come from? The preposition **apo** indicates source and that source is both God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice it's not God THE Father, but God OUR Father. God is the Father of the Son but He is also the Father of all saints. This indicates the personal relationship you as a believer have with the Father through His Son. Grace and peace also come from the Lord Jesus Christ. The title "Lord" means "power", "might" and points to His omnipotence and sovereignty over the universe.

Deity of Christ

We found that some use this last verse to deny the Deity of Christ. It is said that only the Father is called God and the Son is not called God. We looked at 4 verses that explicitly identify the Son with God: Heb. 1:8 the Father says to the Son, "Thy throne, O God is forever". So, God the Father calls the Son God. The 2nd reference was 1 John 5:20 where "Jesus Christ" is called "the true God and life eternal". The pronoun **outos** refers to Christ and Jesus is called the "truth" and the "life" in John 14:6 so nothing would be odd about calling Jesus Christ the "true God and life eternal" as here. The last two examples employed what we call the Granville Sharp rule, named after Mr. Sharp who was a strong student of the Scriptures and particularly of the deity of Christ. He found the repetitive patten of Article-Substantive-Connective Kai-Substantive. Whenever he found this and the two nouns were singular and of the same case both nouns referred to the same person. Two texts specifically use Sharp's rule to show the deity of Christ; namely Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1. Titus 2:13 says "of the great God and Savior of us, Jesus Christ" and 2 Peter 1:1 says "of the God of us and Savior, Jesus Christ". Both texts are significant and explicit references of the deity of Christ.

Tonight we turn our attention to v. 3, the Praise for God's Planned Spiritual Blessings.

B. Praise for God's Planned Spiritual Blessings (1:3-14)

Greek Text: 1:3 Euvloghto.j o` qeo.j kai. path.r tou/ kuri,ou h`mw/n VIhsou/ Cristou/(o` euvlogh,saj h`ma/j evn pa,sh| euvlogi,a| pneumatikh/| evn toi/j evpourani,oj evn Cristw/|(

Translation: 1:3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,

Commentary: This verse is the introduction and the summary of the whole eulogy (1:3-14). Typically after the greeting Paul enters into a prayer of thanksgiving (OVERHEAD) here he deviates from the normal structure with an extended eulogy followed by the prayer of thanksgiving (1:15-23). In 2 Cor. 1:3-4 Paul replaces his thanksgiving with a eulogy. The only other NT book to follow this structure is 1 Peter 1:3-12. Interestingly, in all three books which begin with a eulogy this identical phrase introduces the eulogy. The eulogy here in Ephesians is the longest sentence in the Greek NT spanning from v. 3. Your version probably breaks it up into 3 sentences (4-6, 7-10b, 10c-14) but in the Greek it is a single sentence weaving together in a logical sequence the work of the Trinity in Redemption. However long this sentence, there are seven other long sentences in Ephesians (e.g. 15-23; 2:1-7; 3:2-13, 14-19; 4:1-6, 11-16; 6:14-20) and some longer in classical Greek.

Euvloghto.j o` qeo.j kai. path.r tou/ kuri,ou h`mw/n Vhsoy/ Cristou, “Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”. The word **Euvloghto.j** (*eulogetos*) means “blessed” or “praised” and we get our word “eulogy” from this Greek word. God is blessed for who He is and also for what He has done for the saints. This phrase is not expressing a wish, “blessed *be* God”, “be” is not in the original, but a declaration, “blessed is God”. Therefore, the whole sentence of vv. 4-14 are giving reasons why the believer is to praise God. IOW’s God is blessed because of all that follows in vv. 4-14 (predestination, selection, sacrifice, sealing). Praise to God for what He has done was a common component of Jewish prayers which were fixed at the end of the 1st century in the *Shemoneh Esreh* or Eighteen Benedictions. They were read three times a day in the synagogue and always concluded with “blessed are you, O Lord”. So, declaring that God is “blessed” is not something new to the NT and it has become a common component of Christian prayers too. **Eulogetos** is used exclusively of God in the NT. Only God is said to be blessed, never men. He is the only one who deserves praise. It comes from the verb **eulogeo** which means “to speak well of” and therefore has to do with one who “receives praise” or is “praiseworthy”.

The phrase “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” is frequent and rich because it describes God also as the Father. Last week we saw that God was OUR Father. Now Paul expresses that the Father is God. This is significant because in the OT Father is rarely used for God (only 15 out of 1448 occurrences). In the NT Father is the predominant term for God (245 out of 413 occurrences). God and Father are one and the same in this passage (also cf. Rev. 1:6). Additionally, this God and

Father is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The genitival phrase “**tou/ kuri,ou h`mw/n Vihsou/ Cristou**”, “of the Lord of us Jesus Christ” marks out four truths; 1) He is personal (“Our Lord”), 2) His Lordship over us, 3) His name is Jesus, and 4) His title is Christ, meaning *Messiah*, the promised deliverer.

o` euvlogh,saj h`ma/j, “who has blessed us” gives the *summary* reason for why the God and Father is to be praised. He is to be praised because He “has blessed us”. *God never asks us to praise Him before He has done something for us which is worthy of praise.* God is cast here in the role of the initiator. You are therefore the responder. It is the participle form of the verb **eulogeo** which is a compound word composed of **eu** meaning “well” and **logeo** “to speak”, and thus, “to speak well”. So, God has “spoken well of us”. The participle is aorist, “He *has* blessed us”. Aorist usually means point action in undesignated past time. It means, “it’s done”. The way He expresses that He has spoken well of us is by “giving us every spiritual blessing”. To be blessed by God means to receive benefits from God in the sense of possessions, prosperity, or power. For example, when Isaac blessed Jacob, Esau pleaded to have the blessings also (Gen. 27). It is used seven times in the NT in the sense of God bestowing benefits on believers (Matt. 25:34; Luke 1:28; Acts 3:25, 26; Gal. 3:9; Eph. 1:3; Heb. 6:14). God is the one who provides benefits “to us” (*emas*). The “us” is the inclusive use referring to both Paul and his audience, “the saints”. What are the benefits God provided for “us”?

evn pa,sh| euvlogi,a| pneumatikh, “with every spiritual blessing”. The adjective **pase** modifying “blessing” indicates the *quantity* of the “blessing”. There are no additional spiritual blessings that you as a believer need. He’s already given you every spiritual blessing. To pray that God would give you a spiritual blessing is anti-biblical! Even to pray for more spiritual blessings is anti-biblical! God says right here you already have every spiritual blessing. The problem is not that you need more spiritual blessings it’s rather that you need to *appropriate by faith* what God has already given. You need to believe God’s word. And you can’t believe God’s word unless you hear God’s word. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). You’ve got to reckon this truth to be true. Paul is saying, “consider this fact to be true”! Why is he saying this now? Because these spiritual blessings are the foundation for Gentile Christianity. He’s giving us a base of operation in the spiritual life. The second adjective **pneumatike** modifies “blessing” and indicates the *type* of blessing. **pneumatike** comes from the word **pneuma** meaning “breath” or “spirit” (Pneumatology). The “blessing” is spiritual in nature.

Things which are spiritual pertain to the Spirit of God and have their source in the Creator in contrast to that which is earthly and has its source in the created order. The “every blessing” therefore refers to spiritual actualities not material possibilities. These are spiritual actualities in that they are available for the here and now while the believer is on earth.

Parallel Between OT Israel and NT Church (Joshua and Ephesians)

The Old Testament benefits to Israel were primarily material, such as the land, economic prosperity, and physical protection. However, for the Church the benefits are spiritual. Our verse in Ephesians tonight is one of the major reason Ephesians of the NT complements Joshua of the OT. Turn to Joshua 1:3 holding your place in Ephesians 1:3 (OVERHEAD). We are told that believers in Christ Jesus, under the dispensation of Grace already have “every spiritual blessing”. OT Israel, living under the dispensation of the Law, is the physical archetype of the NT Church’s spiritual blessings.

Possession (OVERHEAD)

In Joshua 1:3 we are told that national Israel, living under the dispensation of the Law ALREADY POSSESSED every inch of ground in the Promised Land. The land was theirs by Divine Right. Israel was given this Real Estate by GOD and it remains their REAL ESTATE by Divine Right today. In the book of Joshua we find out that Joshua took a lot, but not all of the Land. Joshua 13 outlines the land that Israel failed to conquer. The fact is that Israel has never occupied the whole Promised Land. What are the borders of the Promised Land? Two passages reveal the borders, namely Gen. 15:18 and Ezekiel 48 (OVERHEAD). If the Land is Israel’s by Divine Right then why are they not enjoying the Land today? The reason is because enjoyment of the Land is conditioned on obedience to God’s commands. But, in order to obey God’s commands Israel must be given a new heart, that is, they must be converted. Israel wanted to do the whole Law of God but it is impossible for man, apart from a new heart to fulfill the Law of God. So, the Land is theirs but they will not enjoy what is theirs until they have a new heart, until the nation is regenerated. This will come to pass at the end of the Great Tribulation (Hos. 6:1-3; Zech. 13:8-9; Ezek. 40-48). The nation will turn to the Lord and they will all be saved with the result that they will finally enjoy the Land. God will do this thing because the Land is theirs by Divine Right and God made unconditional promises to Israel. God will put in Israel a new heart, one that will follow His law Ezek. 37

and Jer. 31:31-34. Nevertheless, in Joshua every *physical* blessing was given to Israel by Divine Right. Now, in Ephesians every *spiritual* blessing has been given to you. The proper response of the believer in both the OT and NT was to reckon the promises to be true. However, in both the OT and the NT there were ENEMIES that try to DISPOSSESS YOU of your INHERITANCE.

Enemies

Joshua and the nation were not waltzing into an uninhabited land, there were MANY Kings and their peoples inhabiting the Land God promised Israel. God promised military victory to the nation of Israel but because of their lack of faith during Moses day they wandered about for 40 years not enjoying the physical blessings of a fruitful land, economy, and protection from their enemies. The people wanted to go back to Egypt and find security there. In the book of Joshua we follow the military campaigns of the nation against enemies of flesh and blood. There was battle after battle for the Land. We find out from the book of Judges 2:2 that Israel failed. Why? God had told them the Land was theirs? They failed because they failed to reckon the promises of God to be true. They failed to operate by faith and resorted to HVP gimmicks to find security. God had promised them security in the Land so why were they resorting to HVP means of security? God never honors HVP gimmicks, He only honors His word. If He says it's yours it's yours, go and take it, enjoy it, run with it! In the book of Ephesians Paul says that EVERY spiritual blessing has been given to you! However, what we're going to find is that you have enemies too. But your enemies are not enemies of flesh and blood like Israel's enemies. Your enemies are the rulers, powers, and world forces of darkness (Satan and Demons). Since your promises are spiritual your enemies are spiritual forces. Satan and his demons want to stunt your spiritual growth. They want to infiltrate your thinking, convincing you to rely on HVP gimmicks. They want to destroy your faith so you can't appropriate God's blessings for you. And this is why Paul talks extensively about spiritual warfare at the close of Ephesians. He wants you to gird yourself for battle against these dark forces. Why? So you can enjoy the spiritual blessings that God has already given you. You've got to reckon God's promises to be true. Paul doesn't want you to be like OT Israel who floundered and didn't believe the promises God gave them. OT Israel has been given as an example of what to do (when they had military victory by trusting God's provision) and what not to do (when they failed to trust God's provision). How do you do this? How do you become victorious over your enemies?

Way of Victory

By faith in God's word. The word of God was the key to military victory for Israel under the command of Joshua. Notice Joshua 1:7-8. God tells Joshua "Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. ⁸ "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success." God told Israel, do what is in this book. To do that you've got to meditate on the word of God day and night. We're not talking about some Eastern mysticism meditation technique here. Eastern religious meditation has to do with clearing your mind of all content and contemplating your navel. Biblical meditation is intense concentration on the word of God. Biblical meditation is therefore the opposite of Eastern meditation. Biblical meditation is all about content. You never clear your mind in Christianity! You clear your mind and you are opening yourself up to deception! Christianity is about understanding propositional truth! And propositions have content. Don't you listen to all these groups that tell you contemplative spirituality is the ticket to some higher experience with God. You just stick to the word. I can guarantee that if you concentrate on the word of God you'll find tremendous spiritual growth and victory in the Christian life. Your faith will grow like you can't imagine because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). Faith in the word of God is what paved the way for Joshua's military victories and faith in the word of God is what is going to pave the way for your spiritual victory over the demonic forces of this world. God is trying to convince you by His word and His faithfulness to trust Him. Now trust Him. Stop asking for more "spiritual blessings" and appropriate by faith what He's already provided.

Three Responses to "Spiritual Blessings"

First: New or Immature Believer

If you are a new or immature believer then you may never have run across this tremendous truth that God has already given you every spiritual blessing. Now, you can do one of two things with this truth. You can respond positively by considering this truth to be true and operate on this foundation of who and what you have in Christ or you can toss the whole thing. You can go negative but like Joshua you'll

see that there's no victory or enjoyment in the Christian life when you go negative to God's word.

Second: Mature Believers

At one time you were hungry for the word and after you had all the milk of the word you went right on to the meat and you grew in the Lord. All you wanted to talk about was Bible doctrine, Bible doctrine, Bible doctrine. For the first time in your life you saw things coming together, really coming together. You rooted out HVP and replaced it with DVP on a daily basis and you studied the word. Those of you in that camp are probably in one of two places today. Some of you were positive but now you're negative. You took in lots of doctrine and you grew up but at some point you went negative. This is not uncommon in doctrinal churches. Maybe the teaching you received was so good you didn't think you needed personal Bible study or maybe you came to the point where you thought you knew it all. If this is you I bet you've fallen back to HVP gimmicks in every area of your life. You've failed to see that you have to maintain that growth and consistency in the word. You used to have a zeal for the word that resulted in knowledge. Now you have no zeal and your knowledge is dwindling. You're unable to apply it. Whatever the case you've been out of it for a long time and you've failed to recognize that God wants YOU personally to be in His word daily. Like an immature or new believer you too can go positive or negative. You can reckon these truths to be true and get out of that rut or you can continue digging that rut out. God won't respond positively to negative volition.

Third: Unbelievers

If you're an unbeliever then you don't have any spiritual blessings. You're spiritually bankrupt. You need to respond positively to the gospel which is that you are a sinner in Adam separated from God and you need to be saved from who you are in Adam by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, your sin substitute. He took your sin to Himself so that you could be reconciled to God. Now, that's all you have to believe.

Let's summarize the spiritual blessings:

You've been given certain spiritual possessions. But there are enemies out there who want to destroy your Christian life. They hate Christ and they hate you because

you are identified with Christ. You can't enjoy these benefits except by the by the operation of the faith principle. Most people never enjoy the spiritual blessings and most have defeat after defeat in the Christian life. Why? Because of their failure to appropriate the word by faith. You can't operate by faith if you don't know the word. The word is the "way of victory". The promises of God have to be the "real substance" in your thinking. You can't just work up this belief, you have to be taking in the word. You will never be able to believe the word if you don't take in the word day after day after day, hour after hour after hour. You have to go over and over and over it, and root within your soul DVP. Now, something is going to get rooted in your soul regardless; HVP through TV, radio, co-workers, the educational system, newspaper, magazines, etc... So, you have to fight this influx of HVP by taking in the word, filling your mentality with DVP rather than HVP. You've got to root out HVP if you want to be able to appropriate v. 3 by faith. So, this is the first step in true spirituality. You must reckon that God has given you, not just "some" spiritual blessings, but "every spiritual blessing". You need nothing else to be victorious in the Christian life, you can gain no more blessings in the spiritual life. Everything that you need to function on this earth in the present time has been provided by the Spirit of God. True spirituality begins with your volition reckoning the truths of vv. 3-14 to be true.

evn toi/j evpourani,oij, "in the heavenlies" further elaborates on the source of the spiritual blessings which are not only from the Spirit of God but from the "heavenlies". The text does not say "heavenly *places*" but simply "heavenlies". The Greek word is **epouraniois** and is used 5 times in Ephesians (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). Here it is a dative of location, meaning that the location and source of the spiritual blessings is "in the heavenlies". The spiritual benefits that come from heaven are for the believers united with Christ (1:2b), who has ascended into heaven (1:20; 2:6). Because we are united to Christ and Christ is seated in the heavenlies then we partake of all that Christ has given us. Thus, our spiritual blessings can be said to be "in the heavenlies". This does not mean that they are not for the here and now on earth. They very much are, but they find their source in heaven. There is a spiritual battle going on between the source of our spiritual blessings and our present location on earth. It's like an interference and it has to do with the Angelic Conflict. But we still haven't determined where the "heavenlies" is referring to? In Scripture there are at least 3 heavens.

1st Heaven: Atmospheric Heaven

Gen. 1:8, 20 - The 1st Heaven is what we call the Atmospheric Heaven. We have the atmospheric heaven described in Genesis 1:8 and 20, turn there. Originally God created birds to fly in the atmospheric heavens in a kind of expanse. The expanse is really a space between two waters, the waters on earth and the waters that surrounded the earth (what is often referred to as a pre-flood vapor or water canopy that enveloped the earth and protected the earth). At the flood it is supposed that this vapor or water canopy fell like rain upon the earth as God judged the earth. This region now has clouds and birds, it's where precipitation comes from that waters the earth.

2nd Heaven: Starry Heaven

Deut. 10:22 - The 2nd Heaven is what we might call the Starry Heaven. The starry heaven is described as the location of the sun, moon, and stars in Deut. 10:22. Many cultures from monotheistic Israel to polytheistic pagans worshipped the contents of the starry heaven; the sun, moon and stars. Their worship did not quite reach the God who made the Starry Heaven who abides in the 3rd heaven.

3rd Heaven: Highest Heaven

Deut. 10:14 - The 3rd Heaven is called by the Hebrews the *shamayim shamayim*, literally translated as the "heaven of the heavens" (Deut. 10:14). In the Hebrew repetition of a word means emphasis. For example King of Kings indicates that Jesus Christ is the Greatest King, He is King above all kings. This is what the Hebrew is referring to in Deut. 10:14 when it says "heaven of the heavens" which is translated in your Bible as "heaven and the highest heavens". This is where the throne room of God is.

2 Cor. 12:2 - This heaven is also called the 3rd Heaven by Paul in 2 Cor. 12:2. Paul was caught up to the 3rd heaven. This is the heaven being referred to by the word **epouraniois** in v. 3. Thus, the location and source of our "spiritual blessings" are "in this 3rd heaven.

Eph. 6:12 - The same word **epouraniois** is used in Eph. 6:12 to describe the location of the spiritual forces of wickedness. So, both our spiritual blessings and our spiritual foes have access to the same realm of heaven, namely the Highest Heaven.

Eph. 3:10 - The good angels are also in this 3rd Heaven as seen in Eph. 3:10. The question there is whether these are good angels or evil angels but it is probable that the “rulers and authorities” there are good angels. Ellicot says, “the evil angels would more naturally recognize His power but the good ones His wisdom.” The good angels are learning from the Church about the manifold wisdom of God.

Heb. 4:14 - The ascended Christ, when He ascended passed through the “heavenlies” according to Heb. 4:14. This is Christ taking the high ground. If there is a height in the 3rd Heaven then it is Christ who sits there. Satan and his demons have access to the courtroom of God and they are constantly accusing you and I while Jesus Christ is defending us as our Advocate (1 John 2:1-2). Satan is saying, “look down there at Bob, did you see that? Did you see what he just did? That’s an act of righteousness.” And our attorney Jesus Christ just looks to the Father and says, “I paid for that”.

Rev. 12:7-12 - Satan won’t have access to the throne room forever according to Revelation 12:7-12. He will be cast out of heaven at the middle of the tribulation to the earth to wreak havoc on the people of Israel (from whom the man-child came forth). Why does Satan hate Israel so much? Because the savior of the world came from Israel. Satan’s arch enemy came from the seed of the woman Mary. He tried to stop the Messiah in many ways (Gen. 6 episode; Abraham’s lapse of faith with his wife Sarah, Herod’s slaying of males under 2, the temptations, etc...). If Satan can’t get to Christ He will persecute the descendants of Christ. Finally, the last phrase

evn Cristw “in Christ”. Paul here is trying to remind us that we are “in Christ”. Christ is our Federal Head. Christ is “in the heavenlies” and we being “in Christ” have our citizenship in heaven. We are no longer “in Adam” we are in union with Christ, we have been incorporated “in Christ”. This was a new concept for the Ephesians because “they had been worshippers of Artemis who was the local deity on earth” (Hoehner, 172.)

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