

# Every Spiritual Blessing – Part 3

## Introduction

### a. objectives

1. subject – Paul extols the spiritual blessings that God the Father has lavished on the elect
2. aim – to cause us to praise God that we are the recipients of such grace and blessing
3. passage – Ephesians 1:3-14

### b. outline

1. The Spiritual Blessings of the Father (Ephesians 1:3-6)
2. The Spiritual Blessings of the Son (Ephesians 1:7-12)
3. The Spiritual Blessings of the Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14)

### c. opening

1. the **fundamental** nature of the passage
  - a. although the passage maintains a clear view of the Trinitarian nature of God, the passage itself is fundamentally a praise of God **the Father**
  - b. here, Paul is **patricentric**, because he wants to *elevate* the focus of the blessing of God from the *specific work* of the Son or the Spirit to the **divine decree** of the Father over it all
2. the **decree** at the heart of this passage
  - a. the divine decree = the eternal wisdom of God, in which he has foreordained all things that come to pass, for the purpose of his own glory
  - b. here, Paul is outlining the various aspects of the divine decree as related to **soteriology**
3. the **Trinitarian** roles at the heart of this passage
  - a. the Father (**vv. 4-6**) – the blessings of election and predestination
    1. in the decree, the choice of the Father regarding *whom* and *where* his redemption will go
  - b. the Son (**vv. 7-12**) – the blessings of redemption and inheritance

## II. The Spiritual Blessings of the Son (Ephesians 1:7-12)

### Content

#### a. the blessed works of God the Son (vv. 7-12)

1. **blessed work #3: redemption (vv. 7-10)**
  - a. the definition of redemption
    1. “*redemption*” as an umbrella term – all of the various elements of the work of Christ to accomplish the decree of God in the salvation of the elect
      - a. propitiation of wrath, satisfaction of the law in us, atonement for the penalty of law-breaking, reconciliation of relationship, imputation of guilt and righteousness, etc. (**see more below**)
      - b. all terms that “drip” with power and depth of substance, all of which *together* comprise the love of the Father manifested in the Son for the elect
    2. “*redemption*” as a specific term – the work of the Son to **ransom** the elect from the captivity (or slavery) of sin and its consequences
      - a. redeem (as a coupon) = to trade something of limited value for the inherent value of something else
        1. **i.e.** the manufacturer agrees to reimburse the store for the face-value of the coupon, thus reducing the cost of the item to the consumer
        2. **i.e.** part of the “cost” of item is transferred to another in order for the item to be “released”
      - b. redeem (soteriologically) = to trade the infinite value of the Son of God for the inestimable value of the elect, who are enslaved to sin and death in this world
        1. **i.e.** the Father agrees to accept the value of the death of his Son to “purchase” the elect
        2. **i.e.** the “cost” of redemption is paid by the Son to satisfy the demands of the Father
    - c. the biblical picture of redemption in **Hosea 3**
      1. **i.e.** as God will (one day) redeem the nation of Israel from its enslavement to idolatry

- b. the “*forgiveness*” of redemption (v. 7) – the **primary** issue (**why Paul focuses on it**)
1. redemption deals with the issue of sin – because it’s the natural (fallen) state of humanity
    - a. “trespasses” = specific violations of the law; to trespass is to enter where one is prohibited
    - b. **contra**: much of the preaching of our day – where sin is virtually unknown, and “salvation” is more about finding emotional counseling or practical help
  2. redemption deals with the enslavement of sin – because that’s what sin does to humanity
    - a. **read Ephesians 2:1-3** – the ultimate enslavement is *death* – no one can escape it!
  3. redemption deals with the forgiveness of sin – because that’s what we need from God
    - a. because sin is personal – an offense against the very nature of God himself
      1. **contra**: the idea that sin is *impersonal* – not an offense against another person, but a failure to accomplish some “rule” or to fall short of an “expectation”
      2. sin is an **affront** against a *personal God*, one who is the very essence of perfection; it is an “attack” against a holy One, whose image we bear (**1 John 1:5-9**)  
“This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
  - b. forgiveness = the willingness of God to **overlook** the offense, even *through* his justice
    1. **the heart of redemption is the forgiveness of our sin by a God willing to do so**
4. redemption deals with the cost of forgiveness of sin – because only death can redeem death
  - a. forgiveness is *costly* – it requires a **ransom payment**, because God is just
    1. the modern “gospel” trivializes the cost of forgiveness by assuming that God easily grants it just because we need it or because we are worthy of it or because sin is trivial
    2. the biblical gospel says that the ransom necessary to remove us from the power of sin is nothing less than the “*blood*” of Christ himself (**Matthew 20:28**)  
“the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
  - a. the shed blood of Christ is the perfect sacrifice offered to God in his holy tabernacle to create a perfect atonement (**Hebrews 9:11-14**)  
“But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.”
  - b. **how well do we truly grip the depth of the cost of our salvation?**
5. redemption deals with the grace of forgiveness of sin – because it is all of grace
  - a. “*riches of his grace*” = abundance; wealth of; abounding; the overwhelming generosity associated with God’s **choice** to be benevolent towards the elect
    1. **note**: we have a tendency to think of grace as something **small** because we have a tendency to think of our need for it as small (**i.e.** we take it for granted)
6. **another commendable (blessed) action of the Father was to choose, as a great option of mercy within his decree, to send his own Son into the world to become a human being and to shed his blood in death to forgive a people of their sin**
  - a. the Father sends the Son, and the Son blesses us by accomplishing our redemption
- c. the “*mystery*” of redemption (vv. 8-10a) – the **revelatory** purpose (**what Paul sees**)
1. **note**: three (3) terms in these verses speak of something being revealed
    - a. “*wisdom*” = the proper application of knowledge; taking something known and using it well
    - b. “*insight*” = the ability to see “into” something difficult; deeper knowledge of a subject
    - c. “*mystery*” =
      1. common: something unknowable or hidden; that which is confusing and impossible
      2. biblical: something *previously* unknown, but *now* revealed and understandable
  2. the decree of God to redeem a people in time and space through the death of his own Son was hidden to humanity until the arrival of Jesus (**i.e.** the seed of **Genesis 3:15**)
    - a. but, it was fully revealed at the *resurrection* of Jesus – that He was the *fulfillment* of all that God had purposed to do in this world (**further addressed in chapter 3**)
    - b. that revelation was to: the heavenly witnesses (**Ephesians 3:10**), the elect (in their faith), and the world (in the appearance of the church)
    - c. and, the goal of that revelation was to show that God would enter into his own creation and become one of those that he would save (a “*plan for the fullness of time*”; v. 10a)
  3. **another commendable (blessed) action of the Father is to reveal to the great witnesses his purpose to redeem a people out of the mass of fallen humanity as the centerpiece of his eternal decree**
    - a. the Father sends the Son, and the Son reveals the will of the Father over all things

- d. the “unity” of redemption (v. 10b) – the **accomplishing** purpose (where Paul goes)
  - 1. **note:** the phrase “in him” or “in Christ” is repeated eight (8) times – it is the **theme** of this section
    - a. much of it implies something in Christ, but it also has the sense of *in the Father’s plan*
  - 2. in this case, Christ is the one in which everything planned by God is *unified together*
    - a. “to unite all things” = to bring together *in one Person* (or one earthly life) “things in heaven” (i.e. the plans of God) and “things on earth” (i.e. all of creation)
    - b. the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ *unifies* everything that God intended from eternity past – it completes it all (including our eternal life)
  - 3. **another commendable (blessed) action of the Father is to unify everything in Christ, to bring everything together in his position as redeemer and king**
    - a. the Father sends the Son, and the Son unifies heaven and earth
- e. **our God and Father has acted commendably to redeem us, to provide for the awful price of our sin, to reveal his plans from eternity past, and to unify heaven and earth, all in the precious person and work of the Son, whom he sent for us**