To the Praise of God's Glory

Ephesians 1:3-14

This is a wonderful passage of Scripture that is well worth our time to study in detail.

- We could literally spend several months dissecting the wonderful truths of this passage.
- But I want to just take a few minutes to look at the passage as a whole.

And this is a passage that has had a great impact on my understanding of God's glorious grace. So I want to just take a few minutes to look at the major themes of these verses. **So lets read Ephesians 1:3-14** In the original Greek version of these verses, an interesting thing happens.

- Verses 3-14 all read as one long sentence.
- It’s a long run-on sentence, but there’s a reason for it. It’s not bad grammar, its intentionally constructed because everything in these verses are connected to each other.
- They are deeply connected, you can’t separate them.

You could say that verses 3-14 are really a condensed version of “God’s story.” Its the message of the entire Bible packed into 12 dynamic verses. And it starts off with a statement of blessing. Let’s look at verse 3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. When you read a verse like that, you probably have a lot of questions.

- I know I do.

Why does God grant us all these rich spiritual blessings? What’s the purpose of it all? What is the purpose of the church? What is the meaning of life? What is God’s plan for you and me for all time? All these questions are answered here in this passage.

- And they all have the same answer.

The apostle Paul wrote these words to the church at Ephesus, and the point was to show them how wonderful blessed they are.

- And to show them how the blessings flow into the church, and to show them what God’s plan for the church is, and how it should function in order to achieve its purpose.

And so he starts out by saying “Blessed be the God and Father our Lord Jesus Christ”. He’s calling attention to the fact that we owe all our blessings to God.

- God is the source of it all, and because of that, we are grateful and thankful and we acknowledge God.
- And in fact we bless God for what he has done for us.
- This is a declaration of God’s goodness to us.
- God alone is worthy of our praise!
- We give back to God his great blessings that he has poured onto us.

But why has God blessed us so? Well, before we can figure out why God has blessed us, let’s try to get some sense of just what God has blessed us with. The text says, “Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.” (3x) Hmm, What does that mean? Everything spiritual. Every spiritual blessing, he has given us. This is not a promise, this is a declaration of an existing fact. A promise is something you will get in the future. But this is a declaration of something we already have.

- We already have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

These blessings are spiritual in nature. And if we dig into this passage a little bit, we read about some of these blessings.

- verse, 5: we read about things like “adoptions as sons”
- and, verse 7: “redemption through his blood”
- and “forgiveness of our trespasses”
- verse 11: “obtained an inheritance”
- verse 13: “sealed with the Holy Spirit”
These are some of the blessings:

- Forgiveness of sins.
- Redemption.
- Glorification.

And even though right now, we are here on earth, we have in our possession right now, heavenly riches.

- We have a place in heaven.

Paul writes in Philippians 3:20, “For our citizenship is in heaven” We have access to those blessings right now, through Christ. v3 again, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.” In fact, the words “in Christ” and “in Him” appear at least 6 times in these verses, showing how Christ connects us to our blessings. It says,

- verse 3: God blessed us in Christ
- verse 4: chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.
- verse 7: In Him we have redemption through his blood
- verse 9: God lavished upon us all wisdom and insight according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ.
- verse 11: In Him we have an inheritance
- verse 13: In Him we were sealed with the Holy Spirit

All these refer to Christ. So it is through Christ and because of Christ that we have access to these rich spiritual blessings of redemption, forgiveness, adoption, and all the wonderful things in the heavenly places. But why does God do all this? This is just something that is hard to wrap your head around. It is this phrase: to the praise of God's glorious grace. We see it beginning in verse 5, “In love he predestined us for adoption of sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace.” And again, in verse 12, “So that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.” And one last time, in verse 14, “who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.” Why did God bless us with these spiritual blessings?

- He did it for the praise of his glory.

What is the purpose of the church?

- To bring praise to the glory of God.

What is the meaning of life?

- To bring praise to the glory of God.

What is God’s plan for you and me for all time?

- That we should bring praise to His glory.

And that really is the message of the entire Bible.

- That God through his glorious grace, has redeemed us.

When I read this passage, I am humbled.

- I’m humbled because I don’t deserve these rich spiritual blessings.
- I don’t deserve forgiveness of my sins.
- I deserve punishment.
- But through Christ, “we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace which he lavished upon us.”
- God poured out all his grace upon us.

How do we respond to such undeserved kindness?

- By bringing glory to God’s name.
- In all that we do.
- No matter where we are, at home, at work, at church.

God has so richly blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

- And when we recognize how important that is, the only thing we can do is praise God, and commit ourselves to living for his glorious name.
- Everything we do, and every chance we get, we should remember to do it for the glory of God. To bring praise to His glorious name.