

Title: **BLESSING FOR BLESSING**  
 Text: Ephesians 1:2-3  
 Subject: *Christ Our Blessing and Blessedness*  
 Date: Tuesday Evening — June 6, 2006  
 Tape # Y-97b

**Introduction:**

(Ephesians 1:1-3) “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: (2) Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. (3) Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ.”

**TRINITARIAN GRACE**

We worship the triune God (1 John 5:7). And we are saved by the work of the triune God. All three Persons in the Godhead are equally gracious, and all three are involved in the salvation of our souls. This is what Paul shows us in Ephesians 1. As the three Persons of the Godhead are equal in divinity, but distinct in personality, so all three Persons in the Godhead are equal in grace, but distinct in the operations of grace.

**God the Father is set before us as the Fountain of all grace** (Eph. 1:3-6). It was God the Father who, in the covenant of grace, proposed redemption, devised the plan, and chose the people whom he would save by his almighty grace. He found a way whereby his banished ones should not be expelled from him. Then, in the fullness of time he sent his Son into the World to be the Medium, or Mediator of grace (Gal. 4:4-6).

**God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Channel of all grace** (Eph. 1:7-12). All grace comes to sinners through Christ the Mediator. In this chapter Everything God does for sinners and gives to sinners is “*in Christ*.” Apart from Christ there is no grace.

- Am I chosen of God? — I am chosen in Christ!
- Am I blessed of God? — I am blessed in Christ!
- Am I predestinated by God? — I am predestinated to be like Christ.
- Am I adopted of God? — I am adopted in Christ!
- Am I accepted of God? — I am accepted in Christ!
- Am I redeemed by God? — I am redeemed in Christ!
- Am I forgiven by God? — I am forgiven in Christ!
- Do I know God? — I know him in Christ!
- Do I have an inheritance with God? — I have it in Christ!
- Am I called of God? — I am called in Christ!

Do you see what I am saying? All grace comes to us through Christ! **There is no other way the grace of God can reach a sinner.** Let no rejecter of God’s Son imagine that he shall be the beneficiary of God’s grace! It is the work of Christ upon the cross that has brought grace and justice together in the salvation of sinners. Through his blood, “*mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other*” (Ps. 85:10). Blissfully lost in the contemplation of God’s matchless grace in Christ, **John Bunyan** penned these rapturous words...

“O Thou Son of the Blessed! Grace stripped Thee of Thy glory; grace brought thee down from heaven; grace made thee bear such burdens of sin, such burdens of curse as are unspeakable; grace was in Thy heart; grace come bubbling up from Thy bleeding side; grace was in Thy tears; grace was in Thy prayers; grace streamed from Thy thorn-crowned brow! Grace came forth with the nails that pierced Thee, with the thorns that pricked Thee! Oh, here are unsearchable riches

of grace! Grace to make sinners happy! Grace to make angels wonder! Grace to make devils astonished!”

The Fountain of all grace is God the Father. The Channel of all grace is God the Son. And **God the Holy Spirit is the Administrator of all grace** (Eph. 1:13-14). It is God the Holy Spirit who effectually applies the blood of Christ to God’s elect.

- He regenerates the dead by omnipotent power.
- He calls the redeemed with irresistible grace.
- He gives faith by almighty operations of grace.
- He seals God’s elect unto everlasting glory.

Without the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit in conversion no sinner would ever become the beneficiary of grace. He takes the things of Christ and shows them to his people. He quickens those the Father chose, reclaims those the Son redeemed, and leads to the Good Shepherd all the sheep for whom he laid down his life (John 10:11).

“He conquers the stoutest hearts, and cleanses the foulest spiritual leper. He opens the sin-blinded eyes and unstopped the sin-closed ears. The blessed Holy Spirit reveals the grace of the Father and applies the grace of the Son.” – C.D. Cole.

We were saved by the purpose of God the Father in election (Rom. 8:29-30; 2 Tim. 1:9). We were saved by the purchase of God the Son at Calvary (Rom. 4:25; Heb. 10:10-14). And we are saved by the power of God the Holy Spirit in the new birth (John 6:63; Eph. 1:18-20; 2:1-4). All three Persons in the Godhead are equally gracious; and all three must be praised! Therefore, we sing...

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Him all creatures here below!  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts!  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

## **GRACE AND PEACE**

(Ephesians 1:1-2) “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: (2) Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.”

**In verse 1** Paul identifies himself as a messenger of Christ, and identifies the people of God as saints and “*the faithful in Christ Jesus.*” Believing men and women are saints, a holy people, a people made holy by and because of their union with Christ. And God’s saints are “*the faithful in Christ Jesus,*” made faithful by his grace.

**In verse 2** this exemplary servant of our God expresses the desire of his heart for God’s elect. A faithful pastor’s heart is incessantly anxious for the people trusted to his care, constantly desiring and seeking the everlasting welfare of their souls. As a faithful father seeks the good of his family, the faithful servant of God seeks the good of God’s family, and devotes himself to it. Look at that which Paul here expresses as the desire of his heart for the people of God, whom he dearly loved, and remember that he is writing by the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit. That means, he is here telling us the incessant desire of God’s heart for his people. And God’s desire is his determination.

(Ephesians 1:2) “Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.”

This sentence is an inspired pronouncement of grace and peace upon every believing sinner for time and eternity! Grace shall be the constant gift of God our Father upon us in boundless abundance, and the constant result of that grace shall be ever increasing peace from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace is the source and cause of all blessedness, because it is the free, everlasting love and favor of the triune God toward his elect in Christ. The result of that grace, in the experience of it, is peace. When God the Holy Spirit puts the grace of God in us, he gives us faith in and peace from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Peace. And with every fresh experience of grace, we are given ever-increasing peace, "*peace that passeth understanding*".

- Peace in our Consciences by the Blood of Christ.
- Peace in our Hearts by Confidence in Christ.
- Peace with One Another as we are Increasingly United to One Another in Christ.
- And, soon, the Perfect Peace of Eternal Glory!

That is my heart's desire for you. That is what I seek for you in all my labors. — "*Grace and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*"

(Isaiah 3:10) "Say ye to the righteous, that *it shall be well with him*: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings."

(2 Thessalonians 3:3) "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep *you* from evil."

(2 Thessalonians 3:5) "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

### **BLESSED BE GOD**

Now, let's look at the message set before us in Ephesians 1:3.

(Ephesians 1:3) "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:"

Let me show you three things in this verse. **First, this statement sets before us the deity, the eternal Godhead of our blessed Savior.** If the Son is equally to be blessed with the Father, it is because he is equal with the Father and one with him. How precious<sup>1</sup> He who is our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, is himself God. Take from us this sweet truth, and you take from us the mediatorial office of our Redeemer, and our hope perishes. There is no sweeter portion of divine truth, and no gift so precious as the knowledge that our Savior both is God the eternal Son and our Mediator, Jehovah's Servant, who said, "*I must work the works of him who sent me.*"

But, **why is God the Father here called "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"?** He is the Father of Christ, the God-man, our Mediator, who was foreordained before the foundation of the world to his work and office as the Mediator (1 Pet. 1:20), when the Father made the covenant of grace with him, who is the Surety of the covenant.

He is the Father of Christ as both God and man. In his eternal deity our Savior is the Son of God, "*the only-begotten of the Father,*" by glorious and eternal and generation, the eternally begotten Son. As a man, our Savior is that "*holy thing*" that is called the Son of God (Luke 1:32). The Firstborn from the dead is the Firstborn, the Firstborn Son in the family of God.

**Second, the apostle calls upon us to bless God.** — "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" — The word translated "*blessed*" is "eulogized." It means to speak well of and praise highly. — "*Bless the Lord, O my soul,*" cries the Psalmist, "*and forget not all his benefits.*" Paul is saying, "Speak well of God and praise him highly." Prayer rises from our sense of need. Praise rises from our sense of God's boundless goodness and infinite grace.

- The Goodness of His Being
- The Grace He Bestows

God has blessed us. So let us bless him. Let us make it our business to bless the Lord.

"O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord,  
And all that in me is,  
Be stirred up his holy name  
To magnify and bless!"

Sitting here tonight, bless God as you hear this message. Then go on blessing God until your last mortal breath. And enter into heaven's eternal glory still blessing God. Throughout our lives, here and hereafter, let us bless him who gave us our life. Let it be our delight to bless him who gives us all our delights. So says the text, and so let us do. — "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

**But how can we bless God?** Without doubt the less is blessed of the Greater. Can the Greater be blessed by the less? Yes, we are to bless God; but in an indescribably lesser way. God blesses us with all spiritual blessings; but we cannot increase his blessedness. He needs nothing from us; and if he did, we could not give it. "*If I were hungry,*" saith the Lord, "*I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*"

God is all-sufficient within himself, and never dependent upon his creatures. He is infinitely blessed already. We cannot add to his blessedness. When he blesses us, he gives us a blessedness that we never had before; but when we bless him, we cannot, by one iota, increase his absolutely infinite blessedness. David said, "*My goodness extendeth not to thee.*"

### **GRATITUDE AND PRAISE**

How, then, do we bless God? **We bless God by expressions of gratitude.** We say with David, "*Bless the Lord, O my soul.*" We say with Paul, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" We bless God by praising him, extolling him, desiring all honor for him, ascribing all good to him, magnifying and lauding his holy name. Let us do that. Sit still, and let your heart be silent before the Lord. No language can ever express the gratitude we have for him who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Praise him also in your speech. Break the silence. Speak of his glory. Invite others to cry with you, "*Hallelujah!*" Praise to Jehovah! — "*Ascribe ye greatness unto our God.*" Oh, that all flesh would magnify the Lord with us!

(Psalms 34:1-9) "1 will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. (2) My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear *thereof*, and be glad. (3) O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. (4) I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. (5) They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. (6) This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles. (7) The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. (8) O taste and see that the LORD *is* good: blessed *is* the man *that* trusteth in him. (9) O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for *there is* no want to them that fear him."

### **HEARTFELT ASSENT**

We bless God by our heartfelt assent to all the blessedness that is ascribed to him. After hearing how great he is, how glorious he is, how happy he is, we bless him by saying, "Amen; so let it be! So would we have it! Let him be great, glorious and blessed, beyond all conception. Let God be all that God is!" We bless God when we say, concerning the whole of his character, "Amen. This God is our God for ever and ever." Let him be just what this Book says he is. I would not have him be anything less.

- Sternly just, he will not spare the guilty. Amen, blessed be his name!
- Infinitely gracious, ready to forgive. Amen, so let it be!
- Everywhere present, always omniscient. Amen, so again do we wish him to be!
- Everlastingly the same, unchanging in his truth, his promise, his nature. We again say, "Amen. We are thankful and bless him for it."

Our God is just such a God as we worship, trust, love, and adore. He is God indeed. Every attribute ascribed to him is a fresh proof to us that Jehovah is God. Therefore, we bless him in humble adoration.

## **SPREAD HIS PRAISE**

Let us bless the Lord our God by spreading his praise.

(Isaiah 42:10-13) "Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof. (11) Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up *their voice*, the villages *that* Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. (12) Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands. (13) The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies."

We bless God by proclaiming his gospel, seeking others to bless him. Surely, if there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, we are in the best and most practical way blessing God when we labor to bring sinners to repentance through faith in Christ Jesus. Nothing so highly honors him as the salvation of his elect. Nothing so highly honors our God as faith in Christ. So let us make it our business to spread his praise through all the earth.

## **SERVE HIS CHILDREN**

If you would like to honor a man, if you really want to honor a man, honor his children, do good to his sons and daughters. And if you wish to bless God, if we really desire to honor our God, there is no better way to do so than by doing good to his children. When they are sick, visit them. When they are downcast, comfort them. When they are in need, help them. When they are opposed, stand at their side.

You cannot bless the feet, without blessing the Head. And when you have refreshed the feet, you have refreshed the Head. He says, "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" If they are naked, and you clothe them; if they are sick, and you visit them; if they are hungry, and you feed them; you bless and honor God their Father, Christ their Savior, and the Spirit their Comforter. Turn to Psalm 16. David not only said, "*Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; but,*" he added, "*to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight.*"

(Psalms 16:2-3) "*O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, Thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not to thee; (3) But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.*"

I can add nothing to the happiness and blessedness of my God. But I can add to your happiness. I can add to your blessedness. O Spirit of God, make me to be a blessing to your people.

Out in the highways and byways of life,  
Many are weary and sad  
Carry the sunshine where darkness is rife,  
And make the sorrowing glad.  
Make me a blessing, Make me a blessing,  
Out of my life may Jesus shine  
Make me a blessing, O Savior, I pray,  
Make me a blessing to someone today.

"*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" — The Spirit of God calls for us to stretch the puny limits of our capacity, endeavoring to extol, honor, and magnify our God.

"Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing  
My great Redeemer's praise,  
The honors of my God and King,  
The triumphs of His grace!"

## **BLESSED OF GOD**

**Third, this verse declares that blessedness with which the Lord our God has blessed us in Christ.** — “*Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*” Here Paul gives us reason to bless our God.

- The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ “***hath blessed us,***” past tense, all at once, all together, at one time in the eternal past. — We bless God by desiring his praise, honor, and glory. But he has blessed us by commanding blessedness upon us.
- He “*hath blessed us **with all spiritual blessings.***” — Those to whom the Almighty gives one spiritual blessing, he has given all spiritual blessings eternally and forever! Those to whom God has given Christ he has given all things in Christ! — All the blessings of grace! — All the blessings of salvation! (Redemption, Adoption, Righteousness, Justification, Regeneration, and Sanctification)— All the blessings of time! — All the blessings of providence! — All the blessings of Heavenly Glory!
- He “*hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings **in heavenly places.***” The word “*places*” is in italics because it was added by our translators. Perhaps the word would be best read, “*heavenlies,*” or “*heaven glories,*” or “*heavenly things.*”

However it is translated, Paul’s meaning is that God blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heaven before the world was made. God our Father, who blessed us is in heaven. Christ our Savior, in whom we are blessed, is in heaven. And all these blessings shall at last bring us to heaven, where we shall forever enjoy them perfectly and fully.

They are spiritual blessings pertaining to heavenly things, absolutely secure, blessings that can never decay or be taken away! This blessedness bestowed upon us originated in heaven and will bring us to heaven. It is a blessedness that makes us fit for heaven.

- He “*hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places **in Christ.***”

What blessed words those are — “*in Christ!*” **Everything is in Christ. If we have not yet learned that Jesus Christ and him crucified is the foundation, essence, and fulness of all divine truth, if we have not yet learned that the message of the Bible and the hope of the gospel is Christ and him crucified, then we have read the Word of God with no profit to our souls, our religion is a vain show, and we are yet without hope before God!** — What knowledge we have of this Sacred Book will only add to our condemnation in the Day of Judgment! — Without Christ and him crucified our religion is like...

- The Heavens without a Sun,
- A Lamp without Light,
- A Clock without Hands,
- A Compass without a Needle!

Without Christ and him crucified we have no forgiveness of sin, — no comfort in trouble, — no strength in trial, — no atonement, peace, or reconciliation with God, — no hope in death, — no access to God, — no door of entrance into heaven!

Do you understand this? “*Christ is all!*” **Without Christ we are nothing, we have nothing, we can do nothing** (1 Cor. 1:30-31).

(1 Corinthians 1:30-31) “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: (31) That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

**All that God has for guilty sinners is in Christ, only in Christ** (Col. 2:9-10; John 3:35-36).

(John 3:35-36) "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. (36) He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

(Colossians 2:9-10) "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. (10) And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"

The love of God is in Christ. The mercy of God is in Christ. The grace of God is in Christ. Without Christ there is no mercy, love and grace, but only wrath, judgment, and condemnation.

- When the flood came, there was no mercy and deliverance anywhere, but in the ark. – That ark was Christ!
- When the man-slayer fled from the avenger of blood, he found no safety until he entered the city of refuge. – That City of Refuge was Christ!<sup>[1]</sup>
- God said to Israel, "*I will meet with thee (upon) the mercy-seat, between the two cherubim*" (Ex. 25:22). – Christ is our Mercy-Seat. God meets sinners nowhere else but in Christ!

Among the untold millions of the redeemed in heaven, there shall not be found a single voice that shall not sing the praises of Christ, the Lamb of God. **Yonder in Glory Land Christ alone is praised.** There ransomed sinners sing, "*Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood*" (Rev. 5:9). To him alone every knee shall bow. To him every tongue shall confess!

Every blessing of life and grace is ours only in Christ. In this first chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he uses the words "*in Christ,*" or their equivalent, fourteen times. He means for us to understand that all grace, all salvation, all blessedness is "*in Christ.*" All that the triune God has done for us, all that he gives to sinners, and all that he requires of sinners is in Christ!

- All spiritual blessings are in Christ.
- All covenant mercies are in Christ.
- Election is in Christ.
- Predestination is in Christ.
- Adoption is in Christ.
- Redemption is in Christ.
- Forgiveness is in Christ.
- Acceptance is in Christ.
- Truth and knowledge are in Christ.
- The eternal inheritance of God's saints is in Christ.
- And I am in Christ!

"In the Beloved" accepted am I,  
Risen, ascended, and seated on high.  
Saved from all sin through His infinite grace,  
With the redeemed ones accorded a place.

"In the Beloved" – How safe my retreat!  
"In the Beloved" – Accounted complete!  
Who can condemn me? In Him I am free!  
Savior and Keeper forever is He!

"In the Beloved" I went to the tree,  
There in His person, by faith I now see  
Infinite wrath rolling over His head,  
Infinite grace, for He died in my stead!

"In the Beloved" – God's marvelous grace  
Calls me to dwell in this wonderful place!

God sees my Savior, and then He sees me,  
"In the Beloved" accepted and free!

All blessedness is in Christ. All the blessings wherewith God blessed us were conferred upon us in Christ. He, by his merit, purchased them for us as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He, as our Head and Advocate, as our Mediator and Surety, as our Representative and Forerunner, has received them in our name. And, by virtue of our union with him, we have them by right!

Behold the transcendent bounty and liberality of our heavenly Father. He has more than one blessing for his children, he has all spiritual and heavenly blessings for them, grace on earth, and glory in heaven; grace to enable us to glorify him upon earth, and glory as the reward of grace with himself in heaven!

### **CHRIST THE BLESSING**

All blessings are in Christ. But that is not all. **Christ is the Blessing!** Where Christ is not, there is no blessedness, but only cursedness. — "*Men shall be blessed in him.*" I see Christ's hand and Christ's blessing in the mercy he bestows upon me. But this makes the blessing sweetest. — Christ himself is the Blessing!

- Christ gives me light, and he is my Light.
- He gives me life, and he is my Life!
- Christ gives me salvation. That is wonderful; but this is better. — Christ is my Salvation!

In Psalm 1, when David speaks of our Savior, he says, "*Blessed is the man.*" But really, that sentence should be translated, "Blessedness is the man!" And the word "*blessed,*" or "blessedness" is in the plural — "blessednesses." It seems that David was saying the same thing there that Paul is saying in Ephesians 1:3. — Christ is all blessedness and all blessings are in him. He is not one blessing among many, but all blessings in one! The blessedness that was bestowed upon us in him before the world was is not one thing, but in all.

*"The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him"* (Lam. 3:24). This is our lot and portion forever! Rejoice! Eternally "*blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ!*"

Amen.

### **BLESSING FOR BLESSING**

(Songs of Grace #8— *Tune: Take My Life and Let It Be 77.77.*)

Blessed is the man, O Lord,  
Who was chosen by Your grace:  
Your election and Your love  
Cause our hearts to sing Your praise.  
Cause our hearts to sing Your praise.

God of love, You sent Your Son  
To redeem Your chosen ones!  
Precious Savior! Precious blood!  
For our sin Your blood atones!  
For our sin Your blood atones!

When the time of love has come  
God the Spirit comes to some:



By grace we cannot resist,  
God's elect are caused to come.  
God's elect are caused to come.

Come to Jesus? Yes, we do,  
Come to Christ alone for grace;  
By God's sov'reign grace and power,  
We the Son of God embrace!  
We the Son of God embrace!

Blessed Father, blessed Son,  
Blessed Spirit, three in One,  
We for grace our praise return—  
Thank You, Lord, for all You've done!  
Thank You, Lord, for all You've done!

[\[1\]](#) When the man-slayer fled for refuge, he found no safety until he was in the city. He might know everything there was to know about the city (Its size, — Its gates, — Its walls, — Its beauty), but he was not safe until he was in the city. — Now hear me well. — You may know everything there is to know about Christ, — you may know about him, his Person, his work, his doctrine, you may even fight for and defend these things, but no blessing of grace is yours until you are found in Christ by faith!