

Ephesians 1:1-12

Blessed beyond Belief

³ All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.

Two men boarded a coast-to-coast flight and were seated next to each other on the commercial plane. After breezing through the on-flight magazine, the first man turned to the other and asked, what do you do? The man replied: "I am a pastor of a church."

"Oh," said the first man quickly. "I don't believe in that religious stuff. It's for kids, you know, like the song 'Jesus Loves Me This I know, for the Bible tells me so....'"

The minister politely laughed and asked the other man what he did for a living. "I am an astronomer," said the first man.

"Oh, that stuff," said the minister. "I thought it was just for kids, you know - 'Twinkle, twinkle little star....'"

Many years ago, American heritage magazine compiled a list of the 40 wealthiest Americans, there was a woman on that list named Hetty Green. She died in 1916 at the age of 81, with an estate **worth over \$100 million**. And in today's terms, they tell me that would be a little over **\$2 billion**. She was the wealthiest American woman ever at that time, but she was also the most miserly and miserable (those come from the same word, interestingly enough,) woman that anyone ever recalled knowing. They said that she lived in a small, rundown, filthy house. She ate cold oatmeal because she didn't want to spend the money to heat it. Her son broke his leg and she refused to spend the money for medical treatment. And after a long time, his leg became infected and had to be amputated. Here's a woman who had unimaginable resources available to her, which if they had been used right, could have blessed and benefited her life; and they could have blessed and benefited the lives of so many other people. But she refused to use the resources that she had.

What a waste of resources! But yet how many in the church have ungrateful hearts, while God's abundant blessings pile up all around us — unnoticed, unappreciated and unused.

Psalm 103:1 “Bless the Lord, oh my soul and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, oh my soul and forget not all His benefits.”

Webster defines "**Blessed**" as, "***Of or enjoying happiness. Specifically enjoying the bliss of Heaven.***" It carries the idea of that which "***brings pleasure, contentment, or good fortune.***" Simply stated, it is that state of being that we all want to enjoy.

We all like blessings, don't we? There isn't a person in this room that does not enjoy a blessing! And, certainly, we are a blessed people!

The human heart beats an average of 80 times per minute. That's 4,800 times an hour. It beats 115,200 times a day, 42,048,000 times a year. And if you live to about 80 years old, your heart will beat 3,363,840,000 times, give or take a couple 100,000. And pump enough blood to fill 5 supertankers.

I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF!

What about the blood pulsing through our system constantly that performs so many functions within us. Our blood vessels, if they were stretched end-to-end would be 60,000 miles long—enough to wrap around the earth more than twice.

I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF!

What about clothes and all of our other possessions? What about our car, our job, our money? You say, “Money? I get up and go to work and provide money. That has nothing to do with God!” Well, [Deuteronomy 8:17-18](#) says, “You say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.’ But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth.”

I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF

Paul begins here in [Ephesians 1:3](#), trying to express his thanks for the spiritual blessings we've been given by God. And he said this, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” Paul, in fact, got so excited about this, that from verse 3 to verse 14 in the original Greek is one long run-on sentence.

ROMANS 8:32 NLT “He did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won’t he also give us everything else?”

[James 1:17](#) says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and comes down from the Father of lights.”

[Second Peter 1:3](#) says, “His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness.”

[First Corinthians 4:7](#) says, “What do you have that you did not receive?”

[John 3:27](#) says a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given to him from heaven.

Watch How Paul starts this letter. He tells us that our Heavenly Father ***“has blessed us”***. I want you to notice that these words are in the English past tense. At some point in the past, God blessed us! Not only are they past tense, but they are also in the **active voice**. **This means that those blessings that we received at some point in the past continue and will continue on into the future. In other words, I have been blessed, I am being blessed and I will be blessed and my blessing will not stop throughout ETERNITY!** It may not feel like it, and all the facts may be stacked against it being true, but it is true nonetheless!

Well, if I have these great blessings, I want to know more about them, don't you? Thankfully, this verse, and those that follow it in this chapter, give us the information we seek. Let's notice these truths as we discover ***that we are Blessed Beyond Belief***

I. THE QUANTITY OF THESE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

A. The quantity of these spiritual blessings can be summed up in one little word found in verse 3. It is the word ***“ALL”***. That word tells us that in the Lord we find every single thing we need to live the Christian life.

B. You see, God has held nothing back from His children. When He saved us, He gave us everything we needed to serve Him. We have everything we need right now to be ***content***, to be ***successful***, to be ***obedient***, to be ***useful*** to the Kingdom and to be ***happy in Jesus!***

C. When you and I got saved, we got everything Jesus had to offer us! We got it at that very moment, there is nothing else!

2. THE QUALITY OF THESE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

Paul describes these things as "*blessings in heavenly places.*" This literally means that these blessings are things that originated in heaven. They are not earthly blessings, but they are heavenly blessings! In the most literal sense, they are "*Heavenly Things!*" With that in mind, it will help us all to learn just what these heavenly things are. We are told in verses **4-14.**)

Underline "United with Christ" Because of our union with Jesus, we inherit these blessings! **I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF**

V4 Even **before** he made the world, (WHEN? BEFORE) God loved us and **(chose us)** in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.

- A. **He Speaks of Foreknowledge** - This verse deals with the matter of election. For some reason, God, in His wisdom, chose me before the world was formed. He knew me before He formed me in my mother's womb, and He had already determined that I would be in His family. One of the greatest spiritual blessings we enjoy as saved people is the fact that we were chosen in Christ by the grace of God,

Rom. 8:28-31. ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him.

And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory. ³¹ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?

Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

He loved me even though He knew all about me.

I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF!

B. V. 5 **He Speaks Of Family** - "God decided in advance to **adopt us** into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure." (NLT)

This verse tells us that we were adopted into the family of God. That is, at the moment of salvation, you and I became the children of God.

1 John 3:2. “Dear friends, we are already God’s children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.” (NLT)

In other words, we are His sons and daughters with all the rights and privileges that come to any child born in to the family.

Rom. 8:17. “And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.” (NLT)

The Father brought me into His family and made me His child!

I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF!

V. 6 **He Speaks Of Favor** – “So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son” This verse reminds us that we are **"accepted" with GLORIOUS GRACE** by the Father!

There was a time when we were outcasts and aliens, **Eph. 2:12**, but now, in Jesus, we are approved by the Father! We have been brought near to Him by the blood of Jesus, **Eph. 2:13**. We are on God's list of favorites! This means that God is literally pleased with us! A lot of Christians waste a lot of time trying to do what Jesus did when He died on the cross - please the Father!

The Father is pleased with me, because I wear the righteousness of Christ. I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF

V. 7a **Freedom** - He is so rich in kindness and grace that he **purchased our freedom** with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.

This verse tells us that we have been **"redeemed"**. There are three Greek words in the New Testament that are translated "redeemed." This particular one means to **"release a captive after the payment of a ransom price."**

It carries the idea of purchasing a slave and then immediately turning that slave loose. This is what Jesus did for us! He paid the price.

1 Pet. 1:18-19 “For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. ¹⁹ It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.” (NLT)

Jesus died for me, saved me by His grace and delivered me from the captivity of sin. I AM BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF

V. 7b **Forgiveness** –“...**and forgave our sins.**” This verse goes on to tell us that we have received forgiveness of our sins. At the instant of salvation, every single sin in my past, my present and in my future was forever forgiven! **Psa. 103:12** He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.

Col. 2:13-14 You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

1 John 1:7 But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.

We have been forgiven of all our sins! WE ARE BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF

V. 11-14 **Future** - Verse 11-14 speak of three more spiritual blessings that manifest themselves as we go through life into the future.

1. V. 11 **Our Destination** – “Furthermore, **because we are united with Christ**, we have received an inheritance (UNDERLINE THAT) from God, for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.”(NLT)

This verse speaks of our heavenly home! Every believer has a home awaiting them in Heaven.

John 14:1-3. “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. ² There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.

Rev. 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

1 Pet. 1:4. and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay

ARE WE NOT BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF?

2 V. 13-14 **Our Preservation** - ³ And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own^[d] by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. ¹⁴ The Spirit is God's guarantee that he will give us the inheritance he promised and that he has purchased us to be his own people. He did this so we would praise and glorify him.

These verses remind us that when we were saved, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Eph. 4:30. And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. (NLT)

This means that He is the down payment that secures us for eternity. The Holy Spirit is the Lord's promise that what He began at the moment of salvation, He will continue until we are home in Heaven, **Phil. 1:6; 2Tim. 1:12. If you are saved, you are sealed! If you are sealed, you are secure, John 10:28** I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me

3. THE QUALIFICATION FOR THESE SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

A. The last two words of verse 3 tell us what a person must do to enjoy all of these spiritual blessings. That one thing is to be "**in Christ**"!

B. The only way for anyone to enjoy the spiritual blessings of the Lord is for that person to be saved by the grace of God. At the moment of conversion, you are placed into the body of Christ, **1 Cor. 12:13**. You get "**in Christ**"! When this happens, you are made a partner of all the spiritual blessings of the Lord.

Conc: When you and I look at our blessings from the God's perspective, I think we would all have to say that we are BLESSED BEYOND BELIEF. God has provided us with blessings that are beyond description and beyond measure as to their value. I think we need to learn to praise the Lord for His blessings. We need to learn that what we often think of as blessings really aren't. Too often the real blessings of life are those spiritual things that we always have, no matter what else is happening around us. The real blessings of life are the things that never change and that never fade away. **We are blessed!** No matter what else is happening, if you are

saved, you are blessed abundantly! I think we ought to thank Him for those blessings!

The Bible says God gives life ([Genesis 2:7](#))

- He gives breath ([Isaiah 42:5](#))
- God gives strength ([Psalm 28:7](#))
- God gives joy and pleasure ([Psalm 16:11](#))
- God gives us His word ([Psalm 119:105](#))
- God gives repentance ([Acts 11:18](#))
- God gives faith ([Ephesians 2:8](#))
- God gives righteousness ([Romans 5:17](#))
- God gives a new heart ([Ezekiel 11:19](#))
- God gives peace ([John 14:27](#))
- God gives rest ([Matthew 11:28](#))
- God gives eternal life ([Romans 6:23](#))
- God gives food and clothing ([Matthew 6:25](#) and following)
- God gives rain ([Matthew 5:45](#))
- God gives money ([Deuteronomy 8:17-18](#))
- The Bible says God is merciful ([Deuteronomy 4:31](#) and [Lamentations 3:22-23](#))
- God is kind ([Romans 2:4](#) and [Ephesians 2:7](#))
- God is compassionate ([Psalm 145:8](#) and [Psalm 147:3](#))
- God is sovereign ([Isaiah 46:10](#) and [Daniel 4:35](#))
- God is powerful ([2 Chronicles 20:6](#) and [Revelation 5:13](#))
- God is love ([John 3:16](#) and [1 John 4:16](#))
- God is patient ([Romans 2:4](#) and [2 Peter 3:9](#))
- God is good ([Psalm 34:8](#) and [Psalm 136:1](#))
- God is faithful ([Psalm 100:5](#))
- God is our deliverer ([Psalm 18:48](#) and [Proverbs 18:10](#))
- God's promises are true ([Deuteronomy 7:9](#) and [2 Timothy 2:13](#))