

God's Generous Gift of Grace 3

Ephesians 1:3-14 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, ⁴ even as **he chose us** in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ **he predestined us for adoption as sons** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of **his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.** ⁷ In him **we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,** ⁸ which **he lavished upon us**, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making **known to us the mystery of his will**, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In him we have **obtained an inheritance**, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might **be to the praise of his glory.** ¹³ In him you also, when **you heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation, and **believed** in him, **were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,** ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.**

❖ Introduction

- **Again, We are looking at the Generosity of God**
 - **Specifically in His gift of Grace**
- **In these verses, Paul is listing a number of things that are true of those believed:**
 - The Word of Truth
 - And Were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.
 - If that is true of you, then rejoice today, because you have been given more than you can imagine
 - God has changed your course of history
 - He has reversed the curse of death
 - And given you eternal life
 - With rewards
- **According to His Grace**
 - Based off of His grace
 - **Everything mentioned in a positive manner for the sealed believer of the Word of Truth**
 - Has been given as a result of the grace of God..
 - That Paul says has been lavished on you..
- **So, I ask that we live accordingly...**
 - We give our time, possessions and energy to the generous God who has given us grace
- **Reminder:**
 - There is oh so much more in these verses than we will get to today or have gotten to the last few weeks
 - **I want to focus on the main things that God has done, is doing and will be doing for us**

❖ Outline:

- **Here are my main points for today**
 - Telling you where we are going, gonna tell you when we get there and then remind you where we went.
- **Context**
- **A Look at Our Corrupt Nature**
- **1) God Has Been Rich Toward Us in Grace**

- 2) God Has Chosen Us
- 3) God Has Adopted Us
- 4) God Has Redeemed Us
- 5) God Has Forgiven Our Sins
- 6) God Has Shown Us His Will
- 7) God Has Given Us An Inheritance
- 8) God Has Given Us The Gospel
- 9) God Has Given Us His Spirit
- 10) God Should Be Blessed and Praised By Men
- **11) God Did This According to His Plan**

❖ Remember Our Corrupt Nature

- **Before We Can Understand the Richness of this Grace**
- **We must understand our corrupt and depraved spiritual conditions**
 - **We are born into sin**
 - **We are to blame because:**
 - We were represented in Adam... He did what any of us would have done...
 - So we are equally to blame...
 - **You may say, no, I would have done differently**
 - I ask you, have you done differently since hearing God's Word?
 - **Have We not all Knowingly and Willingly rebelled against God?**
- **Carefully Consider yourself**
 - **Our lives are short**
 - They are filled with rebellion and sin
 - **Let us not marginalize our sin against God...**
 - Let us grow in our understanding of its depth and darkness
- **Carefully consider God's thoughts towards us all**
 - God is so Holy and set apart...
 - These sins that we marginalize... we make them out to be nothing
 - Are infinitely terrible in the eyes of God
- **God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden for:**
 - One Sin... Only One...
 - And He cursed them with death...
 - Because of one sin...
- **God created a place called hell**
 - That he describes as a place with burning and smoke and torment
 - It serves as more than an illustration of his thoughts toward sin and rebellion
- **It Took the death of His Son**
 - To reverse the curse of sin
 - To reverse death
- **Yet: God Is Gracious to us even in our most wretched of states...**
 - This is a great and glorious God
- **Paul Reminds The Ephesians in Chapter 2**
 - **Ephesians 2:1-3 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.**

➤ To understand the richness of God's grace, we must consider the depth of our spiritual poverty

❖ **1) God Has Been Rich Toward Us in Grace**

➤ According to the Riches of His Grace

❖ **2) God Has Chosen Us**

➤ Jesus chose to give sinners Grace

❖ **3) God Has Adopted Us**

➤ As benevolent parent would choose to adopt a child with no Hope

❖ **4) God Has Redeemed Us**

▪ ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood,

➤ **Redemption – Slavery**

➤ **Redemption: Freedom Bought**

➤ **His Death Buys our Freedom**

❖ **5) God Has Forgiven Our Sins**

▪ **the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight**

➤ **Trespasses: Lets Begin with our Trespasses...** what we have been forgive of...

▪ So, here we begin to see a little more clearly (if it was not already clear) why we need redemption

▪ **Trespasses – This word does not just describe missing the mark...**

• As we define sin so often... We say, we have missed the mark of God's standard...

• This word here describes and intentional falling

• It indicates reckless and willful sin

➤ **Forgiveness...**

▪ Greek word: *aphesis*

▪ This word's meaning is: to put away or send away...

➤ **Forgiveness:**

▪ The sinner has been discharged of all trespasses... they are now ancient history

▪ **Psalm 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.**

▪ **Romans 4:7-8 ⁷“Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; ⁸blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.”**

• This is a verse of praise and adoration and thanksgiving to God...

◆ This should be our prayer and praise right now...

❖ **6) God Has Shown Us His Will**

▪ ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

➤ **Who likes to know secrets...?**

▪ My kids love secrets... they are terrible at keeping them

▪ But, it is fun when you are told something no one else knows...

▪ It is very powerful...

▪ Mia used to love for us to tell her a secret...

▪ But then she would want to explode until she was able to tell

▪ **When I talk to my kids... half the time they do not even hear my voice...**

• Or they do not care to hear my voice...

▪ **As soon as I say, I would tell you, but it is a secret...**

• Their ears perk up... and they will not leave me alone until I tell them

- That is how you can get a person to listen to you...
- **But, people like to be in on secrets...**
- **God has let us in on a secret... a mystery**
- **Made known to us the mystery of His Will**
 - Wow. We get to enjoy unparalleled access into the plans of God...
 - This is truly a privilege
 - To know how God plans to save the world
 - To know how God intends to bring people that have rebelled against Him
 - Back into a love relationship with Him
- **Why was it a mystery?**
 - It had been veiled for years from man.
 - This is why it was a mystery
 - God had kept his plan mainly to himself
 - He was speaking through prophets so people would know something great as coming
 - Then, He sends Jesus...
- **I remember my wife saying one day out of the blue**
 - Do you ever feel like you know something that most of the rest of the world doesn't
 - That you have been given this information
 - That you are in on something that most people are blind to
 - And I am like... yes I do...
- **The mystery is that God would redeem mankind by the death of His Son**
 - And offer a place in the kingdom to all who believe in Faith.
 - And this would all be a working of God's grace.
- **Three Main Words**
 - Grace – Faith – Redemption
- **Let's Use Scripture to Understand it a little better**
 - **Romans 16:25-26** ²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—
 - Revelation of the mystery
 - That was kept secret
 - For long ages
 - But, has now been disclosed
 - And through prophetic writing has been made known to all nations
 - Not every person though...
 - Just expanding to all nations
 - Not everyone has believed for sure
 - According to the command of the eternal God...
 - Purpose of the mystery revealed?
 - To bring about the obedience of Faith
- **Paul's Explanation of the Mystery**
 - **Ephesians 3:2-6,9-11** ² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the **mystery was made known to me by revelation**, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive **my insight into the mystery of Christ**, ⁵ which was **not made known** to the sons of men **in other generations as it has now been revealed** to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ **This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel...** ⁹ and to bring

to light for everyone what is the **plan of the mystery hidden for ages** in God who created all things, ¹⁰so that **through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.** ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose that he **has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,**

- Colossians 2:2-3 to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, ³in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.
- Keep Digging into the mysteries of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge
 - That are found in Jesus Christ Alone
 - And they are deep and wide

➤ **God has been gracious to open up mysteries to us**

- That the world had never known...

❖ **7) God Has Given Us An Inheritance**

- ¹¹In him we have **obtained an inheritance**, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹²so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might **be to the praise of his glory.**

➤ **First of All... We know our inheritance is not here and not right now...**

- Although one maybe could argue that it has already begun...
- And that would be true...
- But we are living for another home
- We are like Abraham
 - Hebrews 11:10 ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

➤ **Our Inheritance is in the new heaven and new earth...**

- Revelation 21:3-7 ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. ⁴He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." ⁵And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. ⁷The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son.
- Revelation 22:3-5 ³No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

➤ **We Will Inherit Eternal Life**

- A big part of our inheritance will be eternal life...
- The ability to live forever...
- It is not only a possibility for children of God...
- It is a certainty

➤ **Our inheritance is everlasting...**

- 1 Peter 1:4 to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

❖ **8) God Has Given Us The Gospel**

- ¹³In him you also, when **you heard the word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation, and **believed** in him,

- **The Catalyst – The Gospel...**
 - Here is where it all began for us.
 - God has given us the gospel
 - The Word of truth – the gospel of your salvation
 - And we believed...
- **This Gospel of Salvation is the Word of Truth**
 - IN a world full of false ways to God or to Heaven
 - Filled with false worship
 - A light of truth breaks in amongst the lies
- **What Jesus came and did in the flesh**
 - Is now preserved in the Word... in the gospel
 - So that those who believe...
 - Will be saved...
- **Those who are saved will experience the generosity of the grace of God**
 - God has been gracious and generous enough to offer himself
 - And to make sure we hear about it, so we can experience Jesus for ourself
- **The Word of Truth**
 - Jesus came in the flesh...
 - [Explain the Gospel clearly here](#)

❖ 9) God Has Given Us His Spirit

- **were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,**
- **A seal was something put on a document**
 - To show that the document was valid... that it came from whoever sealed it
 - And what was in it was what the writer of the document intended as true
 - It gave validity to the document
- **The Holy Spirit is our seal**
 - God says that He has redeemed us
 - He has forgiven us
 - He is giving us an inheritance
 - All of these wonderful things...
 - **How do we know it is true?**
 - Now this only makes sense to those who have the Holy Spirit living within them
 - Truly... and know it...
- **We know it is true...**
 - Because the Holy Spirit is in us...
 - He is like a down payment until we get the rest of what has been promised to us...
- **This is amazing...**
 - It is so amazing because the Holy Spirit is the greatest thing that could ever happen to us
 - God himself is actually living within each of us
- **Think about this like this:**
 - What if we have been given these promises...
 - Told we have redemption and forgiveness of sins...
 - Told we should fight sin, and hide God's word in our heart...
 - Yet, the Holy Spirit was never given to us...
- **Wow... that would be so sad and powerless**
 - We would be unable to live the Christian life...
 - We would have a difficult time changing our behavior

- Our fellowship with God would be diminished...
 - **God has given us His Spirit**
 - Romans 8:16 ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,
 - 1 John 3:24 ²⁴Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.
 - **The Seal means we are His...**
 - We are the children of God
 - And our assurance is the Holy Spirit of God within us.
- ❖ **10) God Should Be Blessed and Praised By Men**
- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - ⁶ to the praise of **his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.**
 - ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might **be to the praise of his glory.**
 - ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.**
 - **Our Response: It is clear from these verses**
 - **We love to praise everything else in the world...**
 - Football players, friends and family
 - When our children do good things...
- ❖ **11) God Did This According to His Plan**
- 4 **before the foundation of the world,**
 - **5 he predestined us**
 - 5 according to the purpose of his will,
 - according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time,
 - 11 predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,
 - **God is always working... Always knows what He is doing... Always has a plan**
 - Nothing has thrown God off...
 - Nothing has confused God
 - The whole world was in confusion
 - But God was able to reach into this world with its billions of peoples...
 - And bring about His perfect will
 - **He figured this out before He made the earth**
 - Which means, satan, and sin and death were a part of the plan...
 - He does not author sin
 - But He did create a world that He said was good
 - That has the capacity for much evil...
 - **And in the midst of man and satan**
 - Trying to mess up His perfect world...
 - God had a plan to redeem it...
 - To make it perfect without annihilating all of its inhabitants...
 - **He did this:**
 - **According to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will**
 - Isaiah
- ❖ **One More Thing: This is extra**
- Do you see the work of all three person of the Godhead here?

- I title all my points... God did something...
- If you look closely you see the Father, Son and Spirit at work here...
 - the Father's work of love, Eph 1:3 (choosing us to *holiness*, Eph 1:4; to *sonship*, Eph 1:5; to *acceptance*, Eph 1:6):
 - the Son's, Eph 1:7 (*redemption*, Eph 1:7; *knowledge of the mystery of His will*, Eph 1:9; *an inheritance*, Eph 1:11);
 - the Holy Spirit's, Eph 1:13 (*sealing*, Eph 1:13; giving an *earnest* of the inheritance, Eph 1:14).

❖ **Invitation**

- I am Like a banker that comes to your home today
- To offer you freedom from all your debts... house not car note, furniture notes...
 - All future bills payed, etc
 - Also, going to offer you a huge savings account
 - And a big multi billion dollar trust fund
- This is the offer today
- Why would you not whole heartedly accept it?