



Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – March 5, 2024

The Lord be with you.

I have a friend that whenever I see him and ask him how he's doing. He always says, I'm blessed. I like that because it's a good reminder for me. That as followers of Jesus, that we are blessed.

I wanna look at scripture for a few moments to get an inkling of just how blessed you and I are. I'm looking at Ephesians Chapter 1:3, and this is one of my favorite verses in the Bible, as there was so much here. And then it's a verse that I try to take with me through the day, is a verse that I'd like to go over in my mind when I laid my head on the pillow at night. Here it is, Ephesians 1:3, 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.

Now, if you look at this verse in the Bible, you will see that it ends with a comma. It doesn't end with a period with a comma, and that is because the Apostle Paul isn't through yet isn't through with this praise for how God has blessed us. In fact, in the original Greek text, Verse 3 is the beginning of one long sentence that goes all the way through to verse 14, as Paul is so excited, he runs on phrases, piling up verse after verse of how much God has blessed you and me.

So verse three is a joyful verse, a buoyant verse, notice the repetition, blessed, blessed blessing. God blesses us with gifts. We bless God with words for His blessings. So that this is something that you and I, that we can actually do for God. We can bless God. I find that is a remarkable thought that you and I, we can bless God. That you can make God's day better. You can bring a smile to God's face when you bless him, when you speak well of him, when you tell how God has blessed you. When I was a chaplain for hospice, I had a patient who was a homeless man who was brought into our inpatient unit, he lived on the streets, and we discovered that this poor ragged homeless man, why, he was a man who actually had millions of dollars in the bank, but for whatever reason, he was living on the streets.

Now, I share that story because it has been a good reminder to me that sometimes that we followers of Jesus, we live like that homeless man, and that we have spiritual riches and we live spiritually poor. And that is one of the reasons why I like to take this verse with me, to remind me as it says, God has blessed us in Christ with every, every spiritual blessing. Please note the tense of the verb, it says, God has blessed us, past tense. It's not the God will bless us if we pray hard enough, if we are devoted enough, no, God has blessed us. That's you and me, it says, with every spiritual blessing... And in the verses that follow, Paul is spelling out some of our spiritual blessings that includes the forgiveness of sins, being adopted into God's family, to be holy and blameless before God, to have confident access to God, that we have eternal life. That were sealed by the Spirit. When it says, Every spiritual blessing, it means everything that you and I need for time and for eternity, we've got it. God has blessed us. It's not something that you strive for, it's not even something that you pray for, because God has blessed us. That whatever you



water from rock

need, whatever you might hope for is already yours, and Paul calls these spiritual blessings because they are bestowed on us by the Holy Spirit.

Follow Paul's train of thought here. That all three persons of the Godhead, the Trinity are caught up in blessing you and me. The blessings come from God the Father by the Holy Spirit in Christ. Yes, God has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing. That means that every blessing comes to you and me wrapped up in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the center and source of all blessing. You cannot separate the blessing from Jesus. Jesus said, I am the vine, you are the branches. Abide in me, live your lives and me because a part from me, you can do nothing. So live close to Jesus, and you will experience more and more of the blessings that are already yours in him.

Okay, one more. God has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing. It says in the heavenly places where these are blessings that are heavenly in their nature, they are blessings prepared by God for us in heaven, they are the highest, the greatest of all blessings. Turn a page over to Ephesians 2:6, and it says that God has raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. By Jesus Ascension into heaven, Jesus takes you and me with him into all the spiritual blessings that Heaven can give.

So I asked my friend, how are you? And he says, I'm blessed. And I can say that every follower of Jesus can say that because we are blessed by God, can't help himself, God can help, but bless you and me. All that the Father can bestow, all that the son can provide, all that the Spirit can apply. So that we come to God just as we are, and we are blessed with every spiritual blessing heaven can give. Now, what's left for us to do? Well, to pray that God open our eyes to see just how God has blessed us.

And so I close today with a prayer, a prayer of the Apostle Paul prays a little later in Ephesians 1. Paul prays for God to open our eyes to see the blessings. And I pray this for you, and I pray it for me today. I pray that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him. So that with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you can know what is the hope to which He has called you, and what are the riches of His glorious inheritance among the saints. And what is the immeasurable greatness of His power for us who believe.

I am Tim Smith a fellow traveler in the pilgrim way. Thanks for listening, until next time.