

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 1:3

Lesson #2

"in Christ"

07/30/2017

Identity in *Action*

EPHESIANS

A STUDY THROUGH THE EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

1

Common questions.

- What do we have a right to claim (by faith) as a child of God?
- Should we seek and expect material blessings as a Christian?
- Should we seek and expect more of Christ's Spirit than we have?
- Is there more to the Christian life than we have experienced?



2

A **smart** phone is more than a phone!



Many people don't know what they have so they never learn to use it.



3

Are we familiar with
all the apps on our
new life in Christ?



4

Ephesians 1:3

Blessed {be} the God and Father

(The blessings go in two directions. God blesses us so that we can be a blessing to Him.)

of our **(not "the")** Lord Jesus Christ,
(We have an intimate connection with Christ.)

who has **(past tense)** blessed us
(The issue is what Christ has already done.)

with every spiritual **(not material)** blessing
(We lack for nothing spiritually.)

in the heavenly places **(our true home)**

in Christ, **(used 12 times in this chapter)**

5

Ephesians 1:3

Paraphrase taking into account the opening words of Colossians.

“We heap praise on God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ because He has shown us great favor by including us as a part of the Body of Christ, where we are made to share in the full measure of His image in this life and even more in the life to come.”

6

1.

The blessings of God are given so that we might **be a blessing** to God and others.

The goal of the Christian life is not our blessing but rather our **BEING A BLESSING**.

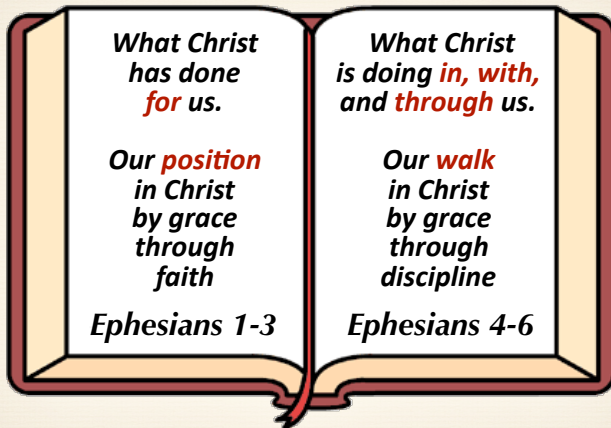
2.

The blessings of God through Christ are a package that **has been** delivered to all believers alike.

The first three chapters are about what **WE HAVE** in Christ, not about what we could or should have.

7

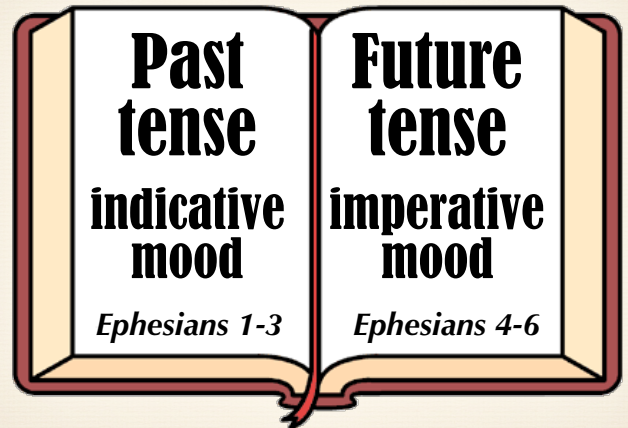
Ephesians



This order is consistent in all of Paul's letters and significant.

8

Ephesians



This order is consistent in all of Paul's letters and significant.

9

Common misconceptions.

1. The Body of Christ is a **class** system.

This is not a new problem - see Corinth.

2. If you don't **feel** it, you don't have it.

Blessings are claimed by faith not feelings.

3. What we need is a special **experience with Christ's Spirit** that will give us what is lacking.

Our problem is not a greater blessing but our walk in faith.

10

1 Corinthians 12:13

“For **by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.”

2a. The **baptism of the Spirit** is the initiation of every believer into the Body of Christ.

- Water baptism is a sign of this initiation.
- The Body of Christ or church is an egalitarian spiritual community united by a common Spirit.
- Vs 13 mentions the Spirit as a “seal” and “pledge” of our inheritance but Paul does not suggest that there may be some Christians who are left out.

11

1 Corinthians 12

⁴Now there are varieties of **gifts**, but the same Spirit. ⁵And there are varieties of **ministries**, and the same Lord. ⁶And there are varieties of **effects**, but the same God who works all things in all persons. ⁷But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

2b. Like an athletic team - each believer has a distinct role or function and each has unique experiences and effects.

12



"A team plays for the name on the front of the jersey not for the name on the back!"

Dean Smith



13

1 Corinthians 3

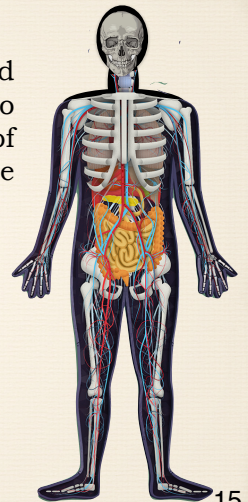
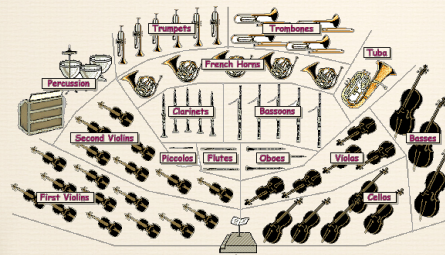
⁴And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to **spiritual** men, but as to men of flesh, as to **babes** in Christ. ⁵I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, ⁶for you are still **fleshly**. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?"

2c. We may each be at different stages of spiritual development.

14

Matthew 25:40

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'"



15

3.

The blessings of God through Christ are **more spiritual than sensual** in nature.

1 Corinthians 15:46

"However, the **spiritual** is not first, but the **natural**; then the spiritual."

2 Corinthians 4:18

"while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are **temporal**, but the things which are not seen are **eternal**."

16

What are the blessings that Paul mentions specifically?

- vs. 4 **Chose** us to be blameless in love.
- vs. 5 **Adoption** as sons (daughters).
- vs. 7 **Redemption** - forgiveness of sins.
- vs. 9 **Revelation** of God's will.
- vs. 11 **Inheritance** of eternal union with God.
- vs. 13 **Sealed (branded)** by the Spirit.

Note what is not mentioned - material prosperity, social prestige, political power.

Note the emphasis on **identity**.



17

3a. The O.T. stands in **contrast** to the N.T. with respect to the nature of God's blessings.

- The material blessing in the O.T. was a "type" for the N.T. blessing (1 Cor.15:46, 2 Cor.4:18, 1 Tim.6:6-10, Heb.4:1-11).

Natural (O.T.)

Promised Land
Temple (building)
Israel
Law
Material wealth
Palestine

Spiritual (N.T.)

Heaven
Temple (body)
Body of Christ
Spirit
Spiritual wealth
Sabbath rest



18

3a. The O.T. stands in **contrast** to the N.T. with respect to the nature of God's blessings.

- When we look to the O.T. to set our **expectations** of God's blessings, we are childish and need to grow up.
- It's not our circumstances or material wealth that distinguishes us but the fact that **we find our identity** outside of them.



19

1 Timothy 6

"5 ... men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, **who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.** 6 But godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by **contentment.** 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content."

3b. Our blessing is seen in the nature and object of our **faith, hope, & love.**

20

"In order for you to rise higher, you have to break away from relationships that are limiting you."

"Do all you can to make your dreams come true."



Joel Osteen

21

*Jesus died to save our souls **not our dreams.***



22

The greater gift

"A monk in his travels once found a precious stone and kept it. One day he met a traveler, and when the monk opened his bag to share his provisions with him, the traveler saw the jewel and asked the monk to give it to him. The monk did so readily. The traveler departed overjoyed with the unexpected gift of the precious stone that was enough to give him wealth and security for the rest of his life. However, a few days later he came back in search of the monk, found him, gave him back the stone, and entreated him, 'Now give me something much more precious than this stone, valuable as it is. Give me that which enabled you to give it to me.'"



Anthony De Mello
Indian Jesuit priest

23

“The Scripture clearly asks disciples of Jesus
to lose their old life
in order to find their new life.
We each have to lay aside something.
I had to ask myself,
‘What does that mean for me?’”

Dr. Rosaria Champagne Butterfield
lesbian,
former postmodern, feminist,
English professor



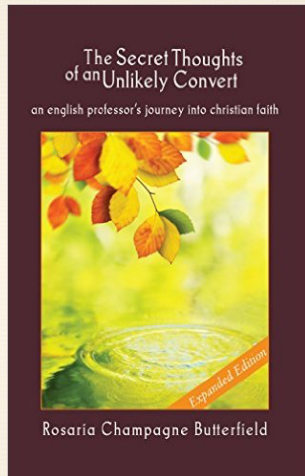
Ephesians 4

“²⁰ But you did not learn Christ in this way, ²¹ if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, ²² that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

25



**“To follow Jesus,
we must lose our
life to find it. What
have you given up
to know him and
yourself?”**



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