

# Blessings of the Believer

*But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him (1 Corinthians 2.9).*

## Introduction

God has provided wonderful and glorious blessings to the one who has put his faith in Christ. He has given these marvelous blessings to us because he loves us. Paul wrote that God has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**. Paul proclaimed many of these blessings in the opening verses of Ephesians, one of the most magnificent passages in the Scriptures. He emphasized that these blessings to the believer in Christ are to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Below is the passage with specific blessings emboldened.

*<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has **blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He **predestined us to adoption as sons** through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.<sup>7</sup> In Him we have **redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses**, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> He **made known to us the mystery of His will**, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him <sup>10</sup> with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things*

*on the earth. In Him <sup>11</sup> also we **have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose** who works all things after the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. <sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were **sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,** <sup>14</sup> who is **given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory** (Ephesians 1.3-14).*

Some of these blessings enumerated above are explained below. These blessing are a “package.” When a person believes the gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4) he has a new relationship with God. He is no longer an enemy but a son or daughter of God. He stands in an unending stream of God's grace from which all blessings flow. These blessings, though real, must be appropriated by faith for the believer to experience them. Faith gives victory in the Christian life. The Scriptures declare what God says about the present possessions for those who have put their trust in His Son. Believe them! Victory in the Christian life is through faith. Hebrews 11 declares how believers in the past had victory in their lives. It was all by faith; they believed what God said!

The blessings enumerated here are for those who have put their trust in Christ. For those who reject Christ's redemption and love, only judgment and condemnation awaits. Jesus came to save mankind. His death and resurrection solved the problem of sin and death. But Jesus warned that judgment awaited those who refuse His offer of salvation. Listen to the words of Jesus,

<sup>16</sup> *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have*

eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God (John 3.16-18).

<sup>21</sup> For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. <sup>22</sup> For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup> so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him (John 5.21-23).

For those willing to put their trust in Christ, God has provided incomprehensible blessings. We are rich beyond imagining. Some of the specific blessings are the following:

- Justification
- Redemption
- Regeneration
- Sonship
- Joint-Heirs
- Reconciliation
- Forgiveness
- Eternal Life
- Indwelling of the Holy Spirit
- Resurrection

## **Justification**

The believer in Christ is declared by the Scriptures to be justified. Justification is a legal term in which the believer in Christ is declared righteous. More than a declaration of "Not guilty," the believer in Christ is declared "righteous." God imputes His own righteousness to the one who accepts the work of Jesus on his behalf. God justifies

the believer in Christ on the basis of faith, not works. Paul wrote in Romans 3.21-24,

*<sup>21</sup> But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;*

Justification is an act of grace by God. It is a gift. It cannot be worked for or earned. It is free—courtesy of the Lord Jesus Christ. He picked up the tab for us.

Paul wrote in Romans 5.1,

*“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”.*

Justification results in peace with God. Peace with God is a blessing in which the believer can rest. Fear of God is removed. Fear of death or judgment is eliminated. We can rest, knowing that God has nothing against us. In Colossians 2.13-14, Paul wrote,

*<sup>13</sup> When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, <sup>14</sup> having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

Everything God had against us was paid for by the death and resurrection of Christ. To the one who trusts in the work of

Christ on his behalf for salvation, who believes the gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4) God says, "Righteous!" cf. Romans 5.9.

## **Redemption**

To redeem means to buy back something that used to belong to the purchaser but for some reason has passed out of his possession. The Scriptures tell us that we were redeemed by Christ. In Colossians 1.13-14, Paul wrote,

*<sup>13</sup> For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

And Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1.18-19,

*<sup>18</sup> knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, <sup>19</sup> but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.*

The biblical picture of redemption is that of redeeming or ransoming us out of the slavery of sin and death. The *agora* was the Greek word for the market. It was where business was transacted. In modern terms we might think its equivalent being the mall, full of shops, banks, etc. One of the commodities in the ancient market was slaves. The Greek word ἐξαγοράζω means to buy out from the market and the biblical picture is one of buying slaves out of the slave market of sin (cf. Galatians 3.13, 4.5; Ephesians 5.16; Colossians 4.5). Apart from Christ, we were helpless and without hope, trapped in the slave market unless someone could buy us out. A slave cannot buy himself out of the slave market. He has no means. But Christ had the means. He was not in the slave market for he was sinless. The price of the purchase was His own blood.

Jesus taught the concept of being slaves to sin. In John 8.31-36, he spoke to the Jews saying,

*<sup>31</sup> So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." <sup>33</sup> They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. <sup>35</sup> The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. <sup>36</sup> So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.*

Redemption is a gift. And what a gift! It is an act of grace by God. It can neither be earned nor worked for. It can only be accepted.

## **Regeneration**

Regeneration means a new birth. Everyone is born once—physically. The Scriptures teach us that we need to experience a new birth in order to have a relationship with God.

Jesus in his conversation with Nicodemus said,

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again (or from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3.3).*

Nicodemus did not understand what this new birth was. Jesus elaborated on His statement saying,

*<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom*

of God. <sup>6</sup> *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* <sup>7</sup> *Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'* <sup>8</sup> *The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3.5-8).*

Why is a new birth necessary? Because we are dead. We enter this world spiritually dead. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15.22,

*In Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive.*

Paul explained this concept in Romans 5.12-21. When Adam disobeyed God and sinned, we all sinned for Adam was the federal head of the human race (we were "in Adam"). Sin spread seminally through the human race. We inherit the sinful nature of our father Adam. God warned Adam (Genesis 2.16-17) that on the day he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that "dying he would die." Adam died spiritually the instant he ate of the tree. As a result, his relationship with God was broken. He became afraid of Him. The relationship of joy and peace was replaced by fear and guilt. Spiritual death led to physical death and Adam died physically after 930 years. It is the same for us. We enter the world spiritually dead and eventually die physically. When we believe in Christ, we are regenerated. We receive a new life—spiritual life—eternal life. John wrote that to have Christ is to have this life. Not to have Christ is death.

To the Ephesians, Paul wrote:

<sup>1</sup> *And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,* <sup>2</sup> *in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of*

*disobedience. <sup>3</sup> Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) (Ephesians 2.1-5).*

and to the Colossians:

*When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, (Colossians 2.13).*

God gives us His life, eternal life, when we believe Paul's gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4).

*He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life (1 John 5.12).*

## **Sonship**

Closely allied with regeneration is the doctrine of sonship. Once regenerated the believer becomes a child of God. John wrote,

*<sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, (John 1.11-12).*

Paul wrote the Galatians in 3.26,

*For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ*



*Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

And again in Galatians 4.4-7,

*<sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,<sup>5</sup> so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. <sup>6</sup> Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" <sup>7</sup> Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.*

The relationship of children of God is one which God has predestined. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1.5,

*"He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,"*

God has elected His children. We exercise our wills by making a choice and believe. But God in His sovereign, omniscient wisdom made a choice also. Such a choice provides the believer in Christ security. Once a son, always a son. Once established, the relationship of being "in Christ" is unbreakable. Jesus illustrated this fact with relation to Jewish believers in the parable of the sheep and the good shepherd,

*"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand" (John 10.27-28).*

**Joint-Heirs**

Jesus is the unique Son of God. He is the God-Man—true God and true Man. When a person believes in Christ he becomes God's adopted child. Furthermore, we are joint-heirs of Christ. One day, God the Father will sum up all things in Christ. He will give to His Son all there is to give. Paul wrote that we are joint-heirs with Christ. This blessing is beyond comprehension. In Romans 8.15-17, Paul wrote:

*<sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" <sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

Peter wrote the same thing in 1 Peter 1.3-5:

*<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

## **Reconciliation**

Reconciliation is the great doctrine that declares that the estrangement between God and man due to sin has ended due to the death and resurrection of Christ. The believer in Christ has taken full advantage of this arrangement. Paul explained this in Romans 5.10-11:

<sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. <sup>11</sup> And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

And again, Paul wrote,

<sup>19</sup> For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, <sup>20</sup> and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven (Colossians 1.19-20).

And finally, Paul gave this word in 2 Corinthians 5.17-19,

<sup>17</sup> Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. <sup>18</sup> Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, <sup>19</sup> namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

## **Forgiveness**

God has forgiven the sins of the believer in Christ. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1.7,

*"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace,"*

This statement is paralleled in Colossians 1.13-14:

<sup>13</sup> *For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

Later in this same letter, Paul wrote,

<sup>13</sup> *When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, <sup>14</sup> having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross (Colossians 2.13-14).*

Forgiveness of sins for the believer in Christ is a present state. It is not something in the future that we hope for. God *has forgiven* us our sins—past tense. No believer in Christ should ever ask God to forgive him—He already has. All we can do is thank God for His forgiveness.

## **Eternal Life**

Everyone dies. Death is the great enemy of the human race. Most people do not wish to contemplate death. We all cling to life. This is because God created man to live in an eternal relationship with Him. Sin destroyed this relationship. It resulted in spiritual death and later physical death. Sin created a barrier between us and God. When we put our trust in Christ, God imputes his own life to us. This life is eternal. One of the great themes of the Apostle John is life. Characteristic of John is that he sets forth powerful, profound truths with simple language. He recorded these words of our Savior in his gospel,

<sup>14</sup> *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so*

*must the Son of Man be lifted up; <sup>15</sup> so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life (John 3.14-16).*

John affirmed Jesus’ statement in his epistle in 1 John 5.11-13,

*<sup>11</sup> And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. <sup>12</sup> He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. <sup>13</sup> These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.*

Most people believe eternal life is something that is obtained or begins at death. But the Bible declares that eternal life begins *the moment we believe*. John wrote, “we have the life” not “will have the life”. Eternal life begins the moment one puts his trust in Christ. And how long does eternal life last? Forever.

### **Indwelling by the Holy Spirit**

When we put our trust in Christ, we are baptized by the Holy Spirit. Paul wrote in 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.”*

This baptism is a spiritual baptism (no water, please). God identifies us with Christ, that we are “in Christ”. We are part of His body, the Church. This blessing is unique to believers beginning with Paul’s ministry. Nothing in the Old

Testament indicated such a relationship.

Paul also wrote,

*And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' (Galatians 4.6).*

And in Ephesians, Paul wrote,

*<sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1.13-14).*

The Holy Spirit given to the believer in Christ is God's "pledge" or "down payment" (ἀρραβών) of his inheritance (2 Corinthians 1.22, 5.5). The Holy Spirit is God's "earnest money" for our future blessing as joint-heirs of Christ (Romans 8.17).

## **Resurrection**

The Scriptures declare that we have the hope, i.e. the expectation of resurrection of our bodies. The resurrection is central to Christianity and to the Gospel (1 Corinthians 15.1-4). Without the resurrection Christianity does not exist. Without the resurrection we have no hope. We look forward to the day of Christ's return and it is at that time that we will receive new, immortal bodies. These bodies will be fit for eternity. Our mortal bodies exist only briefly. They are corrupted by sin and eventually experience death. Above we saw the consequence of Adam's disobedience of God's command about eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. All of us have all been infected with Adam's sin and suffer the

consequence: death.

The resurrection is the “proof” of Christianity. The resurrection of Christ was the event that changed the disciples of Christ. At his crucifixion they fled. When he appeared to them raised from the dead, they became new men. They became bold as lions and proclaimed that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah. The resurrected Christ also appeared to the apostle Paul. He had been a furious enemy of the Way (as it was known then)—of those who believed in Christ. But when Christ appeared to him, alive, on the road to Damascus, God changed Paul’s life forever. As violent an enemy of Christ as he had been, he became his devoted follower and obedient servant. Listen to Paul’s powerful words regarding resurrection:

*<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ is preached, that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, not even Christ has been raised; <sup>14</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is vain, your faith also is vain. <sup>15</sup> Moreover we are even found to be false witnesses of God, because we testified against God that He raised Christ, whom He did not raise, if in fact the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; <sup>17</sup> and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied. <sup>20</sup> But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. <sup>21</sup> For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. <sup>22</sup> For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made*

alive. <sup>23</sup> But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming, <sup>24</sup> then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. <sup>25</sup> For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. <sup>26</sup> The last enemy that will be abolished is death. <sup>27</sup> For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. <sup>28</sup> When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all (1 Corinthians 15.12-28).

Paul described the nature and mechanics of resurrection in the following,

<sup>35</sup> But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" <sup>36</sup> You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies; <sup>37</sup> and that which you sow, you do not sow the body which is to be, but a bare grain, perhaps of wheat or of something else. <sup>38</sup> But God gives it a body just as He wished, and to each of the seeds a body of its own. <sup>39</sup> All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish. <sup>40</sup> There are also heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another. <sup>41</sup> There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. <sup>42</sup> So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body;



<sup>43</sup> it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; <sup>44</sup> it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. <sup>45</sup> So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. <sup>46</sup> However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. <sup>47</sup> The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. <sup>48</sup> As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. <sup>49</sup> Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. <sup>50</sup> Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. <sup>51</sup> Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, <sup>52</sup> in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. <sup>53</sup> For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. <sup>54</sup> But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. <sup>55</sup> O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" <sup>56</sup> The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; <sup>57</sup> but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>58</sup> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15.35-58).

See also [Resurrection](#).

Truly, God has, as Paul wrote, blessed us with every spiritual blessing. All that we are meant to be has been provided for by God through the work of the Son. Thanks be to God!

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Updated, February 3, 2008