

Welcome to Promise Land Bible Church
We're glad you're here!



An open Bible is shown from a low angle, looking up at the pages. The pages are filled with text, but it is out of focus. The background is a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. Overlaid on the center of the Bible is the title 'Our Spiritual Blessings' in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. Below the title is the subtitle 'Scripture text: Ephesians 1' in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font.

Our Spiritual Blessings

Scripture text: Ephesians 1

Blessings from God the Father (Eph. 1:4–6)

He has chosen us (v. 4). This is the marvelous doctrine of election, a doctrine that has confused some and confounded others.

He has adopted us (v. 5). Here we meet that misunderstood word **predestination**.

He has accepted us (v. 6). We cannot make ourselves acceptable to God; but He, by His grace, **makes us accepted in Christ**.

Blessings from God the Son (Eph. 1:7–12)

We should not think that each Person of the Godhead works independently, **because they all worked together to make possible our salvation.** But each Person has a special ministry to perform, **a special “spiritual deposit” to make in our lives.**

He has redeemed us (v. 7a). To redeem means **“to purchase and set free by paying a price.”** There were 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire, and often they were bought and sold like pieces of furniture. But a man could purchase a slave and set him free, and **this is what Jesus did for us.**

The price was His own blood (1 Peter 1:18ff).

This means that we are free from the Law (Gal. 5:1), free from slavery to sin (Rom. 6), as well as free from the power of Satan and the world (Gal. 1:4; Col. 1:13–14).

If we were slaves, we would be poor, but because we are sons, we are rich!

Colossians 1:13-14 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

He has forgiven us (v. 7b).

The word forgive means “**to carry away.**” This reminds us of **the ritual on the Jewish Day of Atonement when the high priest sent the scapegoat into the wilderness (Lev. 16).** First the priest killed one of the two goats and sprinkled its blood before God on the mercy seat. Then he confessed Israel’s sins over the live goat, and had the goat taken into the wilderness to be lost. **Christ died to carry away our sins so they might never again be seen (Ps. 103:12; John 1:29). No written accusation stands against us because our sins have been taken away!** Sin made us poor, but grace makes us rich.

He has revealed God's will to us (vv. 8–10).

This letter has much to say about God's plan for His people, **a plan that was not fully understood even in Paul's day.**

The word mystery has nothing to do with things eerie. It means a **“sacred secret, once hidden but now revealed to God's people.”**

We believers are a part of God's **“inner circle.”** **We are able to share in the secret that God will one day unite everything in Christ.**

Ever since sin came into the world, things have been falling apart.

First, man was separated from God (Gen. 3). Then man was separated from man, as Cain killed Abel (Gen. 4). People tried to maintain a kind of unity by building the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11), but God judged them and scattered them across the world. God called Abraham and put a difference between the Jew and the Gentile, a difference that was maintained until Christ's death on the cross. Sin is tearing everything apart, but in Christ, God will gather everything together in the culmination of the ages. We are a part of this great eternal program.

He has made us an inheritance (vv. 11–12).

The King James Version reads, “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance,” but “in whom also we were made an inheritance” is also a possible translation.

Both are true and the one includes the other. **In Christ we have a wonderful inheritance** (1 Peter 1:1–4), and **in Christ we are an inheritance**. We are valuable to Him.

Think of the price God paid to purchase us and make us part of His inheritance! God the Son is the Father’s love gift to us; and **we are the Father’s love gift to His Son**.

1 Peter 1:1-4 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, **he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,**

Read John 17 and **note how many times Christ calls us “those whom Thou hast given Me.”**

The church is Christ’s body, Ephesians 1:22-23 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

building, Ephesians 2:19-22 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but **you are fellow citizens with the saints and members **of the household of God**, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, **in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.** In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**

bride (*Ephesians 5:22-23 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.*); Christ's future inheritance is wrapped up in His church.

We are "joint-heirs with Christ" (*Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*), which means that He cannot claim His inheritance apart from us!

Blessings from God the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13–14)

We move now from eternity past (Eph. 1:4–6), and history past (Eph. 1:7–12), to the immediate experience of the Ephesian Christians. The Holy Spirit had worked in their lives, and they knew it.

He has sealed us (v. 13). The entire process of salvation is given in this verse, so we had better examine it carefully. It tells how the sinner becomes a saint. **First, he hears the Gospel of salvation.** This is the good news that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again (1 Cor. 15:1ff).

The Ephesians were Gentiles, and the Gospel came “to the Jew first” (Rom. 1:16). But Paul, a Jew, brought the Gospel to the Gentiles as he shared the Word of God with them.

The Ephesians “**heard the Gospel**” and **discovered it was for them—“your salvation”** (Eph. 1:13). Even though the Bible teaches election, it also announces, “**Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature**” (Mark 16:15).

A soul-winner does not discuss election with unsaved people, because **it is a family secret that belongs to the saints.**

He simply announces the truth of the Gospel and invites men to trust Christ, and the Holy Spirit does the rest. D.L. Moody used to pray, “Lord, save the elect—and then elect some more!”

The same God who ordains the end, the salvation of souls, also ordains the means to the end, the preaching of the Gospel in the power of the Spirit. Having heard the Word, the Ephesians believed; and it is this faith that brought salvation. (***Ephesians 2:8-9***
For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.)

This pattern follows what Paul writes in Romans 10:13–15, so read that passage carefully.

Rom 10:13-17 For **"everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."** How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And **how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?** And how are they to hear **without someone preaching?** And how are they to preach **unless they are sent?** As it is written, **"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So **faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.**

It is God's plan for evangelism. When the Ephesians believed, they were "**sealed with the Spirit.**" "After that ye believed" should read "when ye believed." **You receive the Spirit immediately on trusting Christ.** This is not an experience subsequent to conversion.

Act 10:34-36 So Peter opened his mouth and said:
"**Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all),**

Act 10:37-41 you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, **but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses,** who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

Act 10:42-47 And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness **that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.**" While Peter was still saying these things, the **Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.** And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because **the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.** For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and **extolling God.** Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, **who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"**

What is the significance of this sealing of the Holy Spirit? **For one thing, it speaks of a finished transaction.** Even today, when important legal documents are processed, **they are stamped with the official seal to signify the completion of the transaction.** This sealing **also implies ownership:** God has put his seal on us because He has purchased us to be His own.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

It also means security and protection. The Roman seal on the tomb of Jesus carried this meaning.

Matthew 27:62-66 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, "Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last fraud will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, **"You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can."** So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

So, the believer belongs to God, and is safe and protected because he is a part of a finished transaction. According to John 14:16–17, the Holy Spirit abides with the believer forever.

John 14:15-17 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and **he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. **You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.**"

It is possible for us to grieve the Spirit and thereby lose the blessings of His ministry (Eph. 4:30). **But He doesn't leave us. Another use for the seal is as a mark of authenticity.** Just as a signature on a letter attests to the genuineness of the document, so **the presence of the Spirit proves the believer is genuine.** *(Romans 8:9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.)*

It is not simply our lip profession, our religious activity, or our good works, **but the witness of the Spirit that makes our profession authentic.**

He has given us an earnest (v. 14). Earnest is a fascinating word! In Paul's day, it meant **“the down payment to guarantee the final purchase of some commodity or piece of property.”** Even today you will hear a real estate agent talk about earnest money.

The Holy Spirit is God's first installment to guarantee to His children that He will finish His work and eventually bring them to glory. The “redemption of the purchased possession” refers to the redemption of the body at the return of Christ (Rom. 8:18–23; 1 John 3:1–3).

1 John 3:1-6 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, **that we should be called children of God; and so we are.** The reason why the world does not know us is **that it did not know him.** Beloved, **we are God's children now,** and what we will be has not yet appeared; but **we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.** And **everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.** Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; **sin is lawlessness.** You know that he appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. **No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.**

“Redemption” is experienced in three stages:

1. We have been redeemed through faith in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:7).
2. We are being redeemed as the Spirit works in our lives to make us more like Christ (Rom. 8:1–4).
3. We shall be redeemed when Christ returns and we become like Him.

But the word translated earnest also means **“engagement ring.”** In Greece today you would find this word being used that way. But, after all, isn't an engagement ring an assurance—a **guarantee**—that **the promises made will be kept?**

Our relationship to God through Christ is not simply a commercial one, but **also a personal experience of love**. He is the Bridegroom and His church is the bride. We know that He will come and claim His bride because He has given us His promise and His Spirit as the “engagement ring.” **What greater assurance could we want?**

We have examined a number of basic Bible doctrines in this chapter, **all on the theme of our riches in Christ**.

It would be profitable for us to review what these verses teach us.

1. True riches come from God. It is a source of great encouragement to know that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are all working on my behalf to make me rich. God not only gives us “**richly all things to enjoy**” (1 Tim. 6:17), but **He gives us eternal riches without which all other wealth is valueless.**

A distraught wife sought out a Christian marriage counselor and told her sad story of a marriage about to dissolve. “But we have so much!” she kept saying. “Look at this diamond ring on my finger. Why, it’s worth thousands! We have an expensive mansion in an exclusive area. We have three cars, and even a cabin in the mountains. Why, we have everything money can buy!”

The counselor replied: “It’s good to have the things money can buy **provided you don’t lose the things money can’t buy.**

**What good is an expensive house if there’s no home?
Or an expensive ring if there’s no love?”**

In Christ, you and I have “**what money can’t buy,**” and **these spiritual riches open up to us all the wealth of God’s vast creation.**

We enjoy the gifts because we know and love the Giver.

2. All of these riches come by God's grace and for God's glory. Did you notice that after each of the main sections in Ephesians 1:4–14, **Paul has added the purpose behind these gifts?**

Why has God the Father chosen us, adopted us, and accepted us? **“To the praise of the glory of His grace”** (Eph. 1:6). Why has the Son redeemed us, forgiven us, revealed God's will to us, and made us part of God's inheritance? **“That we should be to the praise of His glory”** (Eph. 1:12). Why has God the Spirit sealed us and become the guarantee of our future blessing? **“Unto the praise of His glory”** (Eph. 1:14).

We often have the idea that God saves sinners mainly because He pities them, or wants to rescue them from eternal judgment, but God's main purpose is that He might be glorified. His creation reveals His wisdom and power, **but His church reveals His love and grace.** You cannot deserve or earn these spiritual riches; you can only receive them by grace, through faith.

3. These riches are only the beginning! There is always more spiritual wealth to claim from the Lord as we walk with Him.

The Bible is our guidebook; the Holy Spirit is our Teacher. As we search the Word of God, we discover more and more of the riches we have in Christ. These riches were planned by the Father, purchased by the Son, and **presented by the Spirit.** There is really no need for us to live in poverty when all of God's wealth is at our disposal!

My friend was discussing money matters with his wife and neither of them realized that their little son was listening. Finally the boy broke in with the suggestion, "Why don't you just write one of those pieces of paper?"

Junior did not understand **that it was necessary to have money in the bank to back up “those pieces of paper.”** But we never face that problem when it comes to our spiritual wealth.

A little devotional book by Charles Spurgeon is entitled **A Checkbook on the Bank of Faith.** A promise from the Bible was given for each day of the year, along with a short devotional message. The author described **each promise as being as good as money in the bank to anyone who would claim it by faith,** as a person would write a check against his bank account. **By faith we can claim God’s promises and draw on His limitless wealth to meet every need we may face.**