

The Pearl of the Epistles – Ephesians

Making Known the Mystery of His Will

Ephesians 1:8-12

Ephesians 1:8-12 *Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

Introduction

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus a most glorious letter. The letter is filled with hope and promise as he carefully lays out the importance of God in the lives of the brethren. In the first chapter he lets us in on a profound truth for Christians;

Ephesians 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

Paul introduces them to how “*the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*”.

In verses 4-6 we were introduced to the blessings of the Father: He Chose us (v. 4), He Adopted us (v. 5) and He Accepted us (v. 6). Beginning in the seventh verse, we see the blessings from God the Son. In verse 7 we found that Jesus redeemed us.

In this passage today, we will continue to see the Blessings in Heavenly Places from God the Son as Jesus reveals God’s will to us.

Ephesians 1:8 *Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;*

In the previous verse we found that “*we have redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of sins*”. And all this is according to the “*riches of his grace*.” Now add “*he hath abounded toward us in all*

wisdom and prudence.” Spiritual blessings heaped upon spiritual blessings from God’s grace to those who trust in Christ.

Notice the word *abounded*, it means “in excess; more than enough to spare.” God does not give wisdom and prudence in moderation to His children. God will give in abundance to those that love God and keep His commandments.

Wisdom means full of intelligence and carries the idea of acting wisely. It can also mean insight. So another of the *spiritual blessings* is to have insight into God and then to act wisely concerning His will in your life.

Prudence means to have understanding; to think clearly, a capacity for understanding.

So God liberally gives, through the riches of His grace, wisdom and understanding to believers in His only Begotten Son, Jesus the Anointed One!

***Ephesians 1:9** Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:*

As a young boy I didn’t like to read very much. I would just as soon be playing baseball with all my friends. This condition existed until my first deployment on a ship in the Coast Guard. Life aboard a ship is one of work and then utter boredom. After the work was done, there wasn’t much of anything to do. I noticed that many of my shipmates were filling the down time with reading. So I found a book in the “loaner library” and I found that I liked to read and that I really enjoyed mysteries. I liked the “who done its.”

Paul uses the word “mystery” in this verse, but it carries a different definition than a “who done it.” Mystery used in Scripture is defined a “sacred secret, which was once hidden but is now revealed.” In this case it is a sacred secret revealed only to God’s people.

There are two elements which always enter into a New Testament mystery: (1) It cannot be discovered by human agencies, for it is always a revelation from God; and (2) it is revealed at the proper time and not concealed, and enough is revealed to establish the fact without all the details being disclosed.¹

¹ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed., Vol. 5, p. 222). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The Apostle Paul says that the “sacred secret” of God’s will is now revealed to Believers. And God let us in on this secret by His own good pleasure.

How Great Is Our God! Say it with me, “How Great Is Our God!”

***Ephesians 1:10** That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:*

We really need to understand two terms that Paul uses in this verse; that is the word “dispensation” and “fulness of times”. Dispensation is a term that means “the law or management of a household.” Theologically it means “the method in which God carries out His purposes towards men.” Paul’s use of the word in this verse means the “commission to preach the Gospel.”

Now God has never had but one method of saving folk; everything rests upon one method of salvation. The approach and the man under the system have been different, however. For example, Abel offered a lamb to God, and so did Abraham. The Old Testament priests offered lambs to God. God had said that was the right way. But I hope you didn’t bring a lamb to church last Sunday! That is not the way God tells us to approach Him today. We are under a different economy.²

“Fullness of times” means a point in time. It is time for the plan which God had previously hidden to be revealed to believers through Christ. In this case, it is time to reveal God’s redemptive plan for mankind. The clock of God, if I can use that term since God is beyond time, is moving forward to the event when God’s Son, Jesus the Messiah, will return to the earth and rule as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. (Revelation 5:5)

***Philippians 2:10** That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

When Sean and Rob were teenagers and Michelle was just on the edge, I would have to begin the “countdown” on Sunday mornings so they would know that it was time to leave for church. I would begin by shouting “fifteen minutes kids before it is time to leave.” They knew that meant that I would be backing the car out of the driveway on our way to church in fifteen minutes. Soon I would follow-up

² McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed., Vol. 5, p. 223). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

with “ten minutes kids, all you have is ten minutes.” I called out “five minutes” and finally “I am walking out the door.” It was at this point that I would go to the car, sit and simmer! You see I was the only one on my time. Everyone else was on their own time schedule. Eventually all would get into the car and we were on our way, tying ties, pulling out curlers and applying makeup.

Jesus is coming back one day. The “fullness of time” is at hand. God has already shouted “fifteen minutes world, you have fifteen minutes.” Scripturally there isn’t another event in the prophecy concerning Jesus return that has to be accomplished.

***Ephesians 1:11** In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:*

Here is a wonderful truth. Christians have obtained an inheritance! God is giving us something we do not deserve. And this is all being done as per God’s will for those that love Him and believe on His Son. God knew this from the foundation of the worlds and he predestinated, it was all part of His Plan of Salvation.

***Romans 8:16-17** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*

All of the Scriptures are coming “in focus” since the birth of the Messiah. The Gospel message includes the birth, death and the resurrection of the Messiah, Immanuel, Jesus the Savior of man.

***Ephesians 1:12** That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.*

All of the blessings that come from the Father and the Son are given to those “*who first trusted in Christ.*”

Conclusion

Let us review “all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”

1. God chose us to be holy and without blame (v. 4)
2. God predestined us to be adopted children by Jesus Christ (v.5)
3. God accepted us (v. 6)
4. Jesus redeemed us (v.7a)
5. God forgave us our sins (v. 7b)
6. God revealed His will to us (vv. 8-10)

7. God has made us an inheritance (vv. 11-12)

Let me be very clear today. If you do not have a personal relationship with Jesus, no spiritual blessings await you. The only thing waiting you is eternal torment in Hell.

But it doesn't have to be. Jesus died for you and God wants you to receive your inheritance.

Robert C. Crowder