



The Grand Theater in Ephesus (ephesusbreeze.com)

Every Spiritual Blessing

Ephesians 1:1-14

Every Spiritual Blessing Introduction

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Four things about Ephesus:

1. It was the largest city in the Roman province of Asia.
2. In its history it had come under Persian, Greek and (Hellenistic) Egyptian rule.
3. It had an enormous temple of **Diana (Artemis)** and three more temples dedicated to Roman emperors.
4. It was known around the Roman world for occult practices, especially the ***Ephesia grammata*, or Ephesian letters**.

Every Spiritual Blessing Introduction

Four things about Paul's ministry in Ephesus:

1. He spent more than two years there (**Acts 19:8-10**)
2. During this time "all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." (**Acts 19:10**)
3. The believers were so serious that they spontaneously burned their occult literature in public. (**Acts 19:19**)
4. A large riot started when those who supported the goddess Diana (Artemis) got angry with Paul. (**Acts 19:23-41**)

Every Spiritual Blessing Introduction

Four important topics in this letter:

1. What we need to know about Christ – our Savior and Redeemer.
2. What we need to know about our salvation – how we are made right with God, the forgiveness of our sins, etc.
3. What we need to know about spiritual warfare – an important topic in a city most famous for occult practices.
4. What we need to know about the Church – this new society that God is building in the midst of the world.

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Greeting 1:1-2

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- **1:1** Paul, an apostle...
- The title “**apostle**” sometimes appears in the Bible to designate a messenger sent by a church.
- For example, see **Epaphroditus** in **Phil 2: 25**.
- There is a more technical sense here, as with the **Twelve**.
- Paul is emphasizing his authority as a special representative of Christ to lead the church.

Greeting 1:1-2

- **1:1** saints ... and are faithful
- Believers are a **holy people**, set aside by God as his own.
- God wants us to reflect his holiness.

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- Believers are a **holy people**, set aside by God as his own.
- God wants us to reflect his holiness.
- In the OT, God gave Israel this role.
- The main object of his attention is now the church.
- **Faithful** can have the sense of either “**trusting**” or “**trustworthy**.”

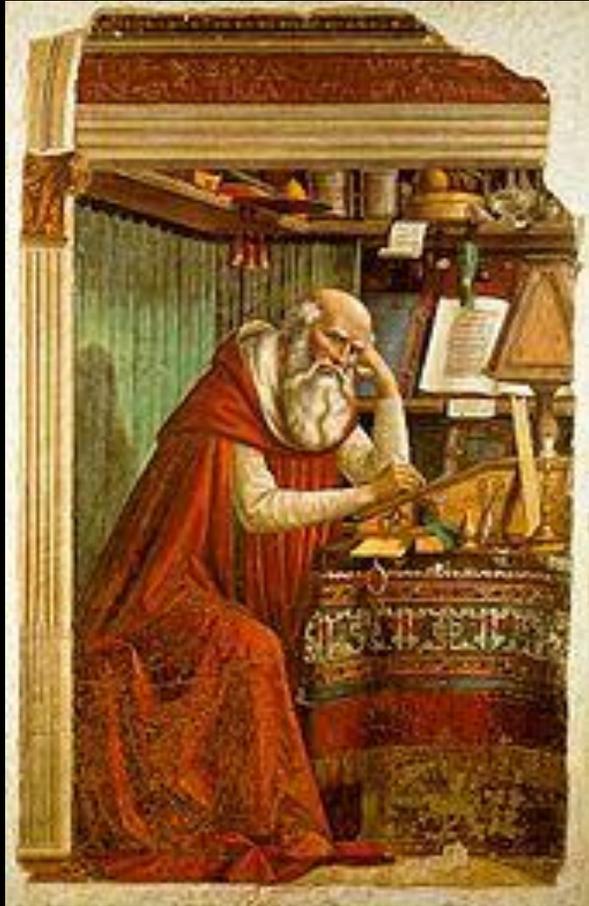
Greeting 1:1-2

- **1:1** in Christ Jesus
- We do not make ourselves “saints,” (holy ones) but we become that when we are connected to Jesus.
- By contrast, when we are ‘faithful’ we strive to maintain a good relationship with the Lord.
- We cling to his word and walk in obedience.
- Christianity always involves a connection both to Christ as the head and to the church as the members of his body.

Greeting 1:1-2

- 1:2 grace ... and peace
- Grace is unmerited favor. This is difficult to understand.
- Sometimes we see it in unusual acts of kindness, as when someone gets a \$1000 tip.
- Peace is also not the norm.
- Conflict, anxiety, selfishness (our own or others') dominate our thoughts and experience.

Greeting 1:1-2



The grace of the Father lies in his willingness to send the Son for our salvation, while the peace of the Son lies in the fact that we are reconciled to the Father through him.

– Jerome (347 – 420), Translator of the Latin Vulgate Bible

Greeting 1:1-2

- 1:2 grace ... and peace
- These two elements – grace and peace – describe the essence of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ.
- They make a perfect greeting for Paul's letters.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:3-14.

- In the original, these 12 verses are one long sentence.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:3-14.

- 1:3 Paul's hymn of praise is full of full of teaching.
- He is amazed as he reflects upon what God has done for us.
- God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:3-14.



The blessings are spiritual not merely because they pertain to the soul, but because derived from the Holy Spirit, whose presence and influence are the great blessing purchased by Christ.

*– Charles Hodge (1797-1878),
Princeton Theological Seminary*

Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:3-14.

- **1:3** Paul highlights the fact that these blessings are spiritual with the phrase “in the heavenly places.”
- Literally, “in the heavenlies.”
- He uses this phrase **5x in Ephesians** – and nowhere else.
- Also see **1:20, 2:6, 3:10 & 6:12**

Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:3-14.

- The whole Trinity is at work in this passage.
- The **Father** elects **verses 4-6**
- The **Son** redeems **verses 7-12**
- The **Spirit** seals **verses 13-14**
- And each section ends with “to the praise of his glory.”

Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:3-14.

Side note:

- We might be confused by the Trinity.
- How can $1 + 1 + 1 = 1$?
- Answer: It doesn't, but God is infinite.
- And each person of the Triune God is infinite.
- Better to think like this: $\infty + \infty + \infty = \infty$

The Father Elects 1:4-6

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- God the Father is the main architect of this entire plan.
- He chose us in Christ (v.4)
- In love he predestined us for adoption (v.5)
- With grace he has blessed us (v.6)
- He is the main actor throughout the rest of this whole passage as well.

The Father Elects 1:4-6

- **Election** can cause some people massive trouble. Here are a few things to remember:
 1. **It is biblical.** Nobody (say Calvin) just made it up.
 2. It is a reason for **holiness**, not an excuse for sin. (**v.4**)
 3. It should lead to **humility**, not superiority. No one earns it.
 4. Our concept of it must be ***totally consistent*** with putting our **faith or trust** in Christ – not in contrast to faith.

The Father Elects 1:4-6

- Regarding adoption, let's see **Romans 8:14-16** (ESV)

¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

The Son Redeems 1:7-12

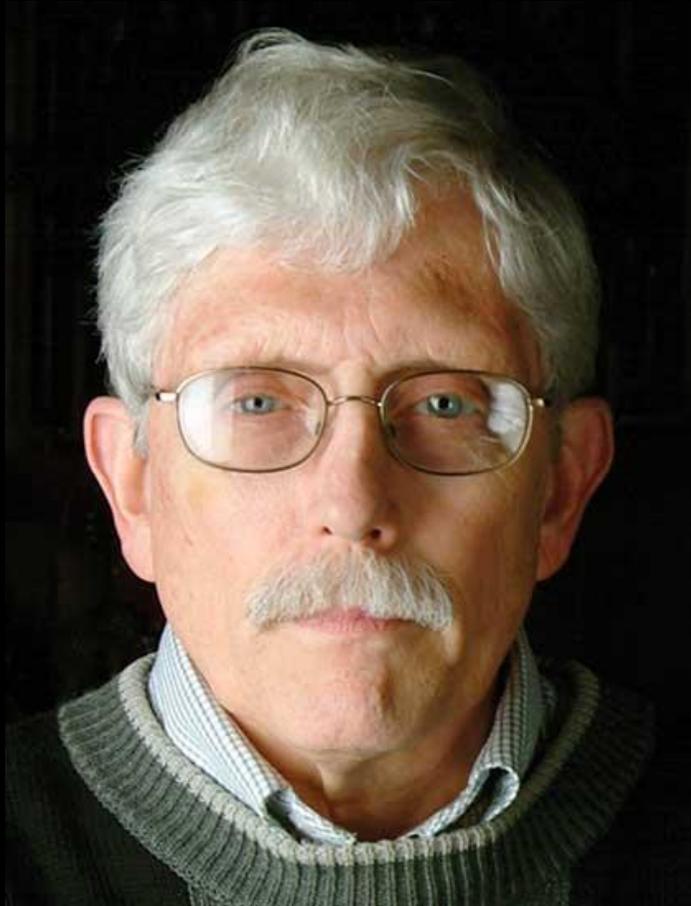
The Son Redeems 1:7-12

- 1:7 **Redemption** is related to the idea of paying to free a slave or a prisoner of war from captivity.
- Christ's death accomplished this for us by paying the penalty for our trespasses – and offering us forgiveness.
- And this is **according to the riches of his grace**.

The Son Redeems 1:7-12

- 1:8 God has lavished his grace upon us.
- God gives according to his bank account, not ours.

The Son Redeems 1:7-12



God's wealth cannot be exhausted, and it is always available to his children. When we get to heaven we will be shocked by how little of the divine largesse we have actually used; we depend on ourselves far more than we should.

*– Grant Osborne,
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School*

The Son Redeems 1:7-12

- 1:9 God has now made known to us this **mystery of his will** – our election and redemption in Christ.
- It is mystery full of **wisdom and insight (v.8)**
- He began “**before the foundation of the world.**” (v.4)
- He has now revealed these previously hidden truths – and revealed them to nitwits like us. 😊

The Son Redeems 1:7-12

- **1:10** God's plan embraces the uniting of all things in heaven and things on earth in Christ.
- He will one day bring the evil of this world to an end.
- And he will create a new heavens and a new earth without any of the flaws of this fallen one that we have ruined.

The Son Redeems 1:7-12

- **Revelation 11:15** (ESV)

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

The Son Redeems 1:7-12

- **1:11-12** Since we are adopted into God's family, we share an inheritance just like the Son.
- This is God's will.
- This is what awaits us in Christ.
- **Think about that for a moment.**

The Spirit Seals 1:13-14

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- We received these blessings “when [we] heard the word of truth, the gospel of [our] salvation and believed in him.”
- It is at this point we were sealed, when the Holy Spirit came into our lives as God’s new children.

The Spirit Seals 1:13-14

Anyone who believes this word ... is sealed by the Holy Spirit ... This mark is similar to the chalk mark that an Igbo host in Nigeria puts on the wrist of a visitor. Both the chalk mark and the seal indicate that this person is to enjoy the privileges and protection of the entire community.

*– Yusufu Turaki, Jos ECWA
Theological Seminary, Nigeria*



The Spirit Seals 1:13-14

- And so we enjoy the “*privileges and the protection*” of God our Father, now that we are part of the family of God.
- God is bringing people from every nation together creating a community of saints.
- We are his holy ones, who are faithful in Christ Jesus.

The Spirit Seals 1:13-14

- **1:14** Guarantee This word means something like “down payment.”
- In modern Greek, it is used for an engagement ring.

The Spirit Seals 1:13-14

- In other words, these blessings are available to all, but only given to those who put their trust in Christ.
- Does that mean Christianity is an exclusive religion?
- Yes, in the sense that we have to believe; we have to place our trust in Christ.
- No, not in the sense that God is trying to keep people out.

The Spirit Seals 1:13-14

- **John 14:6** (ESV)

Jesus said ... “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

- **Acts 4:12** (ESV)

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men [i.e. humans, not males] by which we must be saved.

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- Paul wants the Ephesians – and us – to understand what we possess in Christ.
- God has given us every spiritual blessing.
- We are the targets of his infinite glorious grace.

Every Spiritual Blessing

God the Father has given us all of the following in Christ:

1. Election by the Father (v.4)
2. Adoption into God's family (v.5)
3. Redemption by the Son (v.7)
4. Forgiveness of Our Trespasses (v.7)
5. Knowledge of the Mystery of His Will (v.8)
6. A Part in His Divine Plan (v. 10)
7. A Heavenly Inheritance (v.11)
8. Sealing with Holy Spirit (v.13)

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