

Ephesians  
Identity - Part 1  
A Different Blessing  
07/23/2023

- Ephesians
- A Different Blessing
- Who do you think you are?
- How do you perceive yourself?
- When you know who you are in Christ, then you'll know what to do

*Eph. 1:1-14(ESV) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.*

**A Different Blessing:**

1st) The Blessing of a Spiritual **FAMILY**.

*Eph. 1:4b-5 (ESV) In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,*

- A deeply personal and intimate process that changes our identity and our relationship with God
- It's "according to the purpose of his will" to adopt us into His family as His children through Jesus Christ
- He chose to make us His own even before the foundation of the world
- Man was created in God's family
- Originally man was connected to God
- The fall of man disconnected us from God and stole our identity

*Gen. 1:26a (ESV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*

- That's identity language

*Gen. 1:26b (ESV) And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

*Gen. 1:28 (ESV) And God blessed them.*

#### A) **REFLECTORS**

*Gen. 1:26a (ESV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*

- He wants creation to know something about him, and so he's made us as his reflectors
- You don't reflect by doing, you reflect by being
- The goal is not for the world to know us, but the goal is for the world to know him

#### B) **RECEIVER**

*Gen. 1:26b (ESV) And let them have*

- You don't have to determine or decide what your identity is because God has already chosen to reveal it
- Our part is to receive what's been revealed
- We need the revelation of God
- We need God to tell us who he is, and we need God to tell us who we are
- The Bible provides both
- Be in the Word of God and to have the Word of God in you, because you were created as a revelation receiver, and God wants to speak to you through his Word, and he wants to hear from you through prayer

#### C) **HONORED**

- And let them have dominion
- We are below God, but above the animals
- We become people who think too much of ourselves and we believe we're God-like
- That is to think too little of us

#### D) **BLESSERS**

*Gen. 1:28 (ESV) And God blessed them.*

- They didn't earn their blessing
- The God we serve is the God who begins with blessing
- Your identity is received, it's not achieved
- It frees you up from the performance trap

- It frees you up from the competitive trap
- It frees you up from the bitterness, and the jealousy, and the coveting that marks our world
- It lets you be who God made you to be, and rejoice in who God made others to be
- You are not more valuable than anyone else and you are not less valuable than anyone else
- Your net worth has nothing to do with your self-worth

2nd) A Blessing of **REDEMPTION** and **FORGIVENESS**.

*Eph. 1:7 (ESV) In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,*

*“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.” CS Lewis*

- The act of buying something back or paying a price to return something to your possession.
- This redemption is not something we earned or deserved, but it is a free gift given out of God's abundant grace
- The forgiveness of our sins is a direct result of our redemption
- It is a forgiveness that brings freedom from guilt and shame, and it opens the way for us to live in a close relationship with God
- It is a continuous blessing that impacts our daily lives

*"The essence of sin is man substituting himself for God, while the essence of salvation is God substituting himself for man. Man asserts himself against God and puts himself where only God deserves to be; God sacrifices himself for man and puts himself where only man deserves to be."*

- Why the need for redemption and forgiveness?
- There's evil in this world

*Gen. 3:1 (ESV) “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the other beasts of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say . . . ?’”*

- Adam's is a sin of omission. He doesn't lead his family
- Eve's is a sin of commission. She engages in a conversation she shouldn't, and she believes a lie that she ought not
- Satan is always going to question the clarity, the authority of the Word of God

*Genesis 3:5 (ESV) For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*

- We call it the fall of man and it's where sin entered in and the relationship/intimacy between God and man was broken, hence the need for redemption and forgiveness is needed

3rd) A Blessing of **HOPE** and **INHERITANCE**.

*Eph. 1:11-12 (ESV) In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.*

- This inheritance is not something we earn or deserve, but it is a gift from God, given to us purely out of His grace and love
- This blessing of hope and inheritance is not just about our future in heaven, but it is also about our present on earth
- We have the world coming at us but we have Christ living in us
- Exhausting