

31. If you are outside of the church, you are outside of _____
32. Can you be saved outside of Christ? _____
33. Romans 6:3 says that we have been _____ into Christ.
34. T F The members of Christ's church must do everything Jesus says.
35. T F The member of a denomination must be loyal to the teachings of that denomination.
36. T F The member of Christ's church will do the things his friends and the world tell him to do instead of what Christ says.
37. T F The member of Christ's church will not receive everything he needs to get to heaven.

Use this space for any questions you might have.

Student Name _____

Postal Address _____

THE CHURCH IN EPHESIANS

A Correspondence Course in Nine Lessons by Paul K. Williams

Lesson 2: EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING

Note to Student: Please read Ephesians 1 carefully before studying this lesson. Think about what you have read. Pray to God.

OUTLINE OF EPHESIANS 1

There are three sections in Ephesians 1.

1. Paul greets the brethren at Ephesus, 1-2.
2. Praise to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, 3-14.
 - 2.1 To the Father, 3-6.
 - 2.2 To the Son, 7-12.
 - 2.3 To the Holy Spirit, 13-14.
3. Paul's prayer for the brethren at Ephesus.
 - 3.1 Thanksgiving, 15-16.
 - 3.2 Request, 17-19.
 - 3.3 The power through which the prayer will be granted, 19-23.

The emphasis in this chapter is on Christ. Read the chapter and note the number of times the expression "in Christ", "in Him" and "of Him" are used. The saints are faithful "in Christ Jesus", v.1. We are



blessed with every spiritual blessing “*in Christ*”, v.3. Everything accomplished for our salvation listed in verses 3-14 is done “*in Him*.” Paul asks that God may give the saints at Ephesus a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge “*of Him*”, v.17. Christ has been raised to rulership to be head over all things to the church, v.21-23. This chapter is packed with praise to and thanksgiving for Jesus Christ.

The word “*church*” is not found until verse 22, yet the great work of redemption described in verses 3-14 and the blessings Paul prays for in verse 15-19 are made possible by the fact that Christ was raised from the dead and is not “***head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.***” v.22-23. The redemption of the saints is the redemption of the church. Therefore when we study how God blesses with every spiritual blessing in Christ we are studying about His plan of blessing us in the church of Christ.

QUESTIONS:

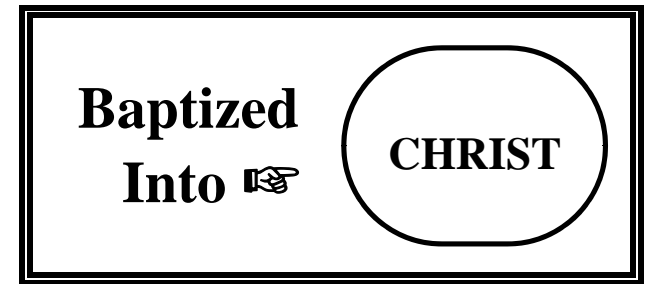
1. T F I read Ephesians 1 before studying this lesson.
2. T F The emphasis in this chapter is on Christ.
3. T F There are four sections in Ephesians 1.
4. T F Paul prayed for the brethren at Ephesus.
5. T F Peter was made head over all things to the church.

Verse Three – The Theme of the Chapter

“*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.*” Who can fail to say “Amen”? Every believer must be struck with awe when he begins to understand what this verse means.

God has blessed us! (That is, God has blessed Paul, the Ephesians saints, and all other saints.) He has blessed us who do not deserve blessing. He has blessed us who have sinned against Him and deserve eternal punishment. We cannot understand why. We can only praise and love Him

Romans 6:3 tells us how one gets into Christ. “*Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?*” Have you been “*baptized into Christ Jesus?*” There is no other way into Him. Contact us at once if you want to be baptized into Christ. We will help you.



The duties of members of the body

Just as my physical head controls every function of my body, so Jesus is “*head over all things to the church.*” This tells us what the duties of the members of the body of Christ are. We must do everything Jesus says. The members of the church will search the scriptures to find exactly what Jesus wants us to do. Then that member will obey those things the same way that my hand obeys my brain. The faithful member of Christ’s body does not argue with Jesus and does not listen to the teachings of men. His whole life is a life of loving obedience to Christ. Paul wrote, “*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me*” (Galatians 2:20).

This is not the picture of denominationalism where the members of many religious bodies are loyal to the conflicting teachings of their denominations. It is the picture of those who will not be moved by friends or the love of the world. It is the picture of those who look always to Jesus, finding in His word everything they need to guide them and sustain them every day of their lives. For from their Head they receive “*the fulness of Him who fills all in all.*”

QUESTIONS

every blessing which Jesus gives to man. Therefore, if I would have every spiritual blessing, I must be in the church, the body of Christ.

QUESTIONS

19. What miracle shows that God will do what He has promised?

20. T F “Seated at God’s right hand” means Jesus is in the position of authority.
21. Why must all the kings of the earth fear Jesus? _____

22. Who are the church? _____
23. Is Jesus the only head of the church? _____
24. In what things is Jesus not head to the church? _____
25. Do denominations have men on earth to be their heads? _____
26. What is the body of Christ? _____
27. How many bodies does Jesus have? _____
28. Are denominations separate religious bodies? _____
29. If we are “in Christ” we are “in _____”
30. Where will I find the fulness of Christ? _____

Where are you?

The student should examine this truth very carefully and ask himself the question, “Where am I? Am I in Christ? Am I in the church, which is the body of Christ?” If you are not, you do not have the spiritual blessings which God has provided for you. You have no forgiveness, no hope of heaven. If you are outside the church, you are outside of Christ. You are without God and without hope in this world!

How to get in.

for it.

Every spiritual blessing

He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. All of the blessings listed in verses 4-14 are ours. Answered prayer, the power to overcome sin and death, the joy of salvation, the hope of heaven – all these and all other spiritual blessings are ours. In 1 Corinthians 3:21-23 Paul bursts into exultation and says, *“For all things are yours: whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come--all are yours. And you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.”* In Romans 8:35-39 he says, *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*



When Paul says we have “every” spiritual blessing he does not leave anything out.

In the Heavenly Places

The expression *“in the heavenly places”* is used five times in the book of Ephesians and nowhere else in the Bible. It is used in 1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; and 6:12. Read these verses before you continue reading this lesson. The only definition of the phrase which will fit



all five verses is, “*in the spiritual realm.*” It is a phrase which emphasizes that the real life of man is not the physical life and struggle but is the life of the spirit in which we serve God or Satan, where our eternal destiny is determined. It is in this realm the Christian receives every spiritual blessing.

God is not promising us every physical blessing. Though He will see that we receive those things which we need, He is not promising the Christian an easy life in this world. On the contrary, the New Testament paints a picture of persecution, deprivation, struggle against sin, and even martyrdom as what the servant of Christ can expect in this life. But the Christian understands that these are not the important things. Paul listed some things of which as a worldly man he could have been proud. Then he wrote, “*But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ.*” (Philippians 3:7-8). The Christian has Christ. In Christ he has every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. All other things are worthless.

In Christ

Every spiritual blessing in heavenly places is “*in Christ.*” This is the message of the letter to the Ephesians. Outside of Christ there are no spiritual blessings! Jesus said, “*Unless you believe that I am He, you shall die in your sins.*” (John 8:24). Those outside of Christ have no salvation, therefore no spiritual blessings.

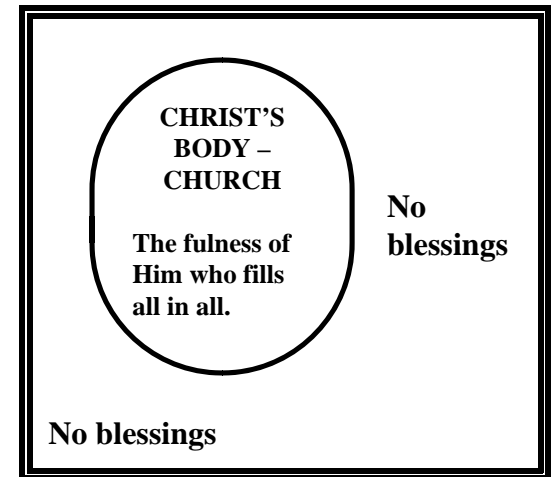
On the other hand “*every spiritual blessing*” is found “*in Christ.*” When

This verse is a death blow to denominationalism because each denomination has its own head. There are not many heads, for the church of Christ – there is *one*, Christ Himself. He does not share that headship with anyone. No person on earth has the right to be the head of Jesus’ church.

The church is His body

“*And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.*” (vv22-23).

The church is Christ’s body. We learn from this that Jesus has only one church. How do we know this? He has only one body. He is the head (one) and the church is His body (one). There is no room for many heads, and there is no room for many bodies. Every excuse for denominationalism is shattered by these verses. The church of Christ cannot be divided up into hundreds of religious bodies, each with its own head. The church is the body of Christ and Jesus is its head. There is therefore only one church.



“The fulness of Him who fills all in all.”

This is saying the same thing verse 3 says, that God “*has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*” The expression “*in Christ*” is the same as the expression “*in His body.*” If I am in the body of Christ I am “*in Christ.*”

The church is “*the fulness of Him who fills all in all*” In the church is

“Seated at God’s right hand in the heavenly places”

Psalm 110:1 prophesied that the Messiah (Christ) would sit at the right hand of God, and Mark 16:19 says, “*So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.*” He is now there, in the position of authority, ruling over all things. He is seated in heaven, in the spiritual realm, exercising His authority as King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 17:14). Let all the kings of the earth fear Him! (Psalm 2).

He is “*far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.*” (V21). Jesus is not only Saviour and Redeemer, He is King and Judge! He is over **all** rule and authority. No one can escape His judgment. He who does not submit to Christ will be broken. “*Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron. Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware*” (Psalm 2:9).

“Head over all things to the church”

Those who submit to the rule of Christ are the church. Those who are described as:

1. saints,
2. faithful in Christ Jesus (v1),
3. who were chosen,
4. predestined to adoption,
5. redeemed through the blood of Jesus,
6. to whom He made known the mystery of His will,
7. who have obtained an inheritance, and
8. who are to be to the praise of His glory (vv3-12)

– these are the church of Christ. To them, and to them only, He has been given as head over all things. “*And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church*” (v22).

The only head

Jesus has been made “*head over all things to the church.*” He is the *only* head of the church, and He is head *over all things* to the church. Those who are in the church must submit to Him in all things, and to no other.

we are in Him we have everything provided! For us to long for something not found in Christ is to long for something which is not a spiritual blessing. We are complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28).



A young lady entering into Christ

Where are we if we are “in Christ”? It is vital to know the Bible answer to this question, for “in Christ” is where every spiritual blessing is found. We will find the answer at the end of this chapter, and when we do you will see that in this verse Paul is talking about the church.

QUESTIONS:

6. With how many spiritual blessings has God blessed Christians? _____
7. How many spiritual blessings are found outside of Christ? _____
8. The expression _____
_____ is used five times in the book of Ephesians.
9. What definition will fit this phrase? _____
10. The real life of man is the life of the _____.
11. Does God promise us every physical blessing? _____
12. If I long for something which is not found in Christ I am longing for something which is not a _____ blessing.

The Spiritual Blessings in Verses 4-14

In the hymn of praise to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit contained in verses 3-14, Paul gives the spiritual blessings which we receive through Jesus Christ. They are:

1. To the Jews (addressed as “us”).
 - 1.1. He chose us in Christ that we should be holy, v4
 - 1.2. He predestined us to adoption as sons, v5.
 - 1.3. Redemption through His blood, v.7
 - 1.4. He made His will known to us, v.9.
 - 1.5. We have obtained an inheritance, v.11.

2. To the Gentiles (addressed as “you”).
 - 2.1. You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit, v.13.
 - 2.2. This is a pledge of our inheritance, v.14.

(The sealing of the Gentiles by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the **first** Gentiles who were converted [Acts 10 & 11] showed that all the blessings given to the Jews are also given to the Gentiles. Our inheritance is the same as theirs.)

The emphasis in this list of blessings is on the fact that God planned our salvation, that He worked it out through Jesus Christ, and that He made it sure to us through the Holy Spirit. Praise God!

QUESTIONS:

13. God _____ our salvation.
14. He worked it out through _____.
15. He made it sure to us through the _____.

Paul’s Prayer for the Saints at Ephesus, vv.15-19

The brethren at Ephesus had two wonderful qualities. “*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,*” (v.15). Paul could only thank God for their faith and love (v.16), and this thanksgiving drove him to ask “*that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the*



Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him” (v.17).

Paul in chapters 2 and 3 is going to write about the “mystery of Christ.” He wants them to know and understand these things – deeply understand them. As he puts it: “*I pray the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power*” (vv.18-19). These are deep and wonderful things, too deep ever to understand perfectly while we live on this earth. The Christian will understand them more and more as he experiences life with Christ, dwells closely with Him, and grows in Him. This is what Paul wanted for the Ephesian brethren.

QUESTIONS

16. Paul gave thanks to God because of their _____ and _____.
17. He asked God to give them a spirit of _____ and _____.
18. Paul prays that they may know the _____ of His calling, the riches of the glory of His _____ in the saints, and the greatness of His _____ toward _____.

The power through which the prayer will be granted (vv19-23)

At the end of verse 19 Paul says, these are “*according to the working of His mighty power.*” All the blessings which Christians expect from God can be hoped for because God has shown His great might “*which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places*” (v20). The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the great miracle which shows that God has the might and the will to fulfill all that He has promised. We do not trust without evidence. We have the evidence of the resurrection – powerful, incontrovertible evidence – upon which to base our hope.