

Identity, Part 2

Ephesians 1:3 - I am Blessed!

Intro. What would you do if I were to tell you that you just inherited 10 Million dollars . Party !

A)After **giving your tithe – RIGHT** - Pay off your debts / buy a new home / Car / Take a vacation / *help out some people in need!*

B) Safe to say that your life would be radically changed .

1)Once you got over how much you would lose in taxes
Your **life would take on a new perspective**

C) **You would see the world differently,**

- You would see problems differently – (Things once ignored – “Now I can do something.”)
- You would see opportunities differently – Never an option / now is
- The way you use your time would be different

D)Now We could go on and on about – how your life would be different.

1) It is safe to say that a lot about your life would **radically change** if you suddenly inherited 10 million dollars

Application for us as believers in Jesus Christ – we are a blessed People!

A)Problem is many of us – have no idea how blessed we really ARE!

B)You have heard the saying: *I can't be out of money, there are still checks in my check book!*

1) Often times the problem is that people fail to keep a record of how much they have in their bank account.

D)They don't know what their balance is !

The same can be true spiritually

A)We need to know what our spiritual balance is. **What has been put into our spiritual bank account.**

B)You will be surprised to Know that there is more there than you could ever dream of!

C)That is really Paul's focus in the first three chapters **of the Book of Ephesians.**

D)Ephesians is broken up into three parts –

- Ch.1-3 Believers Wealth
- Ch. 4-6:9 Believers Walk
- Ch. 6:10 The believers warfare

E)The First 3 Chapters deal w/ Doctrine who we are in Christ / what He has done for us / who we are in Him

1) The Last 3 Chapters deal with **Devotion**

F)Our Response to Him and what He has done { What we GET TO DO / Not what we HAVE TO DO

Now a problem, in my opinion, that many Christians have & even some Churches today have is this:

A) They tend to emphasis the **Devotion** before they **Understand the Doctrine**

B) In fact many Christians are quick to read thru Chapters 1-3 of Ephesians or Skip it all together

1) Because they want to get to studying about how to be **Successful** in their **walks** / Successful in their **marriages** / **Parenting** / ...**professions**

2) **And they want to learn HOW TO STAND STRONG IN WARFARE**

D) The Result is many Christians are **frustrated** in their walks and **worn out** in their service & **losing in** the battle

1) Because they never truly discovered the position of strength that is theirs because they are IN CHRIST

E) They Never grabbed a hold of what has been put in their **SPIRITUAL BANK ACCOUNTS**

So Paul starts with the wealth of the believer Ch.1:3

A) In those three chapters Paul uses the phrases – IN CHRIST OR IN HIM or through HIM – **19 TIMES!**

B) We will look at most of those 19 statements in this series – but in this study I want us to see how Paul starts - Ch.1:3

3 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,

A) Consider the Nature of these Blessings IN CHRIST - NOTE 3 things

#1 The blessings are in the Past tense: *Who has blessed us.*

A) The blessings that are available to us in Christ are **all ready ours!** - Not something trying to earn

B) I mention that because often times people think in coming to Christ that they are buying a ticket to heaven.

1) But life is really going **to stink until we get there.**

C) Trade off – I am turning my back on everything that has ever been fun to me – in order to make sure I am going to heaven.

Nothing could be further from the truth: Eternal life begins now!

A) Quality of life – right now! – Quality of life –

B) Purpose in Life – We were made to live in a relationship with God.

1) Most of us have discovered – **We actually Started living when we became a follower of Jesus.**

C) So the blessings are already available to us!

#2 The Blessings are spiritual in Nature! -every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places

A) These are spiritual blessings that originate in Heaven – but are meant to help us in LIVING HERE ON EARTH!

B) Sometimes because we live in the **realm of the Physical** it is hard for us to remember that there is a Spiritual realm

C) And because the Physical realm is **so real** & can be **so Challenging** it is easy for us to forget about the spiritual realm

See as Christians we live w/ a 3 Dimensional Perspective / – Disney land - Honey I shrunk the kids - 3D Glasses

A) Well the scriptures are our glasses that help bring this life into focus

B) Glasses that Integrate the 3 Dimensions or the 3 Kingdoms to which every believer belongs

C) First there is the **world or Kingdom around us** – this planet / our jobs / our friends / these fleshly bodies / all of which – Present challenges

1) This world that we live in is marked by greed / unfairness / disappointment

This world is controlled by our adversary the Devil – god of this world

A) He has an agenda – program – that is aimed at – DESTRUCTION and DISTRACTION /

B) Distracting people of their need of God/ - DESTROY { **Thief – comes to kill rob and destroy**

C) Then there is the world or the Kingdom which is to Come – **JESUS REIGNS** - The Kingdom of our Lord – marked by peace / Joy / perfect righteousness

D) A kingdom in which there will be no more pain / no more sorrow / no tears / a Kingdom marked by Beauty, Perfection & Ultimate Satisfaction

E) We are presently longing for that Kingdom – longing for that day when we will enter into that perfect & complete rest & be w/ our Lord

1)) Joy that is beyond anything we could ever experience in this life

But then there is this 3rd Kingdom – the Kingdom within

A) The Kingdom w/in our hearts where Jesus is present and wants to Reign – { Our King!

B) Jesus made this statement in Luke 17:21

"The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

C) Where the King is – So is His kingdom – Jesus is welcomed into our hearts –

1) Sets up His throne there – He provides His resources

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in Spirit Theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. THE BEATITUDES

A) **Realize our utter dependency.....** opens the door to receive His resources

B) So there are spiritual blessings and resources available to us as believers –

1) Meant to help us Live for Jesus in this life

C) So the Nature of the Blessings in Christ

1. Past tense – Already available

2. Spiritual in nature

#3 The Scope of these blessings? - Every Spiritual blessing – some bibles render it ALL

A) One commentator put it this way: What a little word but what a mighty word – All – That means the Scope is Huge

B) 2 Peter 1:3 *God **has given** to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,*

C) In other words God has given to us everything we need to **enjoy & experience life to the fullest** –

1) And to live life the way it was meant to be lived

1 Corinthians 2:9 Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him."

A) Now we will see in Coming weeks what some of those Blessings are – as Paul gives us what is a partial list

B) A list that begins w/ our **Calling in the Lord v.4 – and ends w/ all the fullness of God Ch.3:19**

C) Tonight I want to look at something Paul says in 2 Corinthians that – adds weight to the scope of these blessings.

2 Cor 1:20 Paul made this Statement

"For all the promises of God in Him [JESUS] are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us."

All the Promises of God! How many Promises are there?

A) **Common # is that there are over 3,000 promises in the Bible that God has made to man !!!**

B) But an English Pastor by the Name of Dr. Herbert Lockyer – has written a Book entitled all the Promises of God

C) In this book he points out that there are actually at least **7,487 promises made from God to man**

1) About Health & Happiness / Peace & Prosperity / Freedom/ security
Now here is the thing that is interesting when talking about the Promises of God !!

A) Most of the Promises that people claim for themselves are based on an **O.T. formula that is clearly seen in the Book of Duet. 11:22-23**

²²“For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do—to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him—²³then the LORD will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will possess greater and mightier nations than yourselves.

B) So here is the formula – v.22 **If you carefully keep the commandments / Love the Lord w/ all heart / walk in ways & Hold fast to Him**

If you do that – **V.23 THEN** – the Lord says *Then I will drive out the Problems before you & do wondrous things IN you / WITH you* { **CONDITION**

But there in lies the Problem:

A) Oh, I know that **if I love** the Lord with all my heart, **IF I walk** in all of His ways, **& hold fast** totally to Him,

B) **Then** the Lord will indeed do wondrous things for me and through me, in me and to me.

1) The problem is, **Do I always love the Lord** with all of my heart. **Do I walk in all of His ways.**

Do I hold fast only to Him?

C) The answer, sadly, is No.

SO according to Deut 11 , if I'm not doing the 'ifs', I can't expect to receive the 'thens'.

Which shouldn't surprise me – because that was the purpose of the O.T. LAW all along

A) Gal. 3:24,25 – Paul says The Purpose of the Law was to **show us that we are not righteous/ to show us that we can't earn our salvation**

B) To show us that we can't possibly keep the Standard of Righteousness which would qualify us to receive the blessings that we so Desire !!!

C) Our Problem is that we can't fulfill the Obligation / We fail in the IF parts - Therefore we cannot enjoy the THENS

D) SO by this formula - the Blessings of the Promises of God are Not available to me!!!

But look again at what Paul says: So Powerful so wonderful –
²⁰For all the promises of God in Him [JESUS] are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

A) What Paul is declaring is that because Jesus fulfilled all of the Ifs' of the OT perfectly –

B) SO in Him all of the Promises are Yes & Amen

C) Look again at Duet 11:22 to see how this works
Read it slightly different – inserting the name of Jesus

²²“For JESUS carefully kept all these commandments which I command you to do—HE loved the LORD HIS God, JESUS walked in all GOD'S ways, and JESUS held fast to HIS God —

C) Listen close-take heed - here is the Pt.

Jesus has fulfilled all the ifs – in the O.T. **JESUS loved the Father – perfectly**

CC) **Jesus did keep all the commandments/ Jesus did walk in all His ways flawlessly** – Jesus did hold fast to the Father

D) **Therefore the [thens] that follow are given to Him**

E) Now you might be thinking – that is wonderful for Jesus — **good for Him happy proud of Jesus** – but what good is that to me –

1) **I fail miserably - Look at 1 Cor. 1:26-31**

²⁶For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. ²⁷But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the

things which are mighty; ²⁸and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, ²⁹that no flesh should glory in His presence..., as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

Here is what this means to You & Me { God wasn't looking for great people – all had sinned all doomed

A) God wasn't looking for great people – But He is looking for people who will turn to a GREAT GOD !

B) SO when we by faith turn to God & open our hearts up to Jesus –

1) God By His Grace & for His glory places us *weak & foolish things that we are* –IN CHRIST

C) You are placed in Him & everything – He has is yours- it is all available to you / Because Jesus met the IF's we get the Then's

1) All of the Promises of God are Yes & Amen – In Christ

D) What do those two words mean? Well there is a slight variation in their meaning – but the variation is significant to the text

YES – Means they are CERTAIN –They are TRUE

A) The word Amen means they are ACCOMPLISHED – It is a Done deal- Bank on it!

B) So the promises of God in him are “yes.” That is, they are certain.

“And in Him Amen.” That is, they are accomplished – In Christ Jesus

How many Promises are we talking about ? All the Promises Paul says

A) What a RANGE of vision this expression opens up! Peter in 2 Peter 1 called them *Exceedingly great & Precious promises ...knowledge of Him*

B) Promises of **pardon to the seeking sinner**; promises of **justification** to the believing child of God ;

C) Promises of **sanctification** to him who is struggling against sin;

- promises of the supply of spiritual food for those who are spiritually hungry
- promises of **guidance**;
- promises of **preservation**;
- promises of **peace & joy**;
- promises of **hope**;
- promises of the **sustenance of our love**;

- promises **for death**;
- promises **for judgment**;
- promises of **glory**;
- promises that **reach to all eternity**.

E) Your Homework assignment this week - Promises

1) All of those Promises are Certain & accomplished in Christ !!!!

If that sounds too good to be true, think of it this way

A) Whenever I go on a missions trip – There comes a point during the trip – almost every time

B) I start to crave – In-N-Out Burger – **Double-Double** – animal style – fries – and Strawberry shake

1) Crazy – Strong – Dreaming –

C) So suppose – I am in some foreign Country – craving In-N-Out - \$6.00 cover it

Therefore, if I can get to Vista then I will have a burger, fries, and a shake.

A) So I call United Airlines and say ‘*Can you give me directions to Vista Ca.*

B) ‘*What is your mode of transportation?*’ the official asks. ‘*I’m broke,*’ I say. ‘*So I’m going to walk.*’

1) He says something like ‘Do you realize there are mountains to climb, rivers to ford, and a little pond called the Atlantic Ocean to cross?’

C) ‘Yes,’ I say, ‘but *if* I can do it, *then* I can have a burger.’ - ‘Go west,’ he says. ‘And good luck.’

But then, after a moment, he says, ‘I’m interested in your plight. I am an In-N-Out Burger Burger fan too – Double-Double -

A)And it just so happens that a United Jumbo Jet 767 flight 403 is leaving for San Diego in about an hour. *I’ll reserve a seat in first class for you.*’

B)SO I rush to the airport – find my flight - AS I get on the jet and find my seat, - RELAXED

1)I’m not worried about maps or concerned about directions because I’m in the Jumbo Jet

C)and I know the Jumbo Jet will make it.

D)Here is the great part - as we fly, people on the ground won’t even know **I was poor & foolish** enough to think I could walk all the way to **Vista for a hamburger.**

E)No, they won’t even see my foolishness **because** all they will see is a fabulous jet flying through the sky headed for San Diego

So too, when we who were foolish and weak became believers, the Lord said, ‘I have a seat reserved for you. Come on in.

A)And because we are placed in Christ **positionally**, we cruise to our destination **gloriously** / not by walking, climbing, swimming, or hiking,

B) But simply by resting in Him.

Listen you will Know if you are living in the Old Covenant if you hear yourself saying, *‘I had a 45-minute prayer time last Thursday.*

A)*I read 4 chapters in Leviticus last month . I tithed 3 last week. Why aren’t I being blessed?’*

B) That is the mindset of the person who is still trying to do the *if’s in order to achieve the THENS* –

C) It is a monumental day in the life of any believer who finally sees that **in Jesus** it’s no longer ‘if and then’ but **‘Yes and Amen!’**

And the amazing thing is this: Not only is all that we enjoy because of Him, but all that we crave is found in Him.

A)You see, although we think we need Jesus to give us bread, He says, *‘I AM the Bread,’* (John 6:35).

B) We think we need Him to give us direction, but He says, *‘I AM the Way,’* (John 14:6).

Bb)We think we need Him to open up a job or a relationship or a ministry for us, but He says, *‘I AM the Door* (John 10:7).

It’s Me you’re craving. All the promises of God are not something which come FROM Me, but are found IN ME!!!!

C) So there I am on the 767, looking forward to my In-N-Out burger.

D)As I’m sitting quite comfortably in the plane, In First Class - then something amazing happens

The flight attendant comes by with a thick, juicy steak, a steaming baked potato, sautéed vegetables, crisp salad, flaky croissant, and Chocolate Mousse.

B)As I am enjoying this awesome steak with all the trimmings

1)Suddenly an In-N-Out burger is the furthest thing from my mind

C)Because what I’m being given on the plane is so much better.

Here is the thing: - Although I thought the Jumbo Jet was simply a way to get me to In-N-Out

A)In reality, I’m finding more satisfaction than I ever could have imagined **just being on the jet.**

B) So too, we say, ‘**Oh, Lord, I need help.**’ **But as we talk things over with Him,**

- 1) We find that although we initially thought if He answered our prayer, we’d be happy, we realize it was Him we were craving all along.

C) TIME W/ HIM – RELATIONSHIP !

1) And little by little we find ourselves saying, ‘**Whether the JOB opens, the sickness is healed,**

The ministry opportunity emerges

D) It’s all irrelevant compared to what I’m discovering just by spending time with You, Lord.’

1) David Declared **In your Presence – fullness of Joy**
David also – declared – Psalms 27:4

**4 One thing I have desired of the Lord,
That will I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the Lord
All the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the Lord,
And to inquire in His temple.**

That is the sentiment of the man/woman who has found their satisfaction in the Lord!

A) Enjoying that relationship

B) Resting in the reality: He is going to accomplish His will in our lives /

1) He is going to get us to the DESTINATION –

Philippians 1:6

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”

The price is paid, dear brother, precious sister. You’re on the jet.

A) Jesus perfectly fulfilled the ‘ifs’ so you can fully enjoy the ‘thens’.

B) And as you do, you’ll discover that It is all about Him & He is what you were craving all along.

Last thought tonight: -

A) Back to where we started – You inherited 10 million

B) See the world differently, Problems differently
Opportunities differently

C) Same is true of those who us who are in Christ

You have been blessed IN CHRIST – in order to be a blessing!

A) **IN JESUS – SEE OUR WORLD DIFFERENTLY**

B) **Sheep without a Shepherd**

C) **Problems differently – Lord, how do You want to show your strength**

D) **Opportunities differently - FAITH MOMENTS**

E) **See - The more we learn to walk in the reality of those blessings**

–
1) **The more we will be a blessing to others!**

AMEN !!!!