

loved by the Father
 John 17:23
 am being transformed into the likeness of the Lord
 II Corinthians 5:18
 a child of God
 Galatians 3:26
 an ambassador for Christ
 II Corinthians 5:20
 in Christ
 set free from the law of sin and of death
 Romans 8:2
 forgiven
 Ephesians 1:2
 saved by grace through faith
 Ephesians 2:8
 delivered
 II Corinthians 1:10
 alive to God in Christ Jesus
 Romans 6:11
 an heir of God and fellow heir with Christ
 Romans 8:17
 among the called of Jesus Christ
 Romans 1:1
 being renewed day by day
 II Corinthians 3:18
 one in Christ Jesus with all believers
 Galatians 3:28
 freed from all things
 Acts 13:39
 accepted
 Ephesians 1:8
 chosen
 Ephesians 1:4
 bought with a price
 I Corinthians 6:20
 comforted by God
 I Corinthians 1:4
 made alive together with Christ
 Ephesians 2:5
 saved by His life
 Romans 5:20
 loved by Jesus
 John 15:9
 one spirit with Christ
 I Corinthians 6:17
 blessed
 Ephesians 1:3
 His
 enriched in every way
 I Corinthians 1:5
 the salt of the earth
 Matthew 5:13
 no longer a slave to sin
 Romans 6:16
 made righteous through the obedience of Christ
 Romans 5:19
 under grace
 Romans 6:14
 sanctified in the truth
 John 17:17
 temple of God
 I Corinthians 3:16
 the light of the world
 Matthew 5:14
 the Lord's
 Romans 14:8
 a new creation in Christ
 II Corinthians 5:17
 a child of God
 full of goodness and filled with all knowledge
 Romans 15:14

Let's go back and reread verse 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.

Now, let's take up with verse 11.

¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Wednesday night we began to talk about blessings we inherit when we are sealed in Christ. These were listed out in verses 4 through 10. We went over some of those spiritual blessings which we inherit and we has a discussion about the following:

We have REDEMPTION – we have been “bought back” from the slave market of sin. Sin had control of our lives, but in receiving Christ and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit we have a way to overcome the power of sin in our lives.

We have FORGIVENESS – for (completely) + gabh (to give back). In human terms we forgive when we completely release something we may rightfully hold against others. We forgive others when we completely give back our desire to get even or punish them.

When we receive the grace of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, God “gives up” any reason to see us punished for our sins. The debt so to speak that we owed for our own wrongdoing is erased. The debt was paid. Our wrongdoings are forgiven because a great price was paid for each of us. The price paid was Jesus’ death on the cross; with His blood being the payment for our sins and wrongdoing.

The richness of His GRACE is lavished on us. Grace means you are favored even when you don’t deserve it. Think of it as God helping you, loving you, and esteeming you greatly, regarding you highly even when you’ve done nothing to deserve it. I remember when I was a new lawyer, I once was asked to approach the bench by a judge I did not know. He noticed I was from Whitehall (where his wife’s people were from) and he just favored me. He seemed to defend me, help me, encourage me, and look after me for nothing that I had done. That is a picture of grace.

WISDOM – God gifts us wisdom beyond our own abilities. If we listen to His Word, He gifts us the wisdom to know how to use knowledge that we have. We learn truth from God’s word, but the application of that truth is brought about through sound teaching and through the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

PRUDENCE is an interesting word. It means having the ability to think through beforehand the consequences of our thoughts, our words, and our deeds. Prudence can help you stay out of trouble with what you might say or do. Prudence has been described as intelligence, discretion, foresight, practical wisdom, and the ability to see what is suitable or profitable.

He has made MYSTERIES known to us. Paul is telling us that when we are in Christ we as believers have an insight into God’s great plan of salvation for all of humanity. He has made truths known to us in His Word, and we are able to absorb them and understand them by the power of the Holy Spirit. Nothing makes sense in the world if we can’t see things with some of God’s perspective. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the events in the world. In many ways the world has gone crazy. The mysteries of God are unknown to the rest of the world. All the knowledge of the world doesn’t help those in the world to understand the wisdom of God. In a very different way, believers understand death. We understand life. We understand the purpose of living. **The simplest minded person with a Bible in their hand being led by the Holy**

Spirit understands more about the universe than the smartest most educated person on planet earth.

We reap the benefits of adopted children in having this spiritual inheritance.

Another list of the benefits of redemption includes: eternal life ([Revelation 5:9-10](#)), forgiveness of sins ([Ephesians 1:7](#)), righteousness ([Romans 5:17](#)), freedom from the law's curse ([Galatians 3:13](#)), adoption into God's family ([Galatians 4:5](#)), deliverance from sin's bondage ([Titus 2:14](#); [1 Peter 1:14-18](#)), peace with God ([Colossians 1:18-20](#)), and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit ([1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#)). To be redeemed, then, is to be forgiven, holy, justified, free, adopted, and reconciled. See also [Psalm 130:7-8](#); [Luke 2:38](#); and [Acts 20:28](#).

Now moving into verses 11-14 we see mention of an "inheritance". This is a biblical term mentioned over and over again. Often the Bible is speaking of the physical inheritance that is promised and then given to the Jews. He promised Israel things like a "land flowing with milk and honey.... A blessed land." These were a physical inheritance. Our inheritance is EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING that is ours in Christ Jesus. Our is not a physical but a spiritual blessing. We are one of His children that receives our full share of an inheritance.

We really don't grasp totally what He has in store for us. If we could just open our eyes we could see the great marvelous benefits of being a child of God.

v.15 Paul then talks about how he is praying for the Ephesians. Paul was delighted with their spirit. Paul wasn't praising them for their building or their facilities. He points out that it is their "faith in the Lord Jesus" and the "love for all the saints" that motivates Paul to pray for them.

These are two of the key ingredients of a healthy church: our faith in Jesus and our love for one another.

What Paul talks about is whether or not "they have faith" that results in "love for one another". I think we as a church should stop and examine ourselves. How are we doing in our "faith department" at Union Grove? Is our faith decreasing or is our faith increasing. Are we loving one another like we should be loving one another?

It may be that your faith has fallen? Sometimes my faith decreases and it becomes difficult to even imagine that God is concerned in anyway about the things going on in my life. Remember a few weeks ago we talked about how God was an enveloping presence for the Israelites at the side of the Red Sea. I mentioned that it helps us to stop, imagine, and realize God's enveloping presence even in our own lives. Pull out your Bible this week and read this entire book of Ephesians. Ask God to prepare your heart to receive what He wants to say to you and ask Him to help you inwardly digest it. That means it becomes a part of your thought life. Instead of focusing on what you don't have, start focusing on the spiritual blessings that you do have. You

have received these spiritual blessings as your inheritance. I love to meditate on are PRUDENCE, WISDOM, and THE MARVELOUS MYSTERIES OF GOD. It helps me to stay calm and to make sense of what's going on in the world around me.

V. 16 Paul then says that his prayers are continuous. It is wonderful to have some insight into the prayer life of the founder of the church. It convicts me in realizing how lacking my prayer life is. I need to be praying for each of you repeatedly. I need to be cheering you on before the Father. Realizing this, I took the time this morning to pray for every one on in our church roster as well as those who have started coming since we printed it. I am praying for your faith to be increased. I am praying for you to know God's love better and to be an expression of His love to the world around you. And like Paul, I'm praying for you that you'll know Him better.

V. 17 May God give you spirit of wisdom and revelation. We need this to know: 1) His daily will for our lives. 2) To know in some way how much He loves us. This best way to have wisdom and revelation is to open up His Word and feast on it. It is a banquet waiting to be eaten.

V. 18-19 I've prayed for each of you this week that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,...that you'll know the incomparable power that you have in belonging to Him. That means I'm praying that you'll know what you've inherited, you'll use what you've inherited, and you'll appreciate what you've inherited. I'm praying that your eyes will be opened.

OPEN MY EYES THAT I MAY SEE by Clara H Scott

Open my eyes that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.

[Chorus:]

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit Divine!

²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

This power that we're talking about is the same power God showed when He raised Jesus from the dead, and then Paul tells us that He is seated at the right hand in the heavenly realm. I'm

not sure how Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father when the Father is spirit, but I think it speaks of a position of privilege. It is Jesus' place and privilege to be far above any that might rule with all authority, power, and dominion.

You know, it is comforting to me in times like these to realize that Jesus is in authority in the heavens. He is taking note of every silliness and every bit of nonsense that the powers of this world are up to. This last week I watched an interview in which Senator Rand Paul was speaking with the new Secretary of Education. Senator Paul asked the simple question, "Do you think it's okay for boys to compete against girls in women's sports?" The Secretary of Education understood completely what Paul was asking, but he answered with total silliness. It was interesting to me in watching because there they danced. One was asking the simplest question, and the other answered in such a decent and polite and totally nonsensical way. I just kind of thought in my mind what my old friend Weezy would say..... just "oh well". When we do that, we don't get side tracked. Our day doesn't get ruined. Our emotions don't go into a tail spin. I point this out to say when we know the Lord, we are privy to the simple truth. We don't need to be upset or derailed by such senseless conversations. Paul's chapter one seems to end just giving glory to Jesus for Who He is.

Above all powers, above all names there is Jesus. Regardless of what the wise of the world have to say, the Bible tells us that in the end "every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord." (Philippians 2:10-11). Let's not worry about the nonsense of others. Let's just remind ourselves of the marvelous blessings of God that are ours for the taking. They are our inheritance.

In coming to Christ you and I are the adopted children of God.
As His adopted children we have a wonderful spiritual inheritance.
Praise Him today because you and I are joint heirs with Jesus of that inheritance.

Ask yourself this morning several key questions. Do I really have my eyes open to glimpse the truths that God has for me? Do I really understand that the truth of His mysteries can set me free? Do as the song said. Do you take time in silence to listen? Are you ready and willing to see His will for your day, your week, your life? Then pray, "God, open my eyes and illumine me Spirit Divine!"

Let us pray.

SERMON IS UNEDITED THIS WEEK AS AMANDA NEESE HAS TAKEN A WEEK OFF

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