

012124

“Blessings”

Ephesians 1:3-14

John Hanneman



Background

The Bible is full of blessings – blessings expressed towards God and God’s blessings expressed towards his people. In the Old Testament God’s blessings revolved around divine presence, prosperity, health, fruitfulness, and long life. However, when we come to the New Testament, blessings shift from tangible things to being “in Christ.” How do you think of blessing? What are your expectations, hopes, and dreams for blessing? This Sunday we will explore the idea of blessing from Paul’s opening sentence in his letter to the Ephesians.

Sermon Text: Eph 1:3-14 (ESV)

3 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 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 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, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 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, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- a. What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?
- b. What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- c. What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

2. Sunday questions

- a. What thoughts and/or ideas do you usually have when you hear the word “blessing?”
- b. When and where do you feel the most blessed these days?
- c. Do you feel God is against you if you do not feel blessed?
- d. God is for us. God affirms us and chooses us to be sons and daughters “from love, of love, for love.” John encouraged us to say, “I am from love, of love, for love.” Do you deeply believe this truth? Why or why not?
- e. Name specific ways you can “bless” others this week.