

Our possession in Christ

Eph 1:3-14

March 11, 2012

The text: Eph 1:3-14 is the longest sentence in the Greek New Testament.

- 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,
- 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love
- 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
- 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on 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 which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight
- 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him
- 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him
- 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,
- 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory.
- 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,
- 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. (NASV95)

Eph 1:3-4 from "The Anchor Bible."

Blessed is God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has blessed us in Christ, with the full spiritual blessing of the heavens. As [we confess] to live by love, [standing] holy and blameless before him. Before the foundation of the world he has chosen us in Christ.

Notes from Eph 1:3

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, (NASV95)

1. Blessed - be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Blessed (GK = eulogetos)

Vine's says it means "blessed or praised"; it is applied only to God.

ABC (The Anchor Bible Commentary by Mark Barth)

In Greek literature it means; to speak well of; to praise; to sing the praises of; to confess.

(I will be using "ABC", in reference to The Anchor Bible Commentary by Mark Barth)

It is used 8X in NT= Mk 14:61; Lk 1:68; Rom 1:25; Ro 9:5; 2 Co 1:3; 11:31; Eph 1:3; 1 Pe 1:3

2. Blessed - who has blessed us

Blessed (GK = eulogeo) it means:

Vine's says it means

"to invoke blessings upon a person," (see Lk 6:28; Ro 12:14)

"to cause to prosper, to make happy, to bestow blessings on,"

This word is used in the Greek version of the OT (Septuagint) in Gen 18:18, (referring to 12:2-3) Gen 18:18 since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed?

Gen 12:1-3 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

3. Spiritual - with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

Q. How has God blessed us?

A. With every spiritual blessing.

Vine's = Spiritual = (GK = pneumatikos) "always connotes the ideas of invisibility and of power.

ABC = Spiritual = three distinguished uses of "spiritual"

1) It can be used as an attribute of a person, thing or status, belonging to the heavenly world.

2) It can be used to describe the gifts of God.

3) It can be used of things or events that are the result (or evidence) of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

It is used 26 X in NT (Ro 1:11; 7:14; 15:27; 1 Co 2:13, 15, 3:1; 9:11; 10:3, 4, 4; 12:1; 14:1, 37; 15:44, 44, 46, 46; Gal 6:1; Eph 1:3; 5:19; 6:12; Col 1:9; 3:16; 1 Pe 2:5, 5)

- The spiritual realm is a reality now; it has real things in it.

Notice what the NT says is spiritual:

spiritual maturity 1 Cor 10:3	if you think you are spiritual 1 Co 15:44-46
the Law is spiritual Ro 7:14	spiritual wisdom and knowledge Col 1:9
spiritual gifts Ro 1:11	spiritual thoughts and words 1 Co 2:13
spiritual things Ro 15:27	he who is spiritual 1 Co 2:15; 1 Co 14:37
spiritual songs Eph 5:19	spiritual body (in the resurrection) Gal 6:1
spiritual house and sacrifices 1 Pe 2:5	spiritual food, drink and rock 1 Cor 10:3-4 (Israel in the wilderness)

- The spiritual realm is also a demonic realm (Eph 6:12)

4. In heavenly places

Where has God blessed us? In heavenly places.

- These places are in Christ!

- Heavenly = (GK = epouranios) is used 20 X in NT (Mt 18:35; Jn 3:12; 1 Co 15:40, 48, 49, 49; Eph 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12; Phi 2:10; 2 Ti 4:18; Heb 3:1; Heb 6:4; 8:5; 9:23; 11:16; 12:22)

Vine's = "what pertains to, or is in, heaven (epi, in the sense of "pertaining to," not here, "above") in or above heaven, heavenly.

Thayer's =

1. existing in heaven: Mt 18:35

a. the things that take place in heaven,

i. e. the purposes of God to grant salvation to men through the death of Christ: Jn 3:12

b. the heavenly regions,

i. e. heaven itself, the abode of God and angels: Eph 1:3, 20

c. the heavenly temple or sanctuary: Heb 8:5; 9:23

2. of heavenly origin and nature: 1 Co 15:48

- In heavenly places is a phrase used five times in this letter, (Eph 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).

- Heaven is:

Our home (Phi 3:20)

Our hope (Col 1:5; Tit 2:13)

Our inheritance (1 Pe 1:4)

Where our hope is (Col 1:5)

Where the Spirit comes (Heb 6:4; Jn 6:32)

Where Christ is seated (Col 1:20; Eph 1:20)

Where our citizenship is (Phi 3:20)

Where our High Priest is (Heb 3:1)

Where our treasures are to be stored (Mt 6:20-21)

Where our minds are to be set (Col 3:1-2)

Mosaic tabernacle is a shadow of the things in heaven (Heb 8:5)

Was cleansed by the blood of Jesus (Heb 9:23)

The OT saints desired a heavenly kingdom (Heb 11:6)

There are heavenly bodies (1 Cor 15:40)

We have come to Mount Zion the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22)

We have tasted of the heavenly gift (Heb 6:4)

We are partakers of a heavenly calling (Heb 3:1)
We have a heavenly Father (Mat 18:35)
Jesus is seated at the Father's right hand in heavenly places (Eph 1:20)
We are seated with Jesus in heavenly places (Eph 2:6)
We shall bear the image of the heavenly (1 Cor 15:49)

Eph 1:4 Notes:

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. (NASV95)

1. just as He (Father) chose us

Chose = (GK = ek / lego) Vine's = "to pick out, select," "to choose for oneself,"

Another Greek expert says it means "to pick or single out; to choose certain ones who will receive special favor or privilege." He continues by declaring "It speaks of a choice that is settled; meaning that God will not waver in His selection nor will He change His mind. He is not fickle."

It is used 21 X in NT (Mk 13:20; Lk 6:13; 10:42; 14:7; Jn 6:70; 13:18; 15:16, 15:16, 15:19; Ac 1:2, 24; 6:5; 13:17; 15:7, 22, 25; 1 Co 1:27, 28; Eph 1:4; Jas 2:5)

Here are a few examples:

Jn 15:16 "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, ..."

Jn 15:19 "I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

1 Co 1:27-29 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, that no man should boast before God.

2. He chose us in Him (Jesus)

How are we chosen?

In Him!

This settles the issue about God's choice; believers (those in Christ) are the (only) chosen people of God.

The only place to receive any and all of God's promises is in Christ!

2 Co 1:20

For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. (NAS)

For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (KJV)

For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, (NKJV)

Gal 3:13-14 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"-- in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles,

Gal 3:22 But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

Gal 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

3. (we were chosen) before the foundation of the world,

This term "the foundation of the world," is used 10 X in the NT as follows:

The works of God were finished before the foundation of the world (Heb 4:3)

He (Jesus) was foreknown before the foundation of the world (1 Pe 1:20)

Jesus was loved by the Father before the foundation of the world (Jn 17:24)

Jesus spoke of things hidden before the foundation of the world (Mt 13:35)

If Jesus was a Levitical High Priest, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world (Heb 9:26)

Jesus is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8; 17:8)

The Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4)

The kingdom (of God) was prepared for believers before the foundation of the world (Mt 25:34)

4. (the purpose of being chosen) that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

To be holy = (GK = hagios);

Vine's definition = it signifies "separated" (among the Greeks, dedicated to the gods), in Scripture it's used in a moral and spiritual way, "separated from sin and therefore consecrated to God"

Thayer's definition = when used of people:

set apart for God, to be, as it were, exclusively His;

in a moral sense, pure, sinless, upright, holy: 1 Pe 1:16

It is used in NT 232 X; Here are a few examples:

1 Pe 2:9 you are a holy nation.

Heb 3:1 you are holy, brethren

Ro 11:16 you are holy because (Jesus) the first piece of dough and the root is holy

1 Co 3:17 you are the holy temple of God, and that is what you are.

Col 3:12 you are those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved

1 Pe 1:15-16 "but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

To be blameless = (GK = amomos);

Vine's definition = "without blemish"

Thayer's definition = without blemish, free from faultiness, as a victim without spot or blemish:

It is used in NT 20 X in these versus:

Eph 1:4; 5:27; Phi 2:15; Col 1:22; 1 Th 3:13; Heb 9:14; 1 Pe 1:19; Jude 24; Rev 14:5; 18:13

Here are a few examples:

Phi 2:15 prove yourself blameless

Col 1:22 Jesus died in order that we would be presented before Him holy and blameless

Rev 14:5 no lie was found in their mouth; they are blameless

Jude 24 He is to make you blameless

5. In love (vs. 5 He predestined us)

Why did He predestine us? Because He loves us