**January 15, 2017 “The Blessings of the Church” Ephesians 1: 3-14**

**Ephesians 1: 3-6a**

One of the main reasons why I have chosen to go through the book of Ephesians this years is because so many Christians do not know or understand who they are in Christ and because of that we often times beat ourselves up over the inadequacies of our humanity in living this Christian life. For example, how many of us haven’t at one time or another wished we were better wives, husbands, children, parents, grandparents or mentors? This has resulted in an attitude oftentimes which reflects kind of a fatalistic mentality.

“Oh, if I can just hang in there until the end…it will be worth all this sadness and sorrow I experience as a Christian.” “If I can just make it to the rapture, then I will be OK.”

So, we live in this sort of a twilight zone; working as hard as we can to maintain what we have attained as Christians and trying as hard as we can not to lose our relationship with Christ.

The book of Ephesians addressed that attitude in the first three chapters by laying out some of the most sublime truths revealed and taught the Word of God.

I would go so far as to say, if we will only take the time to fully allow all that is written to the Church in verses 3-14 in chapter one, to be incorporated into our lives, this church and every other church who earnestly desires to walk in the fullness of the Spirit of God, would be bursting at the seams with the joy of Christ.

It will require that we take the time necessary to mine out all the truth contained in this book. So, do not think we are going to whisk our way through this book and the truths contained in it. Rather we are going to “stop and smell the roses” all the way through this great book.

1. The body of Christ
   1. Last week I gave you three words to look out for in Ephesians
      1. Body
      2. Mystery
      3. And the phrase “in Him”
   2. Body
      1. Ephesians 1: 22-23
         1. Which is His body
            1. # 1…the church is not a building nor a denomination
            2. It is a living breathing organism and not an organization
         2. Just as a body has many parts
            1. So does the church
            2. All function together for the good of the body
            3. But all parts are directed into their various functions by the head
            4. Which in the Churches case is Christ
         3. Note:
            1. Ephesians 2: 15-16
            2. Ephesians 3: 6
            3. Ephesians 4: 15-16
            4. Ephesians 5: 28-30
2. Ephesians 1: 3-6a
   1. This passage lays out in the clearest terms our identity in Christ
      1. One of the great problems in America today
         1. Everyone is looking for an identity
            1. Preachers today

Wear plaid shirts, blue jeans and have a 10 day old beard…..got to be the hipster

* + - * 1. Football players today

Some will look like walking billboards

Tattoos on every inch of their arms

* + - * 1. So-called Christian book stores

How to books….line the shelves

Many of them are nothing more that pop psychology wrapped in a Christian label

Be an overcomer

Dealing with guilt

Dealing with death

Understanding your self-worth

How to be filled with the Spirit

How to exercise your spiritual gifts

* 1. Christian, our self-worth is found in Christ
     1. Note Vs 3
        1. Blessed be God
           1. “Euolgeetos” from which we get “eulogy”
           2. All that He does is good

Rapists, murderers, child molesters

Liars, cheats, thieves

* + - 1. Who has blessed “us”
         1. Who is the “us?”

We are a blessed people

The people of God walk in His blessings

* + 1. Note… “with every spiritual blessing”
       1. James 1: 5…what is wisdom?
          1. It is the sense to realize what you already have and to not ask for it over and over again
       2. I’m so lonely…can you send someone?
          1. “I will never leave you nor forsake you” … “lo I am with you always even until the end of the age”
       3. I am so sad…can’t you do something?
          1. John 15: 11… “these things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you and that your joy be made full”
       4. I am so worried… can’t you give me some relief?
          1. John 14: 27… “Peace I leave with you: My peace I give unto you… not as the world gives do I give unto you… Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful”
       5. II Peter 1: 2-3… everything pertaining to life and godliness

It is not a question of not being blessed enough, rather it is understanding of all that God has done for us… the people of God.

1. In the heavenly places
   1. You mean all these things are in heaven waiting for us?
      1. Not necessarily
      2. Philippians 3: 20
         1. We are now today
         2. Citizens of heaven
            1. Tyler and Becky are in Guatemala
            2. But they are United States citizens
            3. With the full rights of United States citizens even while living in a foreign land
         3. Benghazi… was an attack on United States citizens on American soil in a foreign land
            1. Therefore, the attack was on the United States as well
         4. This helps us to understand
            1. Ephesians 6: 10-12

In heavenly places

* 1. Heavenly places
     1. Can mean heaven itself
     2. Also, mean the spirit world or supernatural world
  2. Colossians 3: 1-3