

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2025**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
EPHESIANS**

Message One

The Spiritual Blessings to the Church

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:3-14

I. God is the God of blessing—Gen. 1:22, 28; Psa. 115:13:

- A. The Bible calls God the creating God (Gen. 1:1; Psa. 100:3; Isa. 45:18), the redeeming God (Job 19:25; Psa. 19:14; 78:35), the judging God (Gen. 18:25; Psa. 7:11; 9:7), and the God of blessing (Gen. 1:22, 28; Psa. 115:13).
- B. Blessing is the overflow of God through someone's maturity in life—Gen. 47:7, 10.
- C. The first case of blessing in the Bible is Melchizedek's blessing of Abraham—Gen. 14:18-20.
- D. Numbers 6:22-27 speaks of being blessed by God:
 - 1. In the Father—"Jehovah bless you and keep you"—v. 24.
 - 2. In the Son—"Jehovah make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you"—v. 25.
 - 3. In the Spirit—"Jehovah lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace"—v. 26.
 - 4. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all"; this blessing in 2 Corinthians 13:14 is actually the same as that in Numbers 6:23-26.
- E. Through His shepherding, the Lord brings us into the enjoyment of His blessing and causes us to become a source of blessing under the showers of blessing—Ezek. 34:26-27a, 29; Zech. 10:1.
- F. We bless God because God has blessed us—Eph. 1:3.
- G. Hebrews 7:7 says, "But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater":
 - 1. In this verse we see the principle of blessing: the greater blesses the lesser.
 - 2. To be greater or lesser is a matter of the measure of Christ.
- H. We need to treasure God's blessing—Deut. 28:2-8; Psa. 84:4-5.

II. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ"—Eph. 1:3:

- A. Ephesians 1:3-14 reveals God's threefold blessing to the church:
 - 1. The Father chose us with the intention of imparting, dispensing, His holy nature into us to make us holy (v. 4), and He predestinated us in order to impart His life into us to make us His sons in life and nature (v. 5).
 - 2. God's blessing to the church is also in His redemption in the Son (v. 7) and in making us His inheritance by imparting His element into our being (v. 11).
 - 3. God has also blessed the church by sealing us with the Spirit as the consummation of the Triune God (v. 13).
- B. In verses 3 through 14 are the Father's selection and predestination, speaking forth God's eternal purpose (vv. 3-6); the Son's redemption, speaking forth the accomplishment

of God's eternal purpose (vv. 7-12); and the Spirit's sealing and pledging, speaking forth the application of God's accomplished purpose (vv. 13-14).

- C. God "has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ"—v. 3b:
1. All the blessings with which God has blessed us, being spiritual, are related to the Holy Spirit—4:30:
 - a. The Spirit of God is not only the channel but also the reality of God's blessings.
 - b. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit are all related to the blessings bestowed on us.
 2. Literally, *blessing* means "good speech, utterance, well-speaking, fair speech"; Ephesians 1:4-14 is an account of such speakings, such blessings.
 3. All these blessings are spiritual, in the heavenlies, and in Christ—v. 3b.
 4. These spiritual blessings are in the heavenlies:
 - a. *Heavenlies* here indicates not only the heavenly place but also the heavenly nature, state, characteristic, and atmosphere of the spiritual blessings with which God has blessed us.
 - b. The believers in Christ are enjoying on earth these heavenly blessings, which are spiritual as well as heavenly.
 - c. The blessings bestowed on us are of God the Father, in God the Son, through God the Spirit, and in the heavenlies.
 5. These spiritual blessings are in Christ:
 - a. Everything God has given us is in Christ—v. 3.
 - b. Christ is the position in which God blesses the church—2:6.
 - c. Christ is the virtue, the instrument, and the sphere in which God has blessed us.
 - d. In Christ God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies.
 6. The main thing that issues from this threefold blessing is the sonship—1:5.

III. "Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will"—v. 5:

- A. The first item of God's blessing is being chosen to be holy—v. 4.
- B. Being predestinated unto sonship is the second item of God's blessing—v. 5:
1. In eternity past God predestinated us unto sonship, marking out a destiny for His chosen ones before the foundation of the world.
 2. The goal of God's predestination is sonship.
 3. We were predestinated to be sons of God even before we were created.
 4. As God's creatures, we need to be regenerated by Him so that we may participate in His life to be His sons.
 5. God chose and predestinated us according to His foreknowledge—1 Pet. 1:2.
 6. God has predestinated us unto sonship through Jesus Christ—Eph. 1:5:
 - a. *Through Jesus Christ* means through the Son of God, the Redeemer.
 - b. Through Him we were redeemed to be the sons of God, having the life and position of God's sons.
 7. God predestinated us unto sonship according to the good pleasure of His will, which is His purpose.