

## A Kingdom Prayer of Wondrous Grace and Thanksgiving

Paul's entire letter to the Ephesians was written within the framework of continuous, intense prayer, characterized by thanksgiving. He intently wanted them to know the hope to which they were called, the blessings received in Christ and to know and experience the mighty power of God.

*The Promise of Pardoning Grace* is a component of most of our worship services. It is God's promise of undeserved blessings we receive as children of God. In the first chapter of Ephesians is, Paul names many of the spiritual blessings of grace all believers receive in Christ, and he prays for the believers at Ephesus; for wisdom and revelation through the knowledge of God, for the understanding of the hope to which they have been called, and that they understand and experience the power of God in their lives.

## Ephesians 1:3-23

### Spiritual Blessings in Christ

<sup>3</sup> 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, <sup>4</sup> even as he *chose us in him* before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he *predestined us for adoption* as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> *to the praise of his glorious grace*, with which *he has blessed us in the Beloved*. <sup>7</sup> In him *we have redemption through his blood*, the *forgiveness of our trespasses*, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup> which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> *making known to us the mystery of his will*, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

<sup>11</sup> 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, <sup>12</sup> so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> 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*, <sup>14</sup> who is the *guarantee of our inheritance* until we acquire possession of it,<sup>[e]</sup> to the praise of his glory.

In this short passage, Paul encourages the believers in Ephesus, by naming the blessings of union with Christ. That they were *chosen, adopted, graciously favored, redeemed by Christ's blood, forgiven, God's will revealed to them, made an inheritance in Christ, sealed to Christ, and given the Holy Spirit*.

Quite a promise of pardoning grace!

## Thanksgiving and Prayer

<sup>15</sup> For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, <sup>16</sup> I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, <sup>18</sup> having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might <sup>20</sup> that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Pray these things for yourself, your family, your small group, the entire church, and for believers everywhere:

My gracious, powerful, loving God. Make me believe the extravagant promises you make to me and all people you have chosen, called and saved. While I was your enemy, with no regard for you, you had compassion on me, you caused me to believe, and you saved my soul.

Give me understanding and appreciation for the blessings I receive in Jesus. Give me a desire for you and your word, and subdue my rebellious heart. Teach me about you, and how I can have a personal, loving relationship with you. Give me a deep understanding of the salvation to which you called me, and a thankful heart for the glorious riches that are mine in Christ.

Help me to believe in your almighty power, and teach me how to rely on it as I do your will. I know that I am weak, but you are strong, and you will provide the power I need to do anything that you require of me. I belong to you, and nothing can change that. Make me willing to be used for your glory, as you wish. I pray these things in the name of Jesus, whose righteousness was credited to me. Amen.