



**March 8, 2026**

**This is My Story, This is My Song**

**The Doxology**

Ephesians 1:3 (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,

Thomas Ken was called “England’s first hymnist”. He was a chaplain at a boys school and wanted a way to encourage the devotional habits of the boys in the school. So he wrote three hymns.

- At the time, English hymns weren’t a thing.
- The three hymns were to be sung (in your room!) at three times of the day.

From the morning hymn:

*Awake my soul and with the sun, thy daily stage of duty run.  
Shake off dull sloth and joyful rise, to pay Thy morning sacrifice.*

His evening hymn:

*All praise to Thee my God this night, for all the blessings of the light!  
Keep me oh keep me King of kings, beneath Thine own almighty wings.*

Each of the hymns, concluded with the same 13th stanza:

*Praise God to whom all blessings flow, Praise him all creatures here below.  
Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost.*

- Thomas Ken's goal with these first ever hymns, was to keep his students aware of the true blessings of life and where they really come from. They only come from God himself.
- It's hard to imagine that Ephesians 1:3 wasn't in Thomas Ken's mind when he wrote about our God being the source of every real blessing in life.
- Paul will spell out for us what those blessings are. Let's just do three.

### The image of adoption.

**Ephesians 1:4-6** 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.

- God made a way through Jesus that everyone could be adopted into the family of God.
- It doesn't come by proving yourself, it comes by Jesus Christ offering himself.
- Child abandonment was a thing in ancient Rome.
- In Roman culture, when a baby was born it was set at the Father's feet. And the Father either picked it up, thereby claiming it. Or he turned and walked away, rejecting it.
- If he walked away, the baby was very rarely killed. Instead, the child would be left in an isolated place, alone and exposed to the elements.
- Babies were also taken to the marketplace and left. Outside on of the city gates of Ephesus there was a garbage dump were babies would be left.
- If a child was lucky, someone would come along and take it, and raise it.
- And Paul writes to people who have this kind of abandonment engrained in their way of life, *You've been adopted.*
- "If you know Jesus, you are no longer defined by who threw you out, but by who took you in."
- If you have responded to the voice of Jesus, then you need to remember that He picked you out, he picked you up, and he brought you home. He adopted you.

### The image of redemption.

- Redemption is a word from the business world. To redeem something just means to "buy it back".

- Paul writes: *7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace...*
- Paul points out that we have been redeemed. Bought back. How? By the blood of Jesus.
- Ephesus had one of the largest slave trading markets in the Roman world. A quarter of the entire population of Ephesus would have been slaves.
- That means there were people in the church who were slaves. They knew what it was to be bought and sold.
- If we've been redeemed as Paul writes, it implies we needed redeeming/bought back in the first place. And that means that we were all slaves. We're all slaves to something.
- God bought us back by the blood of Jesus. We were lost to God because of our sin. But God showed up and bought us back. And this is the best news ever. Why?
- We've been bought by the only Master who will never enslave us. God is the only master who will pay for your sins.
- It wasn't money that bought us back, it was Jesus, hung on a cross, to pay the adoption fees to bring us back to God.
- **You are no longer defined by what you owe, but by what has already been paid.**
- Jesus bought you. You're his. Remember who you are.

### The image of sealing.

Ephesians 1:13-14 **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.

- Paul is reminding the Ephesian Christians of their conversions story: *When you went under the water to accept Jesus, that the Holy Spirit came in and marked you with a seal.*
- That seal of the Holy Spirit is no less a mark of ownership.
- Roman soldiers were marked with four letters tattooed on their arm: SPQR. The letters marked a person as a Roman soldier for the Emperor. It was a mark of service.
- Soldiers were tattooed. Captives and slaves were branded. Slaves had their ears pierced with an awl made of bone and they would wear a certain earring to show who owned them.
- Paul is writing to people who are literally sealed and marked and tattooed to show who owns them, and he says, "Do you realize, that when you made Jesus Lord, that the Holy Spirit did the same thing to your life? He sealed you too.
- But his seal isn't one of bondage. His seal is a promise.
- It's God's voice saying, "You're mine. I've adopted you, and you are mine!"
- The Holy Spirit in you and for you is God's promise that he is with you.
- **You are no longer defined by an owner wanting something from you, but by an owner wanting something for you.**

You belong, with one caveat. It is this: All this blessing is ours "in Christ."

vs 3: Every spiritual blessing is ours "in Christ."

vs 4: He chose us “in Him.”

vs 5: He destined us to be adopted “through Jesus Christ.”

vs 6: He freely lavished grace on us “in the One he loves.”

vs 7: He redeemed us “in Him.”

vs 9: He revealed the mystery of the will He purposed “in Christ” (vs. 9).

vs 12: We hope “in Christ.”

vs 13: We were included “in Christ.”

vs 13: We were marked “in Him” with a seal.

Whatever else a Christian is, of this there is no doubt: it is someone who is “in Christ”!

In Christ, you have all blessings that flow from the throne of God.

- Who is it that gives the blessing of adopting me into his family? It’s the Father.
- Who is it that gives the blessing of paying the sin debt I owe? It’s the Son.
- Who is it that gives the blessing of sealing me with a promise that I belong to God? It’s the Holy Spirit.
- What is the last line in the great doxology, the great hymn of blessing?

*“Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost”*