**New Hope Fellowship P. Joshua Brunette Ephesians part I 9/21/2022**

**Opening:** Ephesians is a wonderful work of Apostolic encouragement, truth, revelation, and knowledge for practical living. The bible is not meant to be casually read but is intended to be read with an open heart, open mind, and a calm spirit ready to put into action the truth that is gleaned from its pages. Like a mirror reflects a person God’s word will illuminate who we are considering who Jesus Christ is. The letter to the Ephesians focuses predominantly on revealing what the Church is as the Body of Christ in the earth. Therefore, it is crucial for Christians in a church that is forming and growing to understand who and what we are to our region.

**Key Scripture Ephesians 1:1-8 1Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, a the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.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 realms. 4For He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His presence. In love 5He predestined us for adoption as His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the Beloved One. 7In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace 8that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.**

1. **We are blessed of God forever!**
2. **Vs 1-21Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, a the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**

**1.** Paul Greets the Church, the apostles’ greetings, convey authenticity that it is indeed Paul writing, the end of the greeting connects God the Father and Jesus Christ together as co-authority in the triune God, this is an important doctrine in scripture and one of the purposes of the book of Ephesians.

1. **Vs 1:3** **God the Father has (past tense) blessed us in Christ. God made Jesus to be the source of everything He desires to give to us. Christ is the source of our blessing; He is the gift of God that gives to us every day. This will not end, but it will continue throughout all of eternity.**
2. How often do we fall short to receive from Jesus daily the blessings He has already purchased for us.
3. **Spiritual vs Earthly blessings, what are spiritual blessings?**
4. Consecration/Holiness: In Heaven we are instantly consecrated before God, made pure and holy through the blood. On earth our consecration in our daily living and maturation may take time. Our holiness comes from and through Christ’s blood. We should live holy to the best of our ability abstaining from evil in all forms.
5. Revelation/Knowledge/Discernment: Revelation is the unsealed mysteries of heaven have been revealed to us. Knowledge is the accumulation of truth, facts concerning God, and His will for our lives. Discernment is the ability to see and divide between truth and error, to understand the ways of God.
6. Atonement for all sins: past, present, future
7. Righteousness, right standing with God through justification. This means we please God
8. The fruit of the Spirit: The attributes of a life well lived in and through love.
9. The Character of Heaven: We have the mind of Christ and can act upon His will; Christ can now be formed in every believer. This is a process.
10. Access to God without limitation: The door has been opened wide and it will not shut. You can be overwhelmingly satisfied by God in His presence.
11. **Vs 1:4 4For He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in His presence. . . .**
12. The Church has been predestined in Jesus from the foundation of the world.
13. This verse does not teach that God has overridden the free will of man to choose some and not others. God uses “us” and not “I” or “me” referring to the church collective, or those who make up the church.
14. We were called to be Holy and Blameless. Note blameless means that we are without fault. How amazing is the grace of God that all fault is removed from the Church of Christ.
15. **Vs 1:5. In love 5He predestined us for adoption as His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will,**
16. Paul wants the believer to understand that adoption grants us sonship as co-heirs with Christ.
17. It was His love that opened the door, it could be nothing else that opened the door. How great is the love of the Father to adopt us while we were yet enemies. We were sons of disobedience and God’s mercy didn’t leave us in the mess of corruption.
18. **“According to the good pleasure of His will”** people ask why? That is a great question! It is because His will brings Him pleasure. Mankind delights in things that do not benefit others. God’s pleasure comes by helping, blessing, and doing good to others. God delights in doing good to everyone, even His enemies. Our days should be brighter as we meditate on this truth.
19. If God is the author of such a wonderful blessing, who can disagree with Him or stand against His declaration of holiness and blamelessness. Satan wants you to own what Jesus has set your free from.
20. **Vs 1:6** **6to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the Beloved One.**
21. Have you praised God for His grace recently, do you find it hard to praise Him? You must meditate on what His grace has done for you.
22. The free gift is radical, life altering, preposterous, overwhelming because it is totally and undeniably undeserved and unattainable in our effort. \*\* It’s funny that Microsoft word tried to edit the term “free gift” because all gifts are supposed to be free but in experience, we know that not every gift is actually free. Some use gifts to manipulate us and to exact some hidden desire from us.
23. Why? God’s gift has made us utterly helpless! We are held captive by His unrelenting goodness. God’s gift in Christ is continuous, never ending and without Jesus’ humility we would have no hope.
24. We could not pay for our sins; our punishment was eternal hell. So, then He pays for our judgement and gives us overwhelming eternal blessings forever by paying the debts we accumulated. Are you AMAZED?
25. This radical grace was to exalt Jesus since it has come through His selfless sacrifice and is intended by God the Father to draw all willing men and women to Him to form the citizens of a new Kingdom.
26. **Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?**
27. **Do you struggle to receive a gift?** Do you despise being on the receiving end of a gift? For all eternity you will be the recipient of an unending gift in Jesus, so you better get over your ego and pride.
28. When men & women reject such a wonderful savior it is the most severe slap in the face to God almighty. He paid for everything and yet some would still reject Him. The cost was so great, and therefore hell is so terrible.
29. **Vs 1:7 7In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace**
30. Redemption in Greek is “apolutrosis” meaning to be ransomed. We have been ransomed by the blood. Our debt, our cost, our high value was paid once and for all time, we were kidnapped by the devil and Jesus delivered us. Think of the movie (Blood Diamond) the Father pursues His son who was kidnapped by evil.
31. Remember it by His grace that we have received forgiveness. It is because His grace is so rich. Grace is unmerited favor in the Greek word “charis”. God’s bend toward us is to extend grace for our short comings.
32. **Vs 1:8 8that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.**
33. Lavished is a wonderful word to convey the magnitude of this gift in Jesus. Lavish synonyms: rich, grand, splendid, costly, opulent, elaborate luxurious
34. God used great wisdom and understanding in the plan of redemption for humanity. He knew what it would take to deliver humanity from our sinful condition.
35. Consider that God chose us before the foundation of the world. This means God set a plan in motion for the redemption of humanity before He took the first act of creation. To do this God has to know all things in advance.
36. “Understanding” Greek “phronesis” mental action using intellectual and moral insight. God understood the fall of man and the cost of our sins before He ever created us.
37. God carefully thought out a plan of action, considering how the plan of redemption should be put together so that humanity would have an opportunity to serve and know Him after the fall in the Garden of Eden.

**Conclusion:** We are left with no other response but to worship and praise God. The natural desire of a heart that has received this grace is to give it away to others and to return one’s life back to the one who gave it.