

# Thankful To Be In Christ

*by Bryan Gibson*

I read through *Ephesians* recently, with one purpose in mind—to gain a better understanding of the blessings I have in Christ. Here are just some of the reasons I’m thankful to be in Christ.

I am blessed “with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ” (1:3). According to 1:3-14, I’ve been chosen, adopted, accepted, redeemed, forgiven, and sealed. What was previously a mystery has been revealed to me—the plan for MY salvation, a plan that was conceived even before time began. And to top it all off, I’m in line for the most wonderful inheritance one could possibly imagine. Truly, the riches of his grace have been “lavished” upon me (1:8, NAS), and I can’t think of anything I did to deserve it. That’s a far cry from my previous condition, when I was apart from Christ and had no hope (2:12).

I have access through Christ to the exceeding greatness of God’s power (2:17-18; 3:12-13; 1:19), power which He demonstrated when He raised Christ from the dead (1:17-20), and again when He raised me from the dead (2:4-6)—when I was “dead in trespasses and sins” (2:1). I obeyed the gospel, but He’s the one who made me alive; He’s the one who raised me up to sit with others “in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (2:5-6). And that great power is still available to me, for God “is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us” (3:20). This great power works in me when I pray to the Almighty God, when I apply the message of the cross to my life (4:32; 5:2; 5:22-33), and when I “put on the whole armor of God” (6:10-20). “Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (6:10). God’s exceeding great power is readily available, so if I lose the battle against Satan, I’ve only got myself to blame.

Christ rules over all things, and He does so for MY benefit. Isn’t that the point of the following passage? “And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church” (1:22). Not just head of the church (Colossians 1:18), but “head over **all things to the church.**” Everything is at His command to take care of His people, including me, and He does that unflinchingly. He cleanses me, nourishes and cherishes me, because after all, I am a member of His body (5:25-30).

I’ve been given the opportunity (and responsibility) to show others the grace and wisdom and power of God. The blessings God has lavished upon me—they’re not just for my personal benefit; the whole design was to bring praise to His name (1:6, 12, 14). He wants me to be a walking monument to His love and grace, His exceeding great power, and His marvelous wisdom (2:7; 3:8-10; 3:20-21). What an honor, but what an awesome responsibility, too. And that’s where chapters 4-6 come in, because if I can live in the way these chapters tell me to live—the way His wisdom directs, folks will sure be impressed—not with me, but with HIM.