

## THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

### EPHESIANS 1:1-3, SALUTATION AND PRAISE

#### A. A salutation (1-2)

1. Identification and authority of the senders of the epistle (1a), *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God*,
  - a. Paul used the same introduction as he did in Colossians 1:1 and 2 Corinthians 1:1, *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...*
  - b. Paul identified himself as an *apostle of Christ Jesus*.
    - 1) Qualifications of an apostle
      - a) One selected by Jesus who was with Him from the beginning of His earthly ministry, Acts 1:22, *beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.*
      - b) Possessed special miraculous powers given to authenticate the apostles, 2 Corinthians 12:12, *The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.*
    - 2) Paul's qualifications
      - a) He was selected *by the will of God* to minister with the authority of an apostle to Gentiles in contrast to the false teachers.
        - 1] Acts 9:15, *But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel.*
        - 2] 1 Timothy 2:7, *For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*
      - b) He saw the risen Christ, 1 Corinthians 9:1, *Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord?*
      - c) He possessed the miraculous powers of an apostle, Romans 15:19, *by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;*
2. Blessings on the recipients of the epistle (1b-2), *To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
  - a. Paul addressed those at the church in Ephesus as *saints*.
    - 1) *saints* comes from the Greek word which means *dedicated, consecrated*.
    - 2) This references their position as those who placed faith in Christ alone and not their practical holiness.
    - 3) 1 Corinthians 1:2, *To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:*
  - b. *faithful in Christ Jesus*
    - 1) Some say Paul was specifying those who had remained true to the original message.
    - 2) I believe this referenced the believers' practice as an encouragement to continue to be faithful to the Gospel.
  - c. Paul gave them a two-part blessing.
    - 1) First, there is *grace*.
      - a) It is God's unmerited favor and enablement.
      - b) It is most evidently seen in the Gospel, Ephesians 2:8, *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,*
    - 2) Second, there is *peace from God and the Lord Jesus Christ*.
      - a) This is the inner confidence God gives to those who have received His grace through Christ.
      - b) Romans 5:1, *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

3. Praise for spiritual blessings in 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 places,*
  - a. Note: in the Greek Text, verses 1:3-14, are only one sentence.
    - 1) I chose to put verse three with the salutation because it states, as a preface, that all the blessings Paul will mention come from God Who is to be blessed.
    - 2) Thomas Constable, *The Holy Spirit carried Paul along in his thinking as he contemplated God's provision so that he moved quickly from one blessing to the next. It is as though he was ecstatically opening a treasure chest, lifting its jewels with his hands, letting them cascade through his fingers, and marvelling briefly at them as they caught his eye.*
  - b. God is to be blessed not only for Who He is but for all His blessings poured out on His children.
    - 1) *blessed* comes from the Greek word to praise.
      - a) One who is *blessed* is *worthy of praise*.
      - b) Note 2 Corinthians 1:3, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort,*
    - 2) Paul spoke in this section of *spiritual blessings*.
      - a) These spiritual blessings are spoken of in the past tense. They have already been received.
        - 1] Thomas Constable, *"Spiritual" blessings are benefits that relate to our spiritual life in contrast to our physical life. Since God has already given us these things, we do not need to ask for them but should appropriate them by faith and give thanks for them.*
        - 2] Consider 1 Peter 1:3, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*
      - b) Warren Wiersbe, *When you were born again into God's family, you were born rich.*
    - 3) These *special blessings* operate in the heavenly places.
      - a) The Christian who is spiritual operates in the spiritual realm.
      - b) We are physically on earthy but spiritually with Christ in the heavens.
        - 1] Ephesians 2:6, *and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,*
        - 2] Ephesians 6:12, *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*
    - 4) Comments on verse 1:3.
      - a) Jphn Stott, *Paul's description of his readers is thus comprehensive. They are 'saints' because they belong to God; they are 'believers' because they have trusted to Christ; and they have two homes, for they reside equally 'in Christ' and 'in Ephesus'. Indeed all Christian people are saints and believers, and live both in Christ and in the secular world, or 'in the heavenlies' and on earth. Many of our spiritual troubles arise from our failure to remember that we are citizens of two kingdoms. We tend either to pursue Christ and withdraw from the world, or to become preoccupied with the world and forget that we are also in Christ.*
      - b) H. D. M. Spence, *...all that the Father can bestow; all that the Son can provide; all that the Spirit can apply. The resources of all the three Persons thus conspire to bless the Church.*
      - c) Verse 3 is the gateway that opens up to spiritual blessings described by Paul in verses 1:4-14.