



SERMON: *To God be the Glory—Great Things He hath Done!*

TEXT: Ephesians 3:20-21

Introduction: Ephesians is about riches and blessings from God in Christ Jesus (1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16 & 21). Eph. 1:3 gives a panoramic view of God’s blessings to us: **source of blessings** - “*the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,*” **scope of blessings** - “*every [all] spiritual blessings,*” and **sphere of blessings** - “*in the heavenly places in Christ.*”

We give God glory because of these blessings! Rev. 4:11; Rom. 11:33-36; Matt. 5:16.

Consider the blessings we have received from God in Christ Jesus:

- God Settled My Largest Debt (2:1, 13, 16): SACRIFICE.** Three crosses dawned the crest of Calvary many years ago: ❶ Cross of Rebellion, ❷ Cross of Repentance and ❸ Cross of Redemption. When I survey the wondrous Cross of redemption, I see Heaven’s promise (John 14:2ff), the Devil’s defeat (Heb. 2:14-15), the sinner’s plea (Rom. 5:6-8) and the Christian’s hope (Titus 2:11-14). Paul said, “Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). **UNTO HIM BE GLORY!**
- God Satisfied My Deepest Need (1:7; 4:32): FORGIVENESS.** Sin is our #1 problem. Sin causes guilt (1 Jn. 3:4; Jam. 2:10), associates us with Satan (Jn. 8:44), makes us sick (Matt. 7:17) and separates us from God (Isa. 59:1-2; Rom. 3:23; 6:23). Since sin is our #1 problem, forgiveness is our #1 need. Forgiveness removes condemnation (Rom. 8:1), makes us alive in Christ (Eph. 2:1, 5-6), reunites us with God (2 Cor. 5:17-21) and makes us friends with God (Rom. 5:10). The lyrics of the gospel song are true: “Burdens are lifted at Calvary!” **UNTO HIM BE GLORY!**
- God Provided My Greatest Desire (3:3-4, 10, 16-19): GUIDANCE.** The mystery of Christ has been revealed, inspired and confirmed (3:3-4). Therefore, Christians are to walk together in unity (4:1-16), walk in truth and holiness (4:17-32), walk in love, light and wisdom (5:1-21), display God’s wisdom in the home and church (5:22-6:9) and stand strong in the armor that God has given us (6:10-24). All Christians have the Son of God as their example to follow! **UNTO HIM BE GLORY!**
- God Prepared my Highest Longing (1:10-11, 18; 5:26-27): HEAVEN.** I want to spend eternity in heaven because—I’ve been invited (Matt. 11:28-30), our citizenship is there (Phil. 3:20-21) and it has been prepared for the redeemed (John 14:1-6). **SONG:** This world is not my home, I’m just a passing through, my treasures are laid up, somewhere beyond the blue.” C.S. Lewis said in *Mere Christianity*, “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world” (p.119). **UNTO HIM BE GLORY!**

Conclusion: The only fitting response to our great God is to give Him glory, honor and praise - especially in the church (i.e., the company of His redeemed), throughout all ages, world without end - Amen!

- Mark N. Posey

SERMON: *What the World will not Teach our Children!* **TEXT:** Ephesians 6:4; Proverbs 22:6.
Intro: A top-selling book promoted the idea - “It takes a village to raise a child.” If the “village” is the world there are too many things I can’t trust them to teach children. Here are a few...

- A lie is a lie is a lie.** We live in a time when dishonest businessmen & politicians fold, spindle and mutilate the truth so artfully that it’s hard to remember what’s real and what’s not. God’s commands are clear: don’t lie (Rev. 21:8; 22:15). He doesn’t make exception for white lies, coloring the truth or the end justifies the means. He simple says don’t do it!
- Think of others first.** This is contrary to the “look-out-for-#1” society. God calls us to “esteem others better than himself” (Phil. 2:3). We live in a culture that applauds selfishness and self-centeredness, but Jesus says, “*Whosoever will be great among you let him be your servant*” (Mt. 20:26).
- Authority figures deserve respect.** This idea is under attack. Watch cartoons, kid’s shows and the latest children’s movies, and you’ll see parents depicted as bungling buffons whose children rule the roost and set the rules. School administrators and teachers, law enforcement and all facets of government are portrayed as inept, corrupt or clueless. However, if our children grow up with the idea that all authority is to be questioned, bucked, mocked and disobeyed, how will they ever submit to the ultimate Authority—their Lord & Creator? This means referees, airport security and the policeman that just stopped you for driving too fast. It means respect for Elders, Deacons & Preachers.
- Be careful what you allow into your brain.** Paul said, “bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5). Our kids need to know that the Devil will do all he can to put horrendous thoughts into their heads, but it’s their job to pop them right back out. It’s not a sin to be tempted (Heb. 4:15); it’s sin to invite the wrong to put up its feet and stay awhile (Jam. 1:13-15). Make Philippians 4:8 your standard.
- God invented sex for marriage.** Do your children know God’s perfect blueprint for marriage—one biological woman and man devoted to each other with sex as a beautiful and pure expression of their love and devotion? Don’t just assume they know it, tell them God’s plan (Prov. 5:15-18; Heb. 13:4). Tell them that sex before marriage is “fornication” and sex outside of marriage is “adultery,” and both are WRONG!

Conclusion: The world is saying a lot to our kids and has lot of avenues to get their message across. Don’t assume that your children will just GET-IT by taking them to church three times each week, gospel meetings & church camp. They will benefit from these, but there’s nothing better than your instruction, both in word & deed. Let’s speak and live like Christ as we raise our kids!

Adapted—Mark N. Posey

SERMON: *Dynamic Christian Living!*

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Intro: These two verses summarize 1 Corinthians.

- Watchfulness** (*alert, awake, attentive*). 1 Pet. 5:8.
- Steadfastness** (*stand fast on the gospel*). Phil 4:1.
- Manliness** (*courage & bravery*). Joshua 1:6,7,9.
- Strength** (*spiritual strength & maturity*). Eph. 6:10.
- Love** (*affection, good will, agape*). 1 Pet. 1:22;4:8.

Con: Each Christian should desire to become like Christ. He lived the qualities in 1 Cor.16:13-14. **(MNP)**

Pulpit Preview is sent for the purpose of sharing sermon ideas & useful illustrations. It is sent via email on a bi-weekly bases. Editor: Mark N. Posey D.D., preaching minister for the Austinville Church of Christ (2833 Danville Rd. SW Decatur, AL 35603) since 1994. Please send all comments to—pulpitpreview@austinvillecoc.org or address above. **Thanks, MNP.**

SERMON: Do Not's I Love to DO!

TEXT: Hebrews 12:5

1. DO NOT Despise Discipline - vs.5.

2. DO NOT Become Discouraged - vs.5.

3. DO NOT Believe God's does not love you - vs.6-9.

4. DO NOT Think you're being rejected - vs.6b.

Conclusion: I DO NOT want to miss anything God has for me! **(MNP)**

SERMON: "Christ, the Great Physician"

TEXT: Matt. 9:12; Luke 9:17

I. The Physician Knows His Patients (9:12--they that are sick).

II. The Physician Identifies the Problem: SIN (Lk. 19:10; Jn. 8:24).

III. The Physician Provides the Cure (Matt. 20:28; 26:28-29; 1 Pet. 2:24; Rev.1:5); Jn. 3:3-ff).

IV. The Physician Prescribes the Remedy (Jn. 8:24; Lk. 13:3; Matt. 10:32; Mk.16:16).

V. The Patient Must Apply the Remedy (Rom.6:3-4, 16-17; 2 Thess.1:7-9). **(RA)**

SERMON: Blessed are the pure in Heart!

TEXT: James 1:26-27

1. Blessed are the pure in Language - vs 26.

2. Blessed are the pure in Love - vs 27a: God and others.

3. Blessed are the pure in Living - vs 27b. **(MNP)**

SERMON: Check Your Attitude!

TEXT: Paul said, "let this mind [attitude] be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).

Intro: The context explains the meaning of this verse. Notice vs.2-4. Four things are mentioned that pertain to the "mind of Christ!"

1.**Unity:** "being likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

2.**Selflessness:** "let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit."

3.**Humility:** "but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."

4.**Service:** "Let each of you look out not only for his own interest, but also for the interests of others."

Con: Someone once said "Attitude is everything!" Thus, if we strive to have the mind of Christ (i.e., The Attitude of Christ), that IS everything! **(MNP)**

SERMON: "Divine Descriptions of the One Body"

TEXT: Ephesians 4:4; 1:22,23

Intro: To identify the One Body of Ephesians 4:4 and its characteristics, let us consider the word

CHURCH as an acrostic:

1. **C**—alled Out (2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Pet. 2:9).

2. **H**—ouse of God (1 Tim. 3:15).

3. **U**—ndenominational.

4. **R**—edeemed (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Acts 2:41,47; Col. 1:13).

5. **C**—hrist's (Matt. 16:18; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:22,23).

6. **H**—eaven Bound (1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 2:10). **(RA)**

SERMON: The Object of our Attention!

TEXT: James 1:27, "pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this..."

1. God is the object of our Worship - John 4:24.

2. God is the object of our prayers - Matthew 6:9.

3. God is the object of our thoughts - Phil. 2:5.

4. God is the object of our deeds - 1 Cor. 10:31.

5. God is the object of our religion - Jam. 1:27. **(MNP)**

SERMON: The Christian Soldier

TEXT: 2 Timothy 2:3,4

1. Has a CAPTAIN to Follow (Heb. 2:10).

2. Has a CONFESSION to Hold To (Matt. 10:32,33; 1 Tim. 6:13).

3. Has a COMMISSION to Fulfill (Matt. 28:18-20).

4. Has a CHARGE to Keep (2 Tim.2:3,4; 1 Tim. 6:11-12; 1:18).

5. Has COMPLETE Armament (Eph. 6:10-18). **(RA)**

SERMON: What does True Baptism require?

TEXT: Mark 16:16

1. Water—Acts 8:36.

2. Much water—John 3:23.

3. Going into water—Acts 8:38.

4. Burial in water—Rom. 6:1-4.

5. Coming out of water—Acts 8:39.

SERMON: Why must I be Baptized? **TEXT:** Acts 22:16

1. To imitate the Lord—Matt. 3:13-17.

2. Because it is commanded—Acts 10:48.

3. To get into Christ—Gal. 3:27.

4. To be forgiven—Acts 2:38.

5. To be born again—John 3:3,5.

6. To be saved—Mark 16:16.

SERMON: Four F's of Christianity!

INTRODUCTION: I love being a Christian! It is the most wonderful thing in the world.

But what makes Christianity SO attractive and enjoyable? Answer: The four F's all Christians enjoy. Get excited about the following principles:

1. **FORGIVENESS.** Cf. Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10 and John 1:29. Why do we need forgiveness? Answer: sin separates us from God (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; Isa. 59:1-2). Have you even been separated from your family for a lengthy period of time? Sadness, loneliness and despair set in. Imagine being separated from God because of sin. It's frightening to consider. However, Jesus died to reconcile man to God (2 Cor. 5:18-21) and grant forgiveness of sins to those that repent and are baptized (Acts 2:38). **Thank God for forgiveness.**
2. **FATHER.** Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven" (Matt. 6:9). Our heavenly father cares, loves and blesses us (Eph. 1:3). I have a friend whose father died. One day he said, "I wish I could just talk to him." Christians can talk to their heavenly father through Jesus every minute of every day. **Thank God for being our Father.**
3. **FAMILY.** Christians are blessed with a spiritual family. Love, care and concern are rich blessings from those of "like precious faith." The Family of God is the greatest support system on earth. We have a common bond in Jesus Christ. One day we will enjoy the great family reunion in heaven. Are you ready for the day to come?
4. **FUTURE.** Heaven is described as reward and inheritance. It's "incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved...for you" (1 Pet. 1:4). Heaven can be your future if you will live faithfully to the Lord from here to eternity. Death brings finality because it seals our destiny. Is your future happy or sad? **-Mark N. Posey**

► **FIVE TYPICAL STAGES OF GRIEF.** Paul said, "...that ye sorrow [grieve] not, even as others which have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13). We've all experienced grief. We've all felt those intense rolling waves of emotion. But, do we all experience the same feelings each time we lose a loved one? Consider the following from John 11.

1. **DENIAL:** "This can't be happening to me!"
 - John 11:12, Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."
2. **ANGER:** "Why me? It's not fair!"
 - John 11:21, Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."
3. **BARGAINING:** "God, if you answer my request, I promise to..."
 - John 11:22, "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."
4. **DEPRESSION:** "What's the point in trying?"
 - John 11:20, 33, "Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled."
5. **ACCEPTANCE:** "It's going to be OK anyway."
 - John 11:24, Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."