



Sermon Notes — Pastor Thomas Keys, SRMBC

Ephesians: The Christian's Owners Manual I — Do You Know What You Have? (For Members Only) Scriptures: Ephesians 1:3-14

INTRODUCTION

Do you remember the “Member’s Only” Jackets—made popular in the 1980’s? One of the slogans for the Member’s Only Jacket was “When you put it on, something happens...” The thought was that if you had Members Only jacket – women would love you; the men would be jealous of you and life would go your way. In other words, there is favor, power and benefits that are not for everyone – but for “Members Only

And beloved, while God’s is still pouring out His blessings on everyone – even in the midst of a global pandemic, there are certain blessings, spiritual blessings, that are in heavenly places, which are only for Members of the Family of God – who have accepted His gracious salvation by faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

SERMON POINTS

We are beginning our sermon series on the Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. The Book of Ephesians contains so many of the basics of the Christian life - I call it “The Christian’s Owners’ Manual. This was a good church located in the Roman Province of Ephesus located in Asia Minor (which is now modern-day Turkey).

Although these Ephesian believers were surrounded by worldliness, hardship and ungodliness, Paul wanted to remind them about the eternal blessings that they have, and we have in Christ to encourage them – even the midst of difficult times. The city was central place of Idol worship – specifically the Greek Goddess Diana. It was a wealthy city, prosperous city – but one that was far from God. Paul wrote to remind the Church in Ephesus of all they have in Christ.

What I want to do in the message as we begin this series, is to look at the 1st chapter of this letter so that we can Appreciate, Appropriate and Anticipate the Blessings in Christ so the we can know what we have that God has set aside “For Members Only” Anticipation of His Coming (vv. 28 – 30)

I. Appreciate the Glorious Blessing of Membership (Eph. 1:3 – 4)

After his greeting, Paul so excited about these new believers – to remind them of the blessings that God has for us – or every believer in His family. the I need to let you know that God our Father does not short His children – scriptures say here that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. In other words, in Christ – we have top-shelf blessings the trouble of this world, people or even the devil can get to.

- ◆ Spiritual wisdom – Unspeakable Joy
- ◆ Purpose, Prayer and Provision
- ◆ Eternal Life – and Heavenly Gifts
- ◆ Ambassadorship – being a Child and Representative of the Most - High God
- ◆ The Knowledge God, His Son and Salvation
- ◆ The Knowledge of being chosen not by our works/ overlooking our faults – even before the foundation of the World!

Beloved I want to encourage you that as you appreciate whose you are, who you are and what you have as a child of God, you’ll be stronger, wiser and better no that you never would’ve or could’ve made it with You...

II. Appropriate the Gracious Blessings Of Membership (Eph. 1:5 – 9)

know you heard the story about the man who bought a ticket for cruise. It was so expensive that he didn’t have enough money for food, so he brought along a bunch of PBJ sandwiches to eat. Once He got onboard, he noticed that all the other passengers were going to town – eating beans, greens, potatoes, tomatoes, turkey, chicken, chicken, chicken...(You Name It!!!) Then someone told him the all meals were all included with the price of the ticket...

Beloved, so many of us have trusted in Jesus, but do not realize or recognize all the things that we have in Christ – that has been purchased by his precious blood:

- ◆ **Adoption** – we are in the real 1st Family with access to everything we need.

- ♦ **Acceptance** – It doesn't matter who rejects you, or if you have haters or shortcomings – We are always accepted.
- ♦ **Redemption** – O, we are redeemed by His blood – when we were wrong Jesus made us right with God. If any body asks you who I am ... Let the redeemed of the Lord say ...
- ♦ **Forgiveness** – You one of the things I love about typing a letter on a computer – when you make a mistake, you can press the “Undo” button. And in Christ – His blood forgives every sin, every mistake and sets us free... O, I know I'm not perfect – O but I am forgiven

CREDITCARD companies send mass mailings to people with amazing news of great grace. These gracious companies write customers to tell them they are prequalified or preapproved.

By accepting Christ, we have accepted His terms and are prequalified for the spiritual benefits and resources available to us. O beloved, I love how preachers say that God doesn't call the qualified – but he qualifies the called. If you saved, called in Christ – then you qualify for every Spiritual blessing. Receive it, walk in it and you'll be blessed in the city, the field and everywhere you go...

III. Anticipate the Greater Blessings Of Membership (Eph. 1:10 – 14)

You see no matter what going on in your life right now – even if it seems like the wrong people are in charge, even if it looks like devil is running roughshod over everyone and everything – there is a time coming where God is going to put everything under the Lordship of Jesus Christ – He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords and as Paul wrote in Philippians that God had highly exalted Him and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

O, and the great news is that those of us who have already trusted in Him, who worship and serve Him will not only reign with Him – but we have an inheritance. You know that old temptation song Papa was a rollin' stone wherever he laid his hat was his home. And when he died all he left us was alone ... Well can you imagine the inheritance of God who died and is now alive and glorified will have for His kids – a mansion, glory, eternal life, peace and joy. O, if we would keep our minds set on the things above – where Jesus is seated in heavenly places – we would be in peace – even in a global pandemic.

THE STORY is told of Mr. Yates, who owned a farm in Texas. The Great Depression came, and he was having trouble keeping up with the payments on his farm. The bank began to press Mr. Yates and gave him thirty days to pay his back payments or face foreclosure. With three weeks left to go, a man came to Mr. Yates's door. He worked for an oil company.

He asked Mr. Yates to give the company a lease to drill on his farm for oil. Yates knew he was going to lose the farm anyway, so he decided that it couldn't hurt. Well, that oil company did drill and hit a gusher—eighty-two thousand barrels of oil a day. Mr. Yates immediately became a multi, multi, many-times-over millionaire. Now, there's a question on the floor. Exactly when did Mr. Yates become a millionaire?

Mr. Yates was a millionaire the moment he purchased the farm, but he lived in poverty until he claimed what was underneath the ground.

When you came to faith in Jesus Christ as your personal sin bearer, the moment you came to faith, you were blessed “in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing” (Ephesians 1:3). Like Mr. Yates, many of us are living in hard times – times like we have never seen before:

But in Christ we are:

- Adopted, Redeemed, Accepted, Forgiven
- We are Kings and Priests in the Earth
- We have Power and Authority
- We have eternal heavenly blessing that are yours and mine
- We have an inheritance bought with the precious blood of Christ

We have all we with Jesus as our “*Blessed Assurance...*”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ♦ How has your life been changed since you've become a Christian?
- ♦ Many people today struggle with low self-esteem. How does this passage help us to see ourselves as God sees us?
- ♦ Review the list of spiritual blessings we have in Christ (vv. 3– 14). Which one do you need most in your life right now?