

Berakah Prayer

The Book Of Ephesians Summer Sermon Series

1 Chronicles 16:23-36 Ephesians 1:1-14

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Today we're starting a summer series on the Book of Ephesians. St. Paul had spent over 2 years in the town of Ephesus; Ephesus was a major city in the Roman Empire and while St. Paul was there it was also the center of the Holy Christian Church. The Apostle was at the zenith of his career, he had rented a place so he could *preach the Gospel* and *teach the Word* every day.

In Ephesus, the Holy Spirit was working through Paul to make many disciples, new churches were being planted in Asia Minor, demons were being driven out of people, and miracles were confirming that the Gospel was true! The Book of Acts teaches us that God was doing extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even his handkerchiefs and his aprons



were healing the sick and driving out demons (see Acts 19:11-12)! The Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power as St. Paul worked in Ephesus. It was to this congregation in Ephesus that Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians. Paul's letter would've been read in a public worship service in the place of the sermon; and it would've been copied and carried to all the churches in the outlying areas as well. **Ephesians is part of the holy, inspired, and inerrant Word of God.**

Paul begins the book of Ephesians in an unique way. After his customary greeting, the Apostle prays a Trinitarian *Berakah* prayer for the Ephesians.

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Who has blessed us with every blessing of the Spirit
in the heavenly realms in Christ.
Ephesians 1:3**

Berakah is an Old Testament Hebrew word that means “[blessing](#)”. It is a formal way to pray to the Lord; a *Berakah* prayer acknowledges God as the source of all blessings. A *Berakah* prayer focuses on God and what He’s done for us.

In this *Berakah* prayer, we learn that the Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has given us *every spiritual blessing* through faith in Christ.

- † It means that you are not lacking anything when it comes to your spiritual life.
- † It means that God is good, kind and generous to you and He has done everything needed in order to secure your eternal salvation; He preserves you in faith throughout your life.
- † It means that when you were baptized, God showered you with all of His love, mercy and grace.

The thing that Paul is stressing with this *Berakah* prayer is that all the blessings of God come *through Christ*¹. ***In fact, everything from God comes in Christ and only in Christ!***

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Panning, Armin J. *Galatians, Ephesians*

- † Jesus is the Mediator between God and us;
- † Jesus is the One who interacts on God's behalf with us.
- † He is the High Priest Who brings all of God's blessings to us.

Jesus is the **Redeemer**, Who’s life, death and resurrection has reconciled you to God the Father. His death on the cross paid for your sins, and His resurrection from the dead on the third day gives you new and eternal life. His death and resurrection brings you into God's Family so that you now know God as your Father, and He treats you like His Family! He blesses you with every spiritual blessing because you believe in His Son Jesus Christ.

¹ **In Christ** is a theme that dominates Eph 1:3-14, as it is repeated **12x** in numerous variations: *in him, in whom, in the beloved, in Christ*. See 1:3,4,5,6,7²,9,10,11,12,13². “In Christ” is a reference to Holy Baptism, where you were Baptized “into” the Name of Christ . . . and the Father and the Holy Spirit. Ephesians, Winger, adapted

Paul's *Berakah* prayer is a grand and formal way a praising God for all this! **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every blessing of the Spirit in the heavenly realms in Christ!**

So what are some of these *blessings of the Spirit* that have been given to you *in Christ*?

- † **Grace!** Grace is a word that means gift”; and it refers to all of God’s good gifts that He freely gives to you. God is overwhelmingly generous to you; in Christ, God pours His good gifts into your life. Grace reminds us that God's gifts are not earned by our works or effort, but they are freely given to us in Christ!
- † **Truth!** Christ and His Word is truth; Jesus Himself is described as “*Faithful and True*”. The truth of Christ protects you from the lies and deception of the Evil One. That is why we study and learn the Word of God and build our lives on it. We are ever striving to be more and more Biblically literate and doctrinally sound!
- † **Righteousness!** In Christ, you are *declared righteous* in God's eyes. Righteousness is God the Judge declaring you “**Not Guilty!**” in His courtroom. You are absolved of your sins! You are righteous and justified by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ! Righteousness brings assurance to your soul. Righteousness leads you to do “right” things as you live your life – striving for more and more good works and holiness!
- † **Peace!** You have peace with God through the work of Christ on your behalf. Your sins have been dealt with, they no longer separate you from God the Father. Peace with God calms your guilty conscience! Peace with God leads you to have peace with other people! You are a peacemaker in Christ!
- † **Faith!** Faith is a spiritual blessing as the Holy Spirit teaches you the great truths and doctrines of the Christian faith. As you learn to Christian “Faith” you are given “faith” to know and believe that it is true! In faith

you learn to trust God's Word and promises as you live your Christian life each day. Faith in Christ and His promises give you stability and strength!

† **Holy Spirit!** The greatest spiritual blessing is the Holy Spirit Himself who lives and dwells within you. The Holy Spirit sanctifies you so that you have strong faith as you live a holy life in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the source of all spiritual blessings!

Grace! Truth! Righteousness! Peace! Faith! Holy Spirit!

This is just the beginning of a list of spiritual blessings that God the Holy Trinity has freely given to you in Christ!

One of the interesting things in the Book of Ephesians is that these spiritual blessings turn out to be **the very things** that defend you from the evil one and his satanic attacks. **The spiritual blessings that have been given to you in Christ are your “armor” against Satan and his lies and temptations.** It is imperative that you know and understand these spiritual blessings, trust them, and turn to them when Satan attacks you, when life gets difficult, when your cross seems heavy to bear, and when you feel weak and frail in faith.

You have received **every blessing of the Spirit** from God the Father through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. These blessings of the Spirit are your strength, your rock, your stability and your armor!

St. Paul begins the book of Ephesians with a formal *Berakah* prayer; an Old Testament type of prayer praising God for all the spiritual blessings He has so freely given to us! The list begins with **Grace! Truth! Righteousness! Peace! Faith! Holy Spirit!**

May your heart be filled with thanksgiving and may you understand **and echo** St. Paul's prayer:

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
Who has blessed us with every blessing of the Spirit
in the heavenly realms in Christ.**

Ephesians 1:3

Amen!