

Verse by Verse: Ephesians 1:3

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And good morning my radio friends and friends of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. This is Louis T. Talbot speaking and as this is Thanksgiving Day I wish to bring to you a message on the subject, 'let us count our blessings.' And my text is found in Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 3 where the apostle Paul says, "Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ." I want you to note my dear friends that word 'hath,' for the apostle Paul is not talking about something that we're going to receive when we get to heaven.

This is not something that God is going to do for us five minutes before we die. It is something that has already taken place. "He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings." I want you to know the little word 'all,' want to note that. You know that everything that God has for your spirit he has already given you and you are in possession of it. Our spirits are redeemed; our bodies are not redeemed. And so the apostle Paul says that that which we are in possession of right now is all spiritual blessings.

As for the body my friend, that the body will not receive the blessings that God has for it until the Lord descends. And when the Lord returns for the church then this mortal shall put on immortality. And this corruptible shall put on incorruption. And so we are in possession now of all spiritual blessings. You know when a man comes to Jesus Christ it is as though God puts into

his hand a bag full of coins with the assurance that all are his. He does not know the extent of his wealth. He does not know whether coins in the bag are gold or silver or brass, but they're all his nevertheless.

And then he spills them out and counts them, and as he counts them he comes into an intelligent understanding as to the extent of his blessings. And my dear friends in like manner when a person is saved that God puts into his hand a bag filled not with coins, but with blessing. They are all there and they are all his. And then the man spills them out and begins to count them. And then he enters into an understanding as to the extent of his wealth. And I think my dear friends that it would be a good thing if we on this Thanksgiving Day should just spill out the blessings and just note some of them one by one in order that we might understand the extent of our wealth. There are many people who have very, very low ideas in regard to what blessings are. They are like an old Scotch lady that I heard about whose favorite hymn was 'Count Your Many Blessings,' and she was singing this one morning in a little cottage as she was pushing the vacuum cleaner.

And something seemed to say to her, 'you singing 'Count Your Blessings,' why, why don't you count them?' And she did. She sat down at the table with a pencil and paper and she began to mark paper with blessing number one, blessing number two, blessing number three, blessing number four, and so on. And then she came back to blessing number one and then she asked herself, 'now, what will I put down as blessing number one?' Then she remembered that she was 80 years of age and she possessed good health and she had no rheumatism or arthritis and so she put that down as blessing number one. And then she thought of blessing number two, and she

said, 'now, what will blessing number two be?' And then she thought of the fact that she had a good pair of eyes and that she didn't have to wear glasses and so she put that down. She said, 'I have a good pair of eyes and I do not have to wear glasses.' And then as for blessing number three she remembered that she had a good son and the son was married and had a family of his own. But he never forgot his old mother so she put down, 'a good son and he never forgets his mother,' that's blessing number three.

Then she thought of the little house that she lived in and she didn't have to pay taxes because the son kept those up. And it was all paid for. There were no debts and so she put that down. 'A little cottage and no debts and do not have to pay taxes.' And then she thought as she looked at number four or number five she said, 'well,' she said, 'I have got a bunch of fine neighbors and we don't have any fights. They have chickens and they keep them in their place and I keep my chickens in my place and so we get along very, very well.' And so she went on that way. And she filled both pages and I think that before she got through she had about 30 different blessings enumerated. And then she got up and got a hold of a vacuum cleaner and she started to finish the job and as she did she was singing 'Count your many blessings, name them one by one.'

That afternoon the preacher came in and the old lady said, 'my, but I have been having a wonderful time today. I have spent all of my time counting my blessings.' She said, 'Pastor, would you like to see all the blessings that I have enumerated?' And she put into his hand the paper. The preacher just read them down very carefully and then when he came to the last one he turned to the old lady and he says, 'Do you know that you do not have one blessing enumerated here? Not one.' And she said, 'Well if these are not blessings, what are they?' And the pastor said,

'Well, they are mercies and our God bestows mercies upon the just and the unjust, just as Paul says that he causeth the rain to fall upon the saint and the sinner alike.' And the pastor said, 'My dear sister why, everything that you have enumerated here, many unconverted people could say the same thing and perhaps have more of the things that you have enumerated than you possess. And when you go to be with the Lord Jesus you are going to leave all your mercies behind but you are going to take all the blessings with you as you go to heaven.'

And then the preacher said, 'Now, get a piece of paper and a pencil and we'll enumerate some blessings.' I mention this my dear friends because there are thousands of Christians today who estimate God's goodness to them according to the amount of these things that they possess. You may not be in possession of any mercies at all. I mean that you may not have a strong body, and your body this morning may be, may be just a great burden to you with arthritis and what have you.

But my dear friend, if you are a child of God, that you are blessed with all spiritual blessing. And I want this morning that we should just open the bank, as it were, and spill them out and to see what some of these blessings are. You know what the bag is? Why, the bag is the Word of God. And my dear friends the Word of God lists numbers and numbers of things in the realm of blessings that you and I possess in Christ. And I want to spend the next 15 or 20 minutes just enumerating to you the special, the special blessings that God has for you. Here in this chapter one of Ephesians and verse three the apostle Paul says, "Blessed be God, even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Do you see that that verse begins with a doxology? And nothing will make you a singing Christian so much as for you to have a knowledge of just what

those "all spiritual blessings" are. And the apostle Paul says that God has blessed us with them all. But I have just got the time this morning to enumerate about four or five of them.

Each one of these texts that I'm going to give you now tie in with that third verse of the first chapter of Ephesians because they have the word 'hath' in them and you're going to see what Christ 'hath' done. I could spend a great deal of time this morning telling you what he is going to do when the Lord returns and when we're going to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. But my friends let us spend a little time this morning just dwelling upon the things that, that Christ has already done for you. For instance, if you have a pencil and a paper just write on that paper 'blessing number one,' and then right opposite that put 'Ephesians chapter four verse 32.' And the apostle Paul says this, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." And so you would write on your piece of paper 'blessing number one: the forgiveness of all of my sins.' My friends what a wonderful thing that is to know that all your sins are forgiven. And you will note my friend that the apostle Paul does not tell these Ephesians that they are to maintain this attitude toward fellow Christians in order that they might have their sins forgiven.

No, it isn't that. He says that they are to maintain this attitude because their sins have already been forgiven. It's something that has already taken place. My friend I'd like to ask you this. Can you put your finger, your index finger, on that verse in Ephesians 4:32 and say with me, 'I thank God this morning that all my sins are forgiven.' Well I'm afraid that there are some folks who would say to me, 'Oh yes Mr. Talbot, I can say that because I'm so happy and I wear a smile on my face all the time. And when I walk I have a spring in my heel and, and I am happy day and

night and therefore I know that all of my sins are forgiven.' And then if I talk to another fellow he may say, 'No, no Mr. Talbot, I don't think that I can say that all my sins forgiven. I am so, so down in the dumps and so full of the blues and I get so discouraged that I am sure that I would think otherwise if they were, if all my sins were forgiven.'

I want to say to you my dear friends that either one of those answers would show that the one who answered thus has a great deal to learn in regard to what it is that gives us assurance of salvation. For instance, suppose that there were two prisoners in San Quentin penitentiary and they had been sentenced to 30 years imprisonment for some great crime and then the governor of the state decided to pardon them. And the pardon is put in their hands and the gates of the prison are swung open and the men find themselves free. Suppose that they come down here and I want you to see prisoner number one. There he is walking along the main street and as he does so he runs into a policeman and the policeman happens to be the fella that arrested him in the first place. He says, 'What are you doing here?' 'Oh,' he said, 'the governor has pardoned me.' And the police officer says, 'Well, well how do you know that he has pardoned you?' 'Oh," says the man, 'don't just see the smile on my face? Don't you, didn't you hear me whistling a song? Didn't you see that spring in my walk? Oh, I was never so happy in all of my life. Yes officer, my, I've been pardoned.' The officer would say, 'Well that is no evidence to me that you been pardoned. You come along with me,' and he takes him to the prison and throws him into the cell. And you would say, 'Foolish man! Why don't you show him the pardon? Why don't you show him the signature of the governor of the state of California?' But no, he's talking about the smile on his face.

Then the, he goes out, the policeman does, walks along Main Street and bumps into the other fellow. And he says, 'What are you doing here?' 'Oh,' he says, 'I've been pardoned.' And the officer says, 'Well how do you know that?' 'Well,' says the man, 'I don't know it. I've been wondering as to whether it isn't a mistake. I don't feel like a pardoned man. I feel that if I were pardoned that I would feel altogether different. But I am all down in the dumps, and so on, and I think it's all a mistake. Oh officer, take me back to jail.' You would say, 'Foolish man! Why don't you show him the pardon and the signature of the governor of the state of California?' My dear friends I am not underestimating happy feelings, and I am not printing a premium upon long-faced Christians, but my friend, what I want you to see is this: that our assurance of salvation does not depend upon those things at all, but our assurance depends upon two things. First the work of Christ and the second is the Word of God.

And if anybody asks you whether you know you're a Christian, you say, 'yes' and then brother show him the King's signature, and the King's signature is in the Word of God. I do trust that all of you folks can say, 'I know that my sins are forgiven because the Word of God tells me so.' All right. Now here is a second, here is a second half and you'll find this in second Thessalonians chapter 2 and verse 13 and there the apostle Paul says this, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you." My friend, here is this doxology again. Let me tell you that there is nothing that will fill your heart with singing so much as for you to know what God says about the things included in the "all spiritual blessings." And so in this second Thessalonians chapter 13 the apostle says, "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation."

And so you put down on your piece of paper as blessing number two, 'chosen of God to salvation.' Now my friends, don't you get reading 'predestination' and 'foreordination' into that word 'chosen.' You just rejoice my dear friend in the fact that you're chosen. A lot of folks instead of rejoicing in the fact that they're chosen they look at that word 'beginning,' 'chosen from the beginning,' and they begin to wonder just how that was and what beginning is referred to. My dear friends, get your eye on the word 'chosen' and thank God that you have been chosen. I met a, I met an elder in a Presbyterian church some little time ago and he told me that he had been an elder there for 20 years and he did not know whether he was pre-ordained, foreordained to go to heaven or foreordained to go to hell. I said, 'My dear friend, would you like to know that you have been chosen?' And he said, 'Yes.'

Well I just told him what the colored fellow said when somebody asked him that. And the colored fellow says, 'Well you know that if there is an election there must be a candidate. And if you're out to be elected you have to be a candidate.' And he said, 'Yes.' And I said, 'Do you, do you want to go to heaven?' And he said, yes.' He said, 'That's what I want to know.' 'Well,' I said, 'you're a candidate then.' And he said, 'Yes,' he said, 'I am.' Well I said, 'My dear friend, you know that this election concerning you is already over. That is, it's a tie.' I said that the colored fellow, he said, 'You know that God has voted for you and the devil has voted against you, and consequently the election is all tied up.' Then I said, 'And the colored pastor went on to say, 'Now you my dear brother cast the deciding vote.'

And I told this Presbyterian elder that and I said, 'my dear friend you are the one that settles as to whether you're going to be chosen or not.' And we got on our knees and he thanked God that that

moment he put his trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. And then after we thanked God he got up and he says, 'Well thank God the election is over,' and I said, 'Yes my dear friend and you are among the elect and you're chosen.' My dear friends you know that there was wonderful wisdom in that colored man's words and you just rejoice in the fact that you've been chosen, my friend. Do you remember when you were young and you used to play, all of you men will remember this I guess, that is that you used to meet in the alley of your home on Saturday when there was no school.

And then they would choose two fellows to be captains and then they had picked two teams to play football and one would say, 'Well I'll choose Bill,' and another one would say, 'Well I'll choose Harry over there,' and another one would say, 'Well I'll choose Jim,' and another one will say, 'Well I'll choose somebody else.' And my friend I'll never forget the thrill that came into my young life when one of those men said, 'Well I'll choose Louis Talbot.' I didn't try to analyze the thing. I just rejoiced in the fact that I was chosen. And my friend I can't, I couldn't understand, I didn't bother as to why he chose me, I just rejoiced in the fact that he had chosen me.

I don't know why my wife he chose me, but she did. I guess she's wondering even now just why she did. But my friend, God has chosen you. Well you might say, 'Well Mr. Talbot I'm not worthy of all this.' Well my dear friend that it's too late to talk about that because he's already done it. And God is choosing men to salvation, all men who will just put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. All right. Put down on your sheet of paper that 'you are chosen of God unto salvation.' All right. Now we got about five, six more minutes and I've got two other blessings to pull out from the bag. This one now is Colossians chapter one verses 12 and 13. Now put that

down, Colossians chapter 1 verses 12 and 13. And my friend here is a bunch of haths. For instance, Paul says here, "Giving thanks unto the Father."

Do you see, here is this Doxology again? "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath delivered us into the kingdom of his dear Son." My friends what a bunch of haths you have there. Let us look at the first one for a moment. Paul says, "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." That is that Paul is saying in, "that he hath made us meet," he means that he has fitted us for fellowship in light. Whose light? Why, God's light. Do you know my dear friends that when you get into the glory you are going to find the place just illumined with a, with a light of God. And when you and I are there my dear friends you will find that the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has fitted you to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. You know heaven is going to be a wonderful place of fellowship my dear friends, and when you get there you won't have to look around for a dark corner.

You will be able to stand in the, in the brightest star of God's light and that light even will not reveal one spot and one wrinkle in your being because the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ has fitted you for that. You know we oftentimes use an expression concerning a person who is old and, and just having a real experience with God, that that one is ripening for glory. Now that may be a poetic expression but my dear friends it's not true. You know you and I are ripened for glory the moment you put your trust in the Lord Jesus. Let me tell you my dear friend that you will not be any more fitted for God's presence ten years from now than you are right now. God has fitted

you. What is that that fits a man to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light is the blood of the Lord Jesus. My dear friends that isn't going to purgatory that fits you for, to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light. It is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and if the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ doesn't fit you for God's presence then all the fires of purgatorial flames will never do it.

You and I, no matter how faulty you may be, you are fitted for fellowship with all the saints and the glory, and you can stand there my dear friend in light. You won't look around for some dark corner to get into my dear friends, because in heaven there are no dark corners. It is the Lord that has fitted you to be a partaker with all the saints in light. My friends think of all the saints we're going to meet up there. Think of being intimate with Peter, James, and John. Think of meeting the apostle Paul. Think of meeting all the martyrs and all the reformers. Think of being, being in on wonderful talking fellowship terms with the twelve apostles. But my friend you are going to see somebody who'll be even more wonderful than all of them put together. And that one is the Lord Jesus and you'll never be embarrassed my dear friends when you stand in his presence because the Lord hath, he has fitted you to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Now let me run through these two other haths in that Colossians chapter one verse 12. The apostle Paul goes on to say, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Do you see my dear friend in this matter of adoption, if you are going to adopt a child into your home, before that child could be adopted into your home you would have to have all ties of that child with the other family severed? Otherwise the man of the other family, the child, the family in which the child was born, why

that father could come and lay a claim upon your child. And so the first thing in this matter of adoption is to sever all ties that the child may have with the former family. And then when that is done, then the child is translated into the new home. And that is exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ did for us as recorded in Colossians chapter 1 verses 12 and 13, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness."

And my dear friends the devil is the, is the prince and the power of the air and he is also the Prince of Darkness. We were once in his family and the devil was once your father and mine. But we can say with, with the colored folks when they sing that the devil is no relative of mine because the Lord has severed our relationship to the kingdom of darkness and he hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. My friend, he has done all this for you. All this is in the spiritual blessings and Paul says we are blessed with them all. Now there is just one more and then I'm through and that's Galatians 4:6, Galatians 4:6, where the apostle Paul says, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your heart." That is because you are sons, not because of anything else, not because you rolled on the floor, and not because you went to an all-night prayer meeting, but because ye are sons.

And my friends who are sons, why in the first chapter of John and verse 12 you'll find that as many as received him to then gave him power to become the sons of God and because you are a son of God you have the third person of the Trinity dwelling in your heart and his presence will link you with God. My friends, just one word. You know we're thanking God for the United States, this wonderful temple-home of ours. And you know that there are millions of people in

the world today who would give everything that they had if they could only live in these United States.

But my friends we have a blessing down here and we have a wonderful blessing in all of these other things. I went by a theater some little time ago and I saw a sign outside that it was the title of a picture that they were showing and was entitled, 'All This and Heaven Too.' Well of course I did not know what it was but I thought, 'why, that's what the Christian, especially a Christian who's living in the United States, he can say, 'all this and heaven too.' And my friends because of what the Lord has done we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, in Christ.

I trust as, as you meditate upon this, these things that this Thanksgiving Day may be the most blessed that you have ever known. Thank you for listening and tune in tomorrow.