



Blessed with Every Spiritual Blessing:
Study of the Truths of Ephesians and Colossians
COURSE WORKBOOK

Also used for
Retreat/Small Group Leader Guide

BLESSED WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING

STUDY OF THE TRUTHS OF EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS

Retreat Leader Guide

WORKBOOK

RICHARD T. CASE





Acknowledgments

I wish to dedicate this course to and thank all of the leaders of our **Ministry: Living Waters—ABIDE Ministries** along with my wife, Linda, who have all walked together with us as we have processed this important truth of the Christian life—that we have already been blessed with Every Spiritual blessing—and that this has been given to us in the heavenlies—which means we live in the actual reality of life—both spiritually now in heaven and on earth—not just the natural on earth. Heaven and earth operate together in the now as a unit. These leaders faithfully have consistently grasped the import of this, as they live out the privilege of the these blessings as they personally apply to all of us. All of our lives have been changed and blessed because of our living in these truths. Then, they all have been teaching their groups and friends how to also then understand and also receive and experience these privileged blessings—and that though we have received these, it is possible to deny these by thinking they have not really been given or available to all of us. Now, hundreds of others are now receiving it and giving it away, changing the church universal in a big way. Thank you all for being the blessing:

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BLESSED WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING: STUDY OF THE TRUTHS OF EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS

PUBLISHED BY ALL FOR JESUS—ABIDE MINISTRIES

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LESSON 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE BLESSINGS ALREADY GIVEN TO WE BELIEVERS

Write down what you see as the truths about Spiritual blessings. When given? Where given? For what purpose? Why is this so important for us to understand personally?

Read Ephesians 1:3–5:

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, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us^[a] for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will...

When we're in scripture, we need to pay attention to verb tense. What does it say He has done? How has He already blessed us with every spiritual blessing? In other words, it's not maybe, perhaps - in the future He might someday give these blessings to you—it's actually that He's already given this to you. Now, we have a natural question about that. Why am I not experiencing this? Why is it not automatic?

What we're going to discover is that the blessing is already with us, and we will learn to see how it's there. So, the question is, how do we start to experience it? How do we appropriate it? There is an action on our part. How many blessings does that include? All of them? Where is every spiritual blessing? In the heavenly places. So, by definition, what is He saying? This is being done according to what? His will—which is for you to experience every spiritual blessing that's already available to you. It's not fuzzy. And that's why it's not related to the future. It's His will for us now. And it's His good pleasure to do that.

What are these spiritual blessings and what is His good pleasure?

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For each of the following scriptures, write down what you receive as the blessings that God has already given us. Why is this important to your life?

Read Ephesians 1:7–8:

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight...

He gives us redemption? What does that mean? It means to be bought out of slavery.

We deserve slavery. We deserve bondage. We deserve separation. And one of the blessings is that God has redeemed you—now—which gives you the life that is fully available to you because of His work. And He did it through the sacrifice of His blood and includes complete forgiveness. What does that mean?

First of all, we're redeemed. What are we going to be redeemed from? Slavery from sin. So, no longer are you to live in guilt because of your past, but in freedom—now. Forgiveness assures us that we do not need to live in guilt. We have been redeemed—forgiven. One of the blessings is to experience the freedom of that, to realize that He's actually redeemed us. In addition to that, He says, "I'm going to give you wisdom and insight." What do you need wisdom and insight for?

Because we live in a wicked world and we have issues to handle, we have decisions to make. God says: I'm going to give you that wisdom and insight as part of the blessings of the heavenly since you need more than just natural maneuvering. And He will give that to you based upon the fact that God's perspective is "I've already forgiven you, so come and receive and enjoy the wisdom and insight."

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Read Ephesians 1:9–10:

⁹ making known^[a] to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

He uses an interesting word here. Receiving every spiritual blessing is a mystery. What is the definition of the word mystery? Something unknown. It's hidden. It's mysterious. He's saying in order to receive every spiritual blessing, can you do it in the natural? No, it's a mystery. It's hidden. One of the beautiful things of receiving it is to start receiving and having clarity about the mystery that's there, which, by the way, we'll find out is spiritual, and not logical or natural. It'll apply to our everyday life (real issues), but it's spiritual. And again, it's according to His will, according to His good pleasure, that "I'm going to deliver to you what's hidden in this experience of every spiritual blessing—if you have a heart to go now." He further shares with us something wonderful about this.

Read Ephesians 3:1–13:

The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed

3 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— ² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is^[a] that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

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⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in^[b] God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. ¹³ So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

He says: I'm going to explain the mystery. Fundamentally, to start with, remember the truth of the Gospel has been given primarily just to the Jews. And Paul basically is saying that God now is including gentiles as recipients of the Gospel. The mystery is thus for whom?

Everybody.

He's saying the essence of the mystery isn't that you're something special. It's not. It's not that we are gifted; it's not that we are specially educated. It's available for everybody. And that means you. God says:

This is absolutely for you—for everyone—now.

And then He says something remarkable. He says the purpose of it is so that the church—we, the body of Christ—might make manifest (all aspects of the gospel—all the spiritual blessings) in reality. The word there is that in reality, the mystery will be revealed not just to others in the church, but to Heavenly Hosts, to principalities and power, which is the essence of the mystery. Consider this carefully. If that's so, what must happen to make it manifested to principalities and powers? First of all, that means it's by definition in a spiritual dimension because that's where they live, that's where they are functioning. What He's trying to help us understand is that the reality of life is actually the spiritual, and not limited to the natural. We tend to look at our life just in the natural realm. But He says that you're living in heaven

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right now. This is where the shift has to come—we are not just living in the natural, but instead are living in heaven right now, that the spiritual life is actually the real life. It's the spiritual dimension that's really functioning. Why? Because this is what's going on with the principalities and powers.

Since it is in the heavenly places, we must be living there right now. When God created, He created heaven and Earth together. We tend to think He was in heaven and He created Earth. No, He created heaven and Earth together to function as a unit, and interestingly enough when it's all done, He says, we will be getting rid of this one and that we are going to create a new heaven and Earth. Together. They are a unit because it's the spiritual dimension. He goes on to say that He is going to have you make manifest to principalities and powers (the angels and the demonic that are the hosts that are functioning in that dimension). He also says, I want you to make it made known to them. So, if you're going to make it made known to them, what by definition has to be happening in the heavenlies (in His Kingdom)?

Supernatural, extraordinary, extra natural—the miraculous.

If it's natural, does that make any impact on principalities and powers? No. And this is really as Paul expressed to us in Ephesians 6:10–20 that when you're operating in the natural, who's manifesting to you? The demonic. They're actually demonstrating to you that “I have power over you,” because in the natural, they do, since we are outside of God's Kingdom where they have dominion and exercise power over us. And God says, if you're going to live with every spiritual blessing, you're going to not experience their power over you, but demonstrate to them what My supernatural work is. We're the physical representation of the invisible God. This doesn't mean just to live a nice Christian life in the natural. No, it's to demonstrate to the principalities and powers His supernatural work so that everything that we do is intended to be manifested in the supernatural. Now, by the way, if we're manifesting to that, who else is going to be interested? Other people because they'll say, Is that possible for me?

That's what the essence of this course is all about. How do we get to that point where we're experiencing that on a regular basis? And then He ended this discussion with a statement that we have access to the Holy Spirit—with boldness so that we stop being timid and thinking, Woe is me. This life is difficult. I'm a sinner. I'm guilty. But hey, I get to go to heaven. No, He says: “I want you to enjoy this beautiful blessed life through having direct access. Come and spend time with Me. Come with an authentic heart and boldness. Start to experience the manifesting to the principalities and powers.” Let's keep that the key question before us: Am I demonstrating to the principalities and powers this life of God as opposed to just a natural life?

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Remember also that this is expressed in the Lord's Prayer:

Thy Kingdom come.

Thy will be done on Earth as it as it is in heaven.

We are to live in His Kingdom and manifest His will in the heavenlies as we live here on earth.

For each of the following scripture verses, write out the truths regarding how we are called to experience the blessings. Are you experiencing this? Why or why not?

Read Colossians 1:12–20:

¹² giving thanks^[a] to the Father, who has qualified you^[b] to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. ¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The Preeminence of Christ

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by^[c] him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

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God says: "I've transferred you from darkness into the Kingdom of God." The verb tense tells us this has already been completed. We believers have been transferred to His Kingdom, but unfortunately, we walk out of it—back to the darkness. He brought you here to live this Kingdom life, but you continue to walk away from it. You go back to darkness because remember, He's saying the difference is the world itself. The natural is really darkness. He brought you out of that into the heavenly places, so as you walk out, He invites us to come back to experience the fullness of life being offered. When you're in the Kingdom, you're in both places, the natural world and the heavenly supernatural place. When you walk away you go back to the flesh and are only acting in the natural. It is then that we have lost that dimension of functioning in the spiritual and the heavenly. Keep thinking how simple this is: Stay here where we're together and don't exit back to the natural and back to darkness. Why are we to live in the Kingdom? He created it all. Through Jesus. And He uses these words: for Him, in Him, by Him. He created the natural (the world), but it was created how?

Supernaturally.

All was created out of the spiritual by Him speaking it. He says everything that was created included the visible and the invisible—the heavenly. He created the heavenly host, the principalities and the powers, organized in a hierarchy. The system is headed by Satan and then his minions (demonic) that are organized into a structure of nations, state areas, local areas—all focused on trying to attack and cause us trouble. Their purpose is to draw you away from God into the natural where they have power over you. But God says, "I'd like you to demonstrate to them My life. They want to pull you out where they can demonstrate to you their life." It's an interesting battle—and the key is that God is superior. He says in verse 18, "I'm preeminent." What does that mean?

He takes first place.

He is above it all and all powerful so that nothing can thwart His life and power. We experience this through putting Him first and following Him in the Kingdom to which He has transferred us. The beautiful purpose is for Him to reconcile everything in the natural to the original condition of exceptional life with Him. The word reconcile means to restore to harmony the original condition of both heaven and Earth, which He created. What was the original condition?

Both were together as a unit, operating together and both were good—the best and none better.

And where was that place? The Garden of Eden, where the exceptional life was experienced by Adam and Eve in perfection. Since we live now in a world under the control of the enemy with self-centered people, He has the purpose and the ability to restore to us this exceptional life, knowing that it will not be perfect but still to be received with joy and wonder. We will still have trouble and struggle with

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the self (sinful nature), but God promises to bring us back into harmony, restoring back to the original condition your life. Where is that done? In the heavenly. You will experience the riches of that and the fullness of that. And His job is to reconcile the stuff of life back to the original condition. This only happens in the Kingdom of God when we're operating in both Earth and heaven.

Read Colossians 1:24–27:

Paul's Ministry to the Church

²⁴ Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵ of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

He says, "You're going to make manifest the mystery," which are the riches of His glory, Him functioning in the supernatural. And you're going to experience those riches. He says the depth of the mystery is what? Christ in you. Wow. There it is. This is all possible because it's not you being better in the natural. What is it based on? Christ living in you. He's functioning His life through you. He's demonstrating His life through you. And Paul says: It is no longer me who lives but whom? Christ, who lives in me. His power in you demonstrating His life in you. You haven't lost your personality. Paul was the same guy. He didn't become a milquetoast, passive guy. Paul was the same aggressive, bold guy. But in the context of who you are, He manifests Himself, and He said, "The real mystery is Me living in you and then demonstrating it because I can work both sides of it." He will demonstrate His word, which is superior to the natural as He has the power to speak it, which is superior to the natural.

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Read Colossians 1:1–10:

Greeting

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
² To the saints and faithful brothers^[a] in Christ at Colossae:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, ⁵ because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, ⁶ which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, ⁷ just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant.^[b] He is a faithful minister of Christ on your^[c] behalf ⁸ and has made known to us your love in the Spirit.

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God...

He says, "Don't be deceived." He's talking about other believers deceiving you. What's the deception? The natural. The natural is you needing to figure this out in the natural. You've got to be better than what you do and try to conform to the scriptures and theology yourself. That's the deception, He said. Don't be deceived. That's not how it works. He actually reiterates again the mystery. And we're starting to put two and two together. The mystery is Christ. Because in Him, it says, is all wisdom and understanding and power. Where is it? In Christ, who is in you. And then He reiterates it and says all the fullness of God is in Christ. All the spiritual blessings have already

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been given by Christ who is in you and who has all the fullness of God. Since you have all the fullness of God now, is there anything lacking?

No.

This should raise up a question. I have all the fullness of God. The mystery is Christ in me. Christ is all wisdom and understanding. What should be your question?

Why am I not experiencing that to the fullest?

Does that mean that I experience the fullness all the time? In other words, everything at once? And He says: No, it's all there, but it's going to have to be experienced step by step. He even says this in the Lord's Prayer. Give us this what? Our daily bread. He's got to play out day by day by day—the fullness of what He is and has will be experienced today. And what you need today will be experienced. The purpose of what He's going to do for you today is to demonstrate to the principalities and power the supernatural spiritual realm that it's real. It really comes down to the simplicity that Christ is in you, and He's the fullness and this fullness is in you. So, there's no reason to not experience this and no excuse.

We tend to believe that: I'm nobody. I'm not good enough. I can't do this. I don't have the same gifts as others in the church. This is problematic thinking because we all have the fullness of Christ in us already. And the question is more about if you are experiencing that today and if the fullness will play itself out in what you need today. As He leads you and guides you step by step by step, He will have you experience the fullness of His life, which is to be our life.

Christ is in us. He placed Himself in us through the Holy Spirit, who is all of God. It's Christ in us. It's Christ living through us. He wants to live through us in this beautiful abiding, talking, hearing dialogue, and experiencing God in a beautiful way.

For each of the following scriptures, continue to write down what you receive as the blessings that God has already given us. Why is this important to your life?

Read Ephesians 1:11–12:

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

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Most Christians do not understand predestination: "Everything that happens is God's will." Not so. A simple challenge to that thought is: Think of two believers, Christians, both of whom are followers of Christ who get married. What do know from scripture is God's will? For this couple to have an abundant life and marriage together with Him and to stay married. Then, how is it that right now 50+% of Christians are getting divorced? Is that predestined? No, it's not predestined in thinking that God caused us to get divorced. He says: What God has put together, let no man put asunder. So, you can't say that everything that happens is God's will and thus predestined. I'm predestined to be married to this woman, and now I'm predestined to divorce? No, sorry, that's not God.

Predestination is God's plan. "I planned it out. It is what I have for you." Psalms 139 talks beautifully about how He has every day planned out for you. And He says that according to His purpose and His counsel and His will that you, through the mystery, demonstrate the glory of God within His blessing for us, enjoy Him and His wonderful plan. This life is intended to glorify God because you're manifesting to whom?

The principalities and powers of God's supernatural work. He says: That's what I predestined. That's what I've got all lined up for us to experience.

He does say that He knows the plans that He has for us, and they're to help you prosper, to help give you a hope and a future. And He already has it planned out.

That is why I can speak a guarantee to those who God brings into my circle: I can guarantee you that because I know that He says it. It's clear now how that works. You've got to go experience them day to day to day, because Christ is in you. He wants to express His life through you. What God asks is that He walk with you to stay connected, to experience Christ in you, the hope of glory and demonstrate His glory, which will be restoration.

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Read Ephesians 1:13–14:

¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee^[a] of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it,^[b] to the praise of his glory.

The Holy Spirit is your inheritance. To what purpose?

To the praise of His glory: that I'm going to demonstrate My life through you so that you will glorify Me, and it'll be a praise to you and to other people. We will experience a shift of the focus of how our spiritual life works. We tend to look at what I have to do and hope that whatever that is works. God says: I am wanting to live My life through you to praise and glorify Me. I want you to enjoy that. That's the blessing. While He demonstrates that through us, by definition, we are going to be the recipient of it as it translates into real—not hypothetical—areas in our life.

If we demonstrate it to the principalities and powers, then the attractiveness to other people, including believers, will be greater and greater and greater. This is why you experience these blessings so that you can demonstrate it.

Read Ephesians 2:1–9:

By Grace Through Faith

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body^[a] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.^[b] ⁴ But^[c] God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love

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with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

He says: Like everybody, you were in the natural separated from Me and under the influence and control of the enemy. When you became a believer, you received and accepted redemption, through Me going to the cross and taking on the penalty (by grace since it cannot be earned). There's nothing you could do to receive this gift and the mystery of the gift. It's by what I've done on the cross, even though you deserve My wrath. But I, through my nature of forgiveness, gave you forgiveness and gave you the opportunity to re-establish your relationship by taking away requirement of perfection, which no one can achieve.

Through this redemption, He thus brings clarity about the wonderful life that is ours in the heavenly. That's where all the blessings are going to be given. So, if we're in the heavenly place because He already has seated us with Him there, we receive the spiritual realm, plus the authority of the Kingdom that goes with it.

To put two and two together, remember when we were in Ephesians 3, He says: You have bold access to what? The throne room. Because you're with Me, let us now process through what I have to say about these issues of life that you're dealing with because you are in both places. But the key is you're with Me up here in the heavenly throne room. Let's have a conversation. And the key, as we're in the throne room, is what are we seeking? Wisdom and insight about the very stuff of life.

And He said: "My desire is to demonstrate to you those riches." And then He goes on to remind us that we are not going to experience this through any of our work(s), but by what He did that was received by us through faith (believing it to be

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true). He tells us the rest of our life has to be lived by what? By faith. In the typical Christian life, we tend to say: I did receive Christ by faith but now I need to live it out by what I do—by my works.

No, it is to be lived out by Christ living it out through you (the very essence of the mystery). And all you have to do is believe Him and live by staying in the heavenly.

As we end this first lesson, let us grab hold of the beauty and the depth of every spiritual blessing that has already been given to us and is experienced/ demonstrated in the heavenly. It's this simple: We are to live now in the heavenly. He says: See, I brought you with Me, but you keep walking away. You have it all backwards. You're trying to get it all resolved by yourself by working hard to resolve your own issues and thus are walking away from the life available to you—and us.

He says, "Why don't you come with Me where I'm going to demonstrate to the principalities and powers this great mystery?" And guess what the real mystery is? Christ in you. Where does the power come from? Him and His Word. All you have to do is be with Him seated at the right hand of the Father in the heavenly and hear His Word. This will then demonstrate His supernatural power and you will manifest your life to the principalities and powers because of His supernatural work, which you received because you were with Him in the heavenly.



LESSON 2:

OUR REQUIREMENTS TO RECEIVE AND EXPERIENCE THESE BLESSINGS



“He says that He can't afford for us to be spending time worrying about what we did because it's already been forgiven.”

As we finished Lesson 1, we understood that He's raised us in the heavenly place with every spiritual blessing that's available to us, and He wants to express the riches of His glory through this life in us. So, we're with Him, we have access to Him. We're now to experience this.

What are these spiritual blessings, and what is His good pleasure?

As in Lesson 1, for each of the following scriptures write down what you receive as the blessings that God has already given us. Why is this important to your life?

Read Colossians 2:11–15:

¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities^[a] and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.^[b]

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You've been put to death. You've joined Him in His death. You've been raised up with Him. And we learned in Ephesians to where? In the heavenly places, in the throne room with boldness. He said, you've been raised up and made alive. Life happens here in the heavenly place. So, if we're going to experience that life, where do we need to be? In the Kingdom of God, as we operate in this amazing unit of heaven and Earth. It's not to live in just the world and struggle in the natural only—thinking that we are sinners; we're going to fail; It's going to be tough. But, we calm ourselves by saying, hey, we get to go to heaven later. He said: No, it's actually living in the Kingdom (the unit of heaven AND Earth) and living this out together. He goes on to say that because of what He's done and the life He's given us, this life is based upon four things that have been fulfilled already. He lists them in this progression:

1. He's forgiven all of our trespasses—past, present, and future. Where did that happen? At the cross. Hebrews 10 goes into a great discussion of this, particularly that once and for all, He has forgiven us. We are forgiven from the sin that goes all the way back to Adam and Eve (self-will and not following God's will). We tend to develop a hierarchy of sin, meaning that we convince ourselves that one sin is worse than another. And so, you're not as good a Christian as me because I only have little sins. You have the big sins. But, His viewpoint is that they're all the same because they all relate to self. He says: At the cross, I've forgiven you of this issue of self—past, present, and future. We thus are no longer to live in guilt if we're going to experience the blessing. He says that He can't afford for us to be spending time worrying about what we did because it's already been forgiven. His question is, are you going to be with Me where I can deliver and demonstrate to the principalities and powers the blessing?
2. He's taken away the requirement and nailed it to the cross. What is this requirement? To be perfect in order to have a relationship with Him. He said: Because of His holiness and being Almighty God, we have to be perfect. We know something about that. How is anybody able to be perfect? They can't. Romans 3:23; 6:23 say that no one is. Not one single person. The consequence of this is death (because we cannot meet the requirement). So, everybody's in the same boat. He says: I removed that requirement through what I did at the cross, and I replaced it. What did He replace it with? Grace, favor. No one can have a relationship with God through their works. They instead must receive what God has done, which removes the requirement of perfection.

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Now let's put two and two together. He has replaced the requirement that you cannot meet with Him. But where is He living? In you. The requirement has been taken care of. Stop trying to be perfect. He said, "You're trying way too hard, you are working so hard that you think now that you've received Christ, you've got to go be perfect again." He said, "I took that requirement away and My life, which took that away, is in you. Take it easy. Relax, let Me give you this blessed life."

3. He has disarmed principalities and powers. What does disarm mean? He took away all their weapons, took away the power. A few years ago, our country had missile silos all over the country which housed live missiles. There were people manning the silos, and there were people manning the missiles. As time went on, the technology became outdated, and these missiles became obsolete. When they went to take them down, the first thing they did was disarm them by taking away the triggering mechanism. So, the missiles were still there, but they were disarmed which meant that they couldn't be set off and have the power of the missile affect anything because it was "disarmed." So, what He's saying is, "I've disarmed the principalities and powers. They have no power." Now there's more to the story. Where do they not have power? In the life of the believer. And in the heavenly? They have no power in the heavenly. Because why? He has disarmed them, and they have no ability to use their power there. By the way, on Earth, in the natural, they have what? They still have power—they're not disarmed. This is the issue: If you are just living in the natural, who's got power over you? The demonic principalities and powers, and you're no match for that. However, when you step into the heavenly, they're disarmed. And they don't have power over you. Why try to live in both places? This is why Jesus said that in the world, you're going to have what? Tribulation, trouble, you're going to be coming against principalities and powers. You're not dealing with flesh and blood—you're dealing with powers and principalities. However, He has disarmed it. Overcoming the world and the troubles of the world is available to you through the blessings that He provides in the Kingdom, in the heavenlies. He has disarmed the principalities and powers so that through His power, they are of no consequence to you there.
4. I triumphed over them. What does that mean? Victory. Victory has occurred. It occurred at the Garden of Gethsemane when He overcame self and then finished it with the work of the cross, and then was resurrected. It's been done, completed. The demonic and Satan, the ruler of this world, is defeated. Done, completed. As we experience life, are we fighting a battle of equals? No. We

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tend to pray: God, would You fight the battle? Would You gain victory over the enemy? But what Jesus is telling us is: I've already done it. I've already triumphed (gained victory) over the enemy and their power. You're not operating from a struggle of the battle. You're operating out of victory already, which means it's already over. You just need to live in it.

Part of the blessing is to understand these beautiful things, which is the reason He's raised you into the heavenly. And thus, He says: If I were you, I'd stay there.

Read Ephesians 2:11–18:

One in Christ

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

This is amazing. He says, “I am Shalom, great favor, peace, the abundant life. I brought that to you, and I've reconciled this life to you.” What has He reconciled? First our relationship through forgiveness by reconciling us to Him and the blessed life originally intended. We can live in the Kingdom and do not need to live in the

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conflict of the world because: He is restoring us back to the original. Remember, Adam and Eve were in perfect unity with God in heaven and Earth, because God created it that way. They were in both places at the same time. Did Adam and Eve have conflict prior to them having the problem with Satan? They had none because it was unified. So, He's saying that He's brought unification between your struggle of the world and the heavenly. What He's done is brought those two back together so that you don't have to have that struggle any longer.

Read Ephesians 2:19–22:

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens,^[a] but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by^[b] the Spirit.

He just added a wonderful aspect of living in the blessings provided. He said, I've done it all. I'm the cornerstone of this, and you are to be joining who in this? Other believers. And together be built up into experiencing the life of the heavenly. And your role as the church is to help each other stay there. Think how simple this is. If He's going to invite you to that, what must be true of you? You have to be living there. So, the way it's supposed to work is: you and your spouse; you and your family; you and other believers are to experience this together—to live your life together in the heavenly through the blessing of the mystery—Christ in you, the hope of glory, demonstrating the principalities and powers in the heavenly, and you are to build each other up. So, it's not for Him to make you feel better; or enable you to feel better in the natural. That's what the church has become. To help each other just be happy—whatever's easy for you. Interestingly enough, what do

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you discover? It's not very happy. Rather, the best thing He can do is have you live in the heavenly, following Him, experiencing the supernatural, His mighty work in our lives.

Read Ephesians 4:7–14:

⁷ But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”^[a]

⁹ (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?^[b] ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds^[c] and teachers,^[d] ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood,^[e] to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Already He has stated that we are to work to achieve what's called the unity of the Faith—believing you're living in the heavenly where the operation of the Spirit is. Our role is to assist each other to get to that unity. That does not mean unity through negotiation with our partner or with others, but unity with the Spirit. Through this unity, we are called to serve one another by building each other up, by encouraging each other to go to the unity of Spirit, by speaking the truth in love to each other (encouraging them to go to and stay in unity with the Spirit, to stay in the heavenly not just the natural, and to receive the power and life of God).

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We are not to be tossed around back and forth, having this battle that is sometimes good, sometimes not. That occurs in the natural and many in the church are actually promoting accepting that as a way of life. Rather, we are called to build each other up and seek God together by living in the heavenly, which bring forth God's solutions to our life issues. Are you going to have trouble? Yes, you've got an enemy against you, you're dealing with self-centered people, your life will include all kinds of issues. He says: I'll give you the way to walk through that by what I'll do, and speaking this to you through the unity of the faith—unity with the instruction of the Holy Spirit. In the middle of the trouble, are you enjoying the fact that you are in the heavenly, that principalities and powers have been disarmed. The victory has been won. He's going to bring resolution. He says: I'll demonstrate My supernatural power to the principalities and powers by you experiencing real answers during your troubles. We are called to build each other up with these truths. (A key question then is: Are we experiencing and enjoying this so that we can give it away to others and build them up?)

What are our responses and responsibilities to these spiritual blessings and His purposes?

As we are called to this, we are to talk to God and ask Him to fulfill it. Pray!

For each of these scripture verses, write down what you receive as your response and responsibility to experience the blessings from God? Are you fulfilling these? Why or why not? If not, what is causing you difficulty?

Read Ephesians 1:15–21:

Thanksgiving and Prayer

¹⁵ For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love^[a] toward all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

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God tells us to ask for wisdom, revelation, knowledge, and understanding. He defines this in His last statement in Ephesians 1:21: This will happen through “all authority and powers.” Authority exists in Him in the heavenly. He said that's a fact. That's so. You are to pray for wisdom, revelation, knowledge, and understanding of what is needed in your real life, in real situations, to be able to appropriate God's authority and power for these situations and experience solutions to your life issues. He promises to bring revelation of His secrets that are disclosed to you for application to your life issues.

Then He says, pray for the inheritance. What's the inheritance?

When we think of inheritance, we tend to read into this by thinking we will inherit the promised blessings. However, the Word says, “We are God's inheritance.” We are to pray that we understand, realize, and experience being God's inheritance. That by us living in the heavenly, we can have fellowship with Him, and He gets to enjoy us—His inheritance. How did we become His inheritance? In order for us to receive Him, He had to die. In order for Him to receive us, we have to die to self. He said: You're my inheritance, but I can't receive you and experience you until you go to death and then the two of us can experience this intimate relationship. Remember, He enjoys being with us and wants us to enjoy being with Him.

Then He says: Pray that you would receive the greatness of My supernatural power. Through the Word there is supernatural work, miracles that are directed toward whom in that verse? You - those who believe in His authority and power that operate in the heavenly. These are directed toward you individually in your life circumstances, if you have a heart to believe it. This very power is what raised Christ from the dead. There's nothing greater than that: raising somebody from the dead. This same power is available to you, in Christ, who is above all things and has all the power to deliver to us.

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Read Ephesians 3:14–21:

Prayer for Spiritual Strength

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family^[a] in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

We are to ask for the Spirit to strengthen us. Your strength is so that you understand, realize, and live in the fullness of Christ. Where is He? In you. To be strengthened as you keep praying for the fullness of Christ in you: to show you that fullness, help you understand that fullness, and give you the power to appreciate that fullness. Then, together with others that are in the same place, to pray that we comprehend the greatness of His boundless love, of His surpassing love that He gives to us to experience every spiritual blessing. This is why your small group is so critical. It is your community helping each other live in the heavenly places.

Then He invites us to ask Him to perform with His authority and power (related to the truths of 1:15–21) more than we ask or think. This is not about us trying to come up with selfish things like more money, rather they are the blessings that He defines as such: the joy of life, our freedoms, the wonder and the beautiful relationship that you can have with your spouse, not having conflict with people who are opposing you, not struggling with and accepting the work of the enemy who's coming against you. He says He can handle all of that. When you ask and

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imagine, you tend to think in the natural. He says, if you walk with Me, what will I do? More than you could think or imagine—as I'm going to do things in your life in a spectacular way and greater than you think—because it's beyond what you think. That is what he will deliver to you.

Read Colossians 1:9–11:

⁹ And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, ¹⁰ so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy...

Does that prayer make more sense to you now? You are to ask for the complete wisdom with understanding of His will, which is to demonstrate Himself to you; with the glory of His riches—His immeasurable power that will be fulfilled of His will. So, continue to ask that you gain an understanding of all this—so that you experience it as you live in the heavenly places.

Read Ephesians 5:1–20:

Walk in Love

5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

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³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them; ⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ...

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He says three things: First, walk in love. Think of the simplicity of this. Who are you walking with? Where is He? In you, and in the heavenly. So, if you're going to walk in love and walk with Him, who is love? It means daily moving along the path of life that He has for you. He will demonstrate this to you as you walk with Him, which implies to stay with Him. You don't need to be perfect. Quit trying so hard. Just walk with Him, and He'll do the work. This is why joy comes in. Ask each other: Are you enjoying life? If you're walking in the love of Christ with Christ, you will have joy. If you don't have joy, something is wrong. Likely you've gone to the natural and you're struggling with the issues of life on your own.

Secondly, walk in the light. Light, He says, exposes what? The darkness. And when you're visibly walking in the light, by definition, you're not walking where? In darkness. Don't stay in darkness, which is you walking in the natural. Rather, walk in the light that comes from walking in the heavenly. The key to that is a heart to go to the truth. Are you willing to receive truth? Are you going to the truth? His invitation is to go to the truth about all your life (in the light). So, walking in the light is walking in the truth. Have a heart to go to truth.

Third is walking in wisdom. God says: "I'll give you the wisdom, through being filled with the Holy Spirit. As you pursue wisdom, you're going to know My will." Remember His will is for you to demonstrate to the principalities and powers, His supernatural strength. He provides you wisdom by directing you to be in the right place at the right time with the right people so that He can demonstrate His supernatural work. It's not what you do for God, but rather it's what God is going to do for you. But you've got to be in the right place. Receive wisdom.

And then He says in Ephesians 5:21: This requires you to submit to one another. Submit to what? Through the Spirit of God to help each other stay in the heavenly, to walk in love, walk in the light, walk in wisdom. So, actually, as we submit to each other with a heart to have us live in the heavenly where all the blessings are, we are submitting to Christ, to His will and His wonderful life for us.

Read Colossians 4:2–6:

Further Instructions

² Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— ⁴ that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

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⁵ Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. ⁶ Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Let's look at a new definition of outsider. Our typical definition of an outsider is what? Unbeliever. But that is not what He's talking about here. It includes them, by definition, but an outsider is all who are not living in the heavenly. In this process, we are not responsible for making sure every outsider comes into the heavenly, into the Kingdom. This is not your job. When you try to make it happen, you become an outsider. It's funny because you can't do it in the flesh. And if you do it with judgment, it's like saying, "You should do this or that and here are the rules, and here's what you've got to do." If this happens, then you are no longer living in the heavenly. He said, now pray that God does what? Opens the door. He says: I'll open the doors. I'm going to use you to invite people to it. So, you pray. And again, it takes simple discernment. Are you living there or not? It's easy to know if you are walking in love, in the light, in wisdom, demonstrating to the principalities and powers this supernatural life of blessings. As you are enjoying all this, He directs you to invite "outsiders" (all those not living in the heavenly) to enjoy this same life.



LESSON 3:

OUR CALLING TO SERVE OTHERS IN HELPING THEM RECEIVE AND EXPERIENCE THESE BLESSINGS



“We are His workmanship. We enter into that workmanship when we receive Christ, with Him directing us to good works.”

God has said to us that His purpose of blessing us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly is to glorify Himself, and in turn we demonstrate or manifest these beautiful things to principalities and powers, which means it must be supernatural coming from the spiritual, which is superior.

What is our response and responsibility to these spiritual blessings and His purposes?

As in Lesson 2, for each of these scripture verses, write down what you receive as our response and responsibility to experience the blessings from God? Are you fulfilling these? Why or why not? If not, what is causing you difficulty?

Read Ephesians 2:10:

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

We are His workmanship. We enter into that workmanship when we receive Christ, with Him directing us to good works. When we think of good works, typically we think of ministry and our activities that we have defined as good things to do. However, God’s good works are what He has created for us - He defines what is good (and it means exceptional, fulfilling His

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purposes, and leading us to the very best as it fulfills His purposes). He has our path planned out. He says, "I've already created them, ordained them beforehand. It's unique to you. The good works are unique to you." Who defines good? He does. And as we think of the blessed to be a blessing, it is to join God in His good works. The good works are for you to experience what the blessing and demonstrate the why of it—to the principalities and power.

As He (not us) defines the good works, our role is to walk in them. Think about walking. What does that imply? Movement. It's not an event. It's not something you do, and it is finished. Rather it is moving along the path that He has ordained.

Life is not just coincidences. The Father has our lives all planned out and our privilege is to walk in the blessings He has planned for us to receive and then demonstrate to the principalities and powers, manifesting the supernatural things that God is planning on working in our lives—the good works (really His work) in our personal circumstances.

Read Ephesians 4:1–6:

Unity in the Body of Christ

4 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

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The way to walk in the good works created by God is to spend our energy in a determined way to come to unity of the faith. What does that mean? Your unity is with whom? The Spirit who is living within you. You'll know God's will for you through His good work through the unity with your spouse and with your friends around you. He says to go to unity through confirmation by others around you so His will is clear and known. He is opening the way for us to walk in the good works He has planned.

Read Ephesians 4:15–16:

¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

We've understood that we need to comprehend the depth of Christ's love, walking in love, in the fullness of the spiritual life. He says: If you're going to discover My good works and experience these blessings, it is necessary to speak the truth with My heart—not out of judgment, but out of desiring each other to experience the good works that He has created and planned out.

In what way does He speak the truth: How's it going? Are you experiencing the Kingdom of God? Are you enjoying it? Are you seeing the demonstration of the supernatural works that will manifest itself to the principalities and powers. So, we can speak truth to each other in an honorable and respectful way (with the heart of God's love). Not in a harsh way. Not in a judgmental way but to assist each other to experience God's blessings in all of life.

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Read Ephesians 4:25–32:

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

As we speak the truth, we are reminded in verse 32 to always speak the truth from a heart of forgiveness, on the same basis Christ forgave you. What did you deserve? His wrath. But He says: I forgave you, through my own nature - forgiveness and love. I went to the cross on My own and gave it to you. You didn't earn it. So, if you're going to speak the truth, make sure that you're never coming at it with harshness because you're angry, you're frustrated, you're trying to persuade somebody. Rather with forgiveness that allows you to speak the truth without agenda, revenge, or judgement but with truth in love, honor, and respect.

In order to speak the truth, we are first called not to lie to each other. We're not purposely speaking untruths, but we tend to lie to each other. How do we lie to each other? By not speaking up and saying how we feel about something.

By not speaking, though we do have truth about this, we don't say anything to avoid conflict. It's just easier. But we specifically are called to not be silent and to speak up.

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Speaking truth. What truth? Your reality or your truth at the moment. Is it absolute truth? Not yet. He'll get you there, but you're speaking your own truth, as you have it in your heart. And thus, a willingness to listen to the truth. As we work together to go to unity in the Spirit (receiving God's will as expressed in Ephesians 4:1–6), you're speaking the truth. Not to convince somebody, but rather that you would assist each other in getting to the truth that is known through the unity of the Spirit, which is His will and His good work that is planned for you.

And, as you are speaking truth, you are called to not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth. What's unwholesome talk? I'm right. You're wrong. You should do this or that—especially when speaking with harshness and attack (which is why it is so important to be in forgiveness). As you process this, you actually impart grace (God's favor) to the person/people with whom you are sharing truth. What does grace mean? God's extreme favor: helping them move into a position of living in the heavenly by your speaking gently and beautifully. The truth to impart grace. Come, let's go to the heavenly together.

Thus, we have a choice: either speak the truth in love and work together to reach unity of the Spirit or not speak up at all or with our own agenda. If we decide to not speak up or speak with our own agenda (especially in an unwholesome way), we grieve the Holy Spirit. What does the word grieve mean? Make sad, make sorrowful. What makes sad the Holy Spirit? You not walking with Him by not speaking the truth, or seeking the truth together in unity, or attempting this with harshness and agenda. You're off on your own, and as we know from Romans 8:5–8, we have put Him to death (not experiencing His life, so in essence shunted off His life and power). He is grieved because He cannot deliver to us the beautiful life of demonstrating the principles and powers. It's sad to Him that you've walked away from receiving these blessings, which are all planned out.

We are to get to a place of neutrality. We are to walk in the Spirit and speak the truth as we seek to come to unity of the Spirit. In doing this, we will discover and live out God's will, which is to bless us with every spiritual blessing and experience: His supernatural life in our real—life circumstances. We know that God's will is best and none better, and thus we want His will, not our own.

Our heart for all this is Ephesians 5:21: submit to one another. This means not submitting to others' decisions or personal agenda, but rather submitting to the process. Let's go to truth, let's go to unity, let's seek unity, let's get to God's will. Are we walking in the Kingdom? Are we experiencing all the best? And are we submitting to each other by not grieving the Holy Spirit but by speaking the truth with honor and respect as we receive, understand, and follow God's will in unity with the Spirit?

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Read Ephesians 5:22–33:

Wives and Husbands

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.^[a] ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Traditionally, this section of scripture is misinterpreted that wives are to submit to the decisions and desires of their husbands. So, wives are to submit to what? Submit to your husband's encouragement to seek God's will. And don't go to the flesh as you argue and debate your way, or become resentful in your heart because you are not being honored and respected with your truth. Surrender to your husband as if you're surrendering to Christ, seeking His will together, which will lead you (who as married people are one) to God's wonderful will and what couples are to process together.

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He says to husbands: Help your wife get there. Do you have a heart to get there? Because the heavenly is where the beautiful life is. Christ knows that is His role with the body (the church). Does He force us to do that? He doesn't. But let's look at how He does it. He doesn't force us; and He doesn't say, I don't care what you think. He says: Let me bring you to the heavenly place because that is where all the blessings are going to be.

He says: You're unique. I'm first showing you how to be My bride. And then I will show you how to see Me as the example of a husband. I will show you how to be My child and how to lead your family: to teach children to obey their parents, as unto the Lord. This corresponds to the first commandment with a promise: that it may go well with you. We are to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. In a similar way, we as workers are to obey our earthly masters, with fear and trembling and with a sincere heart as you would Christ, serving God from the heart. As we are called to help our children receive and understand God's wisdom by encouraging them to stay in the heavenly, we are to operate in the same way as an employee. He says He will show us what it means to live as an employee. Remember He is supernatural so that if you're in the wrong place, He'll take care of it. If you've got an awful boss and you're experiencing really difficult times, He'll take care of it. And either that guy is going to move on or He's going to have you go somewhere else. Or maybe it's a heart issue for you; let Him heal that.

As you look at that whole thing, your role as a husband, father, son, wife, daughter, employee, we are to live in the heavenly and encourage each other to live there, too. Because this is going to be fantastic.

Read Ephesians 4:17–24:

The New Life

¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self,^[a] which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

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He says you could still, as a believer, live as if you are an unbeliever, because you're putting to death your connection to the Holy Spirit, whom you're grieving. Don't let your heart be hard by living just like an unbeliever. How could that happen?

You've chosen your will, your way, you don't hear from God. Basically, you believe that you have a plan and will call on Him if and when you need Him. You allow yourself to think that if everything is God's will, then shouldn't God give you what you determine as good? And when it doesn't happen, you have conflict or difficulty and get into worse pickles. Things aren't working, you and your spouse aren't getting along, etc. Your heart gets hard, actually resentful at the thought that God is good and has a beautiful plan for you to receive every spiritual blessing.

The way to counteract this hardness, He says, is to put to death the flesh. And put on the new life. Live as a new person. What does that mean? Living as a child of Christ, walking with Him in the heavenly with the life of Christ functioning in you. That's the new person. But can you get there by yourself? No. The harder you try, the more difficult it's going to be because you're still in the old skin, not the new person. Put on the new skin and walk in the heavenly. He said, "Come with me, I'll do the work." Become a new person.

Read Colossians 2:16–23:

Let No One Disqualify You

¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. ¹⁸ Let no one disqualify you, insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions,^[a] puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, ¹⁹ and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

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²⁰ If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations— ²¹ “Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch” ²² (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? ²³ These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

He says not to conform to what? The world's patterns. He's talking about other believers who are walking in the flesh, the world, and trying to put their system upon you—by putting rules on you, telling you the way to experience God is to do this, this, this, and this. He says, do not accept that. Don't live that way. Don't let religion start to conform you, because religion is of the world and you're going to experience the natural consequences of that. And He gives us this interesting truth. What should we be connected to? The head. That's Christ. Just walk with Him. Don't let Christian rules start to define you. This has no value. That's a waste of time, and you're never going to live in the heavenly that way. It'll actually accelerate you living in the natural. Then, take one more step. He says: Don't put rules on other people. Because you're actually hampering their ability to live in the heavens. Instead of saying “you should,” you are to go to God together, and see what He has to say about this because He'll get you to the place of blessing. You are to just enjoy each other—in joy and freedom, walking on His individual path that He preordained—in His good works. It's going to look different, and it's going to be different for each person. And the timing of it is different. And what they know today may be different than next week. So just because you learned it doesn't mean everybody should learn it at the same time. They'll get there—on His path, not yours.

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Read Colossians 3:1–11:

Put On the New Self

3 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. ³ For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is your^[a] life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

⁵ Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:^[b] sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of these the wrath of God is coming.^[c] ⁷ In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. ⁸ But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self^[d] with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. ¹¹ Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave,^[e] free; but Christ is all, and in all.

He says to set your mind on things above—the heavenly. That's where you get your wisdom. That's where you get your insight. That's where you get your power, that's where you get life. Set your mind on life there—the heavenly and not in the natural. Let the Spirit guide you. Let Him lead you. He has it all prepared ahead of time. Set your mind on that. What's His heart? What is He telling us? One of the things we know He says it to go to unity with your spouse and inner circle. Seek God's will. That's where the best is going to be, and as you live in the heavenly, you will experience these blessings.

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And then He says, again: Put off the old and put on the new. He just gave an illustration of what the old looks like—immorality, anger, wrath, covetousness. What is He saying? You're living in the natural, and you're not experiencing anything that He has for you. The remedy is to come and repent and walk with Him. This goes back to speaking the truth in love. Assist others to put their minds on the spiritual and walk with God together. Let's go to the Kingdom. Let God resolve it. See how simple and beautiful life is.

As we head toward finishing the course, He says that you do have an enemy, and as we live in the Kingdom, we have power against this.

We have an enemy that is working to prevent us from experiencing these blessings. We are thus to stand against the work of enemy that works against the work of God.

For the following scripture verses, write out the elements of our spiritual armor. In what ways are you using these elements? For those that elements that you have not used, why not? What do you now understand as what God is calling you to use?

Read Ephesians 6:10–20:

The Whole Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 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. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, ¹⁹ and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

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We first are called to stand. Stand where? In the heavenly. That's where it's all going to happen, now. Yes, you have a battle. You have something going on. Stand here in the heavenly so that we can deal with this right now. It is not dependent upon us or our efforts to stop this attack. He says, if you stand here, it's ending right now. Why? He told us in Colossians: The enemy can't be here, because he's disarmed and triumphed over already. You don't need to put up with this. We stand against it. The attacks are going to stop; the consequences still may be there, and we have to deal with those, but the attacks are going away.

One key to this is to know that you are not dealing with flesh and blood. You are dealing with what? Principalities, powers, and rulers. We experience it with flesh-and-blood, self-centered people, people who are hurting your business or your finances, people who are causing you trouble and you think you need to handle that person. He says to think past that. You're not dealing with flesh and blood. Who's influencing that person to thwart you. And the thwarting is to get you where? Out of the Kingdom, out of the heavenly and into the natural, because that's where Satan's got the power. This is called temptation. James 1:12 says that God is never tempting you. It's the enemy, and he appeals to your self-appetites that draw you out of the Kingdom. The enemy is working to get you riled up. He's working to get you fearful. He's working to get you thinking that you have to fix everything on your own.

Thus, He says, as we understand this, we are to use all of the armor of God. He said, first of all, put on the belt of what? Truth. What is the truth? Finding out what's going on here; what's happening here - in my real circumstances, which are in the world, but involving principalities and powers.

Then, put on the breastplate of righteousness. Whose righteousness? Christ's. Stay with Him. Because He's going to be the one who leads you to His answers, so stay with Him.

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He further says: Walk with peace on your feet. What do you do when you're in battle? You're moving, going to battle. You're moving your feet. He says: Before you do that, make sure that you're experiencing peace. In other words, are you living in the heavenly? If you're not, do not think that you can attack. You can't. You're not going to be able to do anything. So, get back to your place of shalom with Him first. Stay in Him. What's the truth? Let Him give you that shalom so that you can go after it together.

As you are in shalom, you can then put on the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation, which is: God making everything work. It is wholeness, it is going to be restored to the original. So put that on. And then the shield of faith against the fiery darts. And what is that? It is what God is going to say about this. Do you believe it? Believe what? Not your answer to the attack, but what God is speaking is His answer to this attack.

So far, these are all defensive weapons. Yes, stay protected. And then once you're protected, you take up the sword, His Word in which is all the power to cast it away. You can just speak it away from what He's given you and what He says to you. You can now go on the offense. And that's it. You don't need to put up with this any longer. The enemy has to flee. And He says, stand, stand, stand, stand, stand. Pray, pray, pray, pray. Pray for what? For you to experience what's already true. You're going to have trouble. You will be attacked, and primarily by people, but really it is by principalities and powers. It doesn't mean that you don't experience the adversity of the world. You will experience that. But there's a remedy against it. Stay in the heavenly, stand with the full armor of God and continue to experience the blessing of the Kingdom with every spiritual blessings.

Summary:

As we come to the end of our study, write out from the following summary verses in Colossians the keys to receiving every spiritual blessing? What has God asked you to fully understand and how are you to adjust your life to receive every spiritual blessing?

Read Colossians 3:12–17:

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love,

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which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

He says: Let the Word dwell in you richly. You are to stay in the heavenly and hear His voice. You are understanding what He's saying, it's coming into you, and you are abiding. And as you have the Word dwelling in you, you are then to follow His good works, His path, to do everything in word or deed, according to Christ. Why would you be doing that? Because He's prepared in advance good works when you're in the heavenly. These will be clear to you. His good works for you to be in today and the decisions you're making and where to be on the path He has planned for you. Stay there, in the heavenly, receiving His Word, which is to dwell in each of us.

And as you're experiencing the love of Christ, let peace (shalom) rule everything about your life. This means to let shalom umpire your life. What does an umpire do in any sport? Close calls, what's good, and what's not good. What's in or out, what's fair or foul, what's a touchdown and what's not, what is a penalty and what isn't. It's making a determination based upon the truth. And so, if you let peace umpire your life, as you're staying in the heavenly, you know whether you're thinking and your activity is of God or not. If you have lost your peace, you know you have exited the Kingdom, the heavenly. So, repent, return back to Him and let Him guide you through the peace that He gives you. Let shalom rule, umpire all of your life, which is always intended for you to stay in the heavenly where He can bless you with every spiritual blessing.

