

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Ephesians: Overcoming Our Insecurities In Christ
Part I: The Believer's Secure Position In Christ, Ephesians 1:1-3:21
A. Overcoming The Insecurity Of The Lack Of Spiritual Blessings
(Ephesians 1:1-3)

I. Introduction

- A. Many believers today fear they may be missing some spiritual blessing from God, so they strive to "speak in tongues" or be "slain in the spirit" or be healed of a disease or be baptized in water, etc. either to gain all of God's spiritual blessings as Christians or even to finalize the salvation of their souls!
- B. Ephesians 1:1-3 *in its context* addresses this fear with wonderful application for us today:

II. Overcoming The Insecurity Of The Lack Of Spiritual Blessings, Ephesians 1:1-3.

- A. Many of the believers to whom Paul wrote the Epistle of the Ephesians had once been steeped in the magic arts of paganism in an effort to obtain spiritual power and fulfillment, cf. Acts 19:1, 10, 17-19.
- B. Indeed, when Paul's ministry had led many of them to burn several million dollars worth of their pagan scrolls of magic spells (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Acts 19:19) and they had turned from their famous local goddess Diana, it had led to a city-wide riot in the stadium at Ephesus where its pagans had insecurely shouted out for nearly two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," Acts 19:23-27, 34!
- C. Thus, addressing this deep fear of spiritual lack so typical in pagans, an insecurity that plagues not only the lost but even many Christians today, Paul reaffirmed that every believer positionally has the full sum of God's spiritual blessings for him in Christ, and that by faith alone in His Gospel, Ephesians 1:1-3 et al.:
 - 1. When Paul wrote Ephesians 1:1 KJV, he noted he addressed "the **saints** which are at Ephesus," meaning his Ephesian readers had been saved by faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Now, these folk had become "saints" **without** any **additional works** that **followed** their trust in Jesus:
 - a. Ephesians 1:12-13 KJV claims these "saints" were sealed with the Holy Spirit "after" faith in Christ.
 - b. Some claim "after" here means some **time** after faith in Christ, these believers gained God's fulness of spiritual blessings by receiving the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues; Asa Mahan, The Baptism of the Holy Ghost, 1870, p. iv as cited in Donald Ray Shell, "The Doctrine of the Seal of the Spirit and Its Implications," a 1976 Master's Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, p. 25.
 - c. Well, the KJV expression "after that ye believed" translates the aorist participle, *pisteusantes* ("having believed"), and though it **grammatically MAY** signal a **temporal** relationship where one is **sealed some time after believing**, in this context, it better signals a **logical** relationship, where the phrase would read: "having believed, you were sealed," Ibid. ; U. B. S. Greek N. T., 1966 ed., p. 665.
 - d. Proof that believers are thus sealed with the Spirit apart from later works is given in 1 Corinthians 12:13, 29-30: Paul there wrote that **all** his Corinthian believing readers had been baptized by the Holy Spirit into one spiritual body though **not all** had prophesied or performed miracles or healed or spoken in or interpreted tongues (the questions in 12:29-30 are written in the Greek as rhetorical questions that expect a negative answer; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1989, fn. to 1 Cor. 12:29-30).
 - e. Thus, there is **no time lapse between trusting in Christ for salvation and being sealed with the Holy Spirit**: the **instant** one believes, **logically based on that faith**, God seals him with the Spirit!
- D. So, **IN VIEW OF THIS GRAND CONTEXT**, Ephesians 1:3 reveals that God has blessed "us", that is, we His "saints", "with **all spiritual blessings** in heavenly *places* in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3 KJV): so, **by faith alone in Christ alone, every believer is a SAINT** (Ephesians 1:2, 12-13) **who is blessed in his POSITIONAL SALVATION STATUS in Christ with EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING God has for him in this life, and that apart from any later work like water baptism, speaking in tongues, being "slain in the spirit" or any other later alleged work of "blessing"!**

Lesson: *By faith alone in Christ only, we possess every spiritual blessing that God has for us in our salvation standing in Christ, so we need not seek some other blessing at a later date by some later work!*

Application: *(1) May we rejoice in the completeness of the spiritual blessings we possess by faith alone in Christ only! (2) May we then refuse to feel pressured to seek additional experiences like "tongues speaking," "being slain in the spirit", "water baptism," etc. for eternal life or spiritual fulfillment!*