

The Reality Of God

Ephesians 1:3

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

When we read this letter of Paul to the church, we move into a different world. We live in a secular and materialistic society and one that increasingly finds no place for God in life, work, and play. But this world to which Paul introduces us begins with God. As he begins, he also closes the epistle, as seen in Ephesians 6:23, “Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The secular, materialistic, skeptical world says to us, “We do not need God. We do not have any place for faith, and as for ethics and morality, the Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule are enough.” **To them God is unnecessary.** The Golden Rule is good but morality will soon become unraveled without God. **There must be a motive behind righteousness, ethics, and morality,** and that motive is not found in **men.** **Men change and are unstable, but morality, righteousness, and goodness are always the same, for they are grounded in the character of Almighty God.** **Right, morality, and truth** are not what man says they are, but **what God says they are,** and God never changes. **What was right yesterday is right today and right forever.** **There is no such thing as a changing morality except in perversion.** **Right, righteousness, morality, and truth** are all **grounded in the character of Almighty God** and without Him we have nothing but **dust** and **sand.**

The unbelieving world says that faith is a matter of gullibility. It is a **hangover from superstition,** the drag of our evolutionary rise from our ancestors. They emphasize the **contradiction** between **science** and **faith.** But, my friend, **all science is capable of is to observe,** and it **writes down what it sees.**

For example, all that scientists can do is observe the law of gravity, they cannot not explain it. Take the *moon*, for example, which has the power to move the entire ocean. Think of the power to move an ocean! Science cannot explain it, it just observes.

It is a universal law in physics that when a thing gets colder it contracts; when heated, it expands. One can take water, contain it, build a fire under it, and the steam will drive a powerful engine. The thrust of that expansion of water is tremendous. However, as it becomes colder and colder, it condenses, it contracts. When it decreases in temperature to 32 degrees, for some unknown and inexplicable reason, it turns around and does just the opposite. It expands as it freezes! But it is suppose to contract. You can see it but you cannot explain it. Science does not explain, it just observes and writes down what it sees.

Where are the answers? Is there any purpose in life? Why was I born? Is there any meaning to existence? Where did I come from? What am I? Where is my eternal destiny and home? The answers lie in God!

Paul begins with God and that is the way we want to start. This is the way *Paul lived* and *concluded his life*, and this is the way *we want to live and conclude our lives*, namely, in God. Therefore, look with me as we look at our text, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul begins with these words, "Blessed be God." But how can I bless God? Hebrews 7:7 says, "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better." God is so great and I am so small. How could I ever bless God? When God blesses us He bestows benefits upon us. He pours out of His abounding grace love and gifts. He enriches our souls and lives. But how can I bless God? I cannot add to His *perfection*. I cannot add to His *blessedness*. He said in Psalm 50:12,10, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine

and the fullness thereof. For every beast of the forest is mine and the cattle up on a thousand hills."

With all of that in mind, how can I possibly bless God? The answer is found in the Word of God. And the Bible says we can bless God in three ways.

First of all, we bless God by our praises, prayers, words, and deeds of gratitude, thanksgiving, and appreciation. The Psalmist put this way in Psalm 103:14, “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies.” The Word of God says, “Bless the Lord and forget not all his benefits.” Listen, if you want to bless God, then **start praising Him in thanksgiving and gratitude**, remembering the source from whence your blessings come.

Praise is that simple outpouring of love and devotion to the Lord God of glory for His love and goodness in your life. Psalm 126:23 says, “Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing. Then they said among the nations, The Lord has done great things for them. The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad.” When we read and/or hear the Word of God, and when we think of His great love for us, and when we see His blessings in our lives, we ought to shout His praises all the daylong. Listen, **if you can't praise Him every day, you can't praise Him on Sunday.**

Secondly, we bless God by our love and commitment to Him. Deuteronomy 6:45 puts it this way, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.” That is exactly the very same scripture that Jesus used in Matthew 22:37, “Jesus said to him, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” We are commanded to love the Lord our God. We bless God when we love God!

At the very heart of the Christian life is our understanding of the love of God. 1 John 4:10 says, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." John 3:16 tells us that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life." **All creation is a work of God's love.** And **Jesus Christ** is God's giving of Himself in love to **restore** and **fulfill** all **creation**. The **Holy Spirit** is the pouring out of this love in endless transformation and fresh commitment. **When we recognize God's wonderful love and His awesome blessings, it results in our celebration, better known as praise.** Praise is therefore an attempt to cope with the abundance of God's love for us, but returning our love to Him. **If you really want to bless God, then fall in love with Him!**

Thirdly, we bless God in our service, ministry, and compassionate relationship with God's people. Paul put it this way in Galatians 6:10, "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially, to them who are of the household of faith." Our relationship with God's people not only involves kindness, it also includes forgiveness, as seen in Ephesians 4:32, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven you." Jesus said this in Matthew 25:40, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

We bless God in our love and friendship for His people. Folks, I am convinced that nothing breaks the heart of God any more than seeing His children at odds with each other in **resentment** and **bitterness**. Look once more at our text, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Ladies and gentlemen, the only way to the Father is through the Son.

The Bible tells us that *no man can see the face of God and live.*
To look upon the presence and the glory of God would be like looking into the blazing sun. It blinds our eyes. Hebrews 12 concludes with this verse, "For our God is a consuming fire." The earlier verses in that chapter describe Mount Sinai, the mount that burned with fire, and then quotes from the Old Testament, "And Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." **Who can look at God?**

The answer to that question is simple, for Jesus said to His disciples in John 14:79, "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him. Philip said to Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us. Jesus said to him, Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, Show us the Father?" **Would you like to know what God is like?** Look at Jesus, for **if you know Jesus** you know **God the Father.** If you **love Jesus** you **love God the Father.** **If you sit at the feet of Jesus** **you sit at the feet of God.** If you **follow Jesus** you **follow the Lord God.** What an amazing privilege!

Look once more at our text, "Blessed be God, and blessed be the Lord, our Savior Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, in Christ." **God's blessings on our life are not something that is going to happen.** It is not a future thing. It is God who has blessed us *now*. **If you are "in Christ," right now you are in the "heavenlies" and you are blessed with "all spiritual blessings."** Child of God, there is not a need in your life that has not already been provided in the finished work of Jesus Christ!