

Series: "Ephesians: Discovering Our Riches in Christ"

"Our Spiritual Treasure!"

Ephesians 1:7-12

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Pastor Corey Sateren

How many of you have watched the movie "National Treasure"?

SLIDE –



Well for those of you who have not seen it...the plot centers on the character of Ben Gates (played by Nicolas Cage). Ben Gates comes from a family of treasure hunters. His grandfather believes that the forefathers' buried a treasure somewhere in the country and have placed clues everywhere but unfortunately the clues are highly cryptic and scattered all over the place. Ben thinks he has found THE clue but it only leads him to another clue which is on the back of the Declaration of Independence. Ben takes it upon himself to steal the Declaration of Independence. The clue IS on the back of the Declaration but it too comes with another clue which comes with another clue which comes with another clue. Finally, they are at the last clue which opens the vault door to the treasure.

We have been studying the Book of Ephesians on Sunday mornings and finding out that we too have a treasure - only of spiritual riches - available to us. And just as Ben Gates has been searching for his hidden treasure for years...there are many Christians who seem to search for their spiritual treasure for years! The clues as to what it is and where it is found are right here in this book we call our Bible. And it really is pretty simple to find our treasures!

As this scene opens that I'm about to show you Ben Gates and his three partners are at the very last clue that is about to unlock this massive treasure they have been looking for! He is holding the clue in his hands and says, "Could it really be that simple?" And sure enough it opens the treasure vault. Let me suggest that our 'spiritual treasure' is really that simple to find...it is in the Bible truths that most of us hold in our hands every day.

Then he says something like, "The secret lies with Charlotte." But you see the Christian's secret lies with Jesus Christ.

As the vault door opens and they walk in they begin to see the treasures and are all just aghast to find the wealth of the treasure! In fact, the funny young man sees a blue/green mummy case and says, "I'm guessing that's significant." It reminds me of so many Christians as we read our Bibles and say, "Well I can imagine that truth is significant but I have no idea why."

At this point in the movie the music builds as Ben Gates lights the chambers and discovers a massive amount of hidden treasure right before his eyes! It has been there all along! They just had to discover it! They gulp! Then they rejoice with each other and hug each other.

And I dare say when the Spirit of God sheds light on the spiritual treasure chambers that lie before us as Christians...when we discover how rich we are in Christ...we too will rejoice and not be able to contain ourselves!!!

Watch it with me and read Ephesians' truths all through this scene...

SLIDE – **Show the movie clip!!!!**

Wow! Could you see the correlation?

"Could it really be that simple?" - Could the Christian life/truths really be that simple?

"The secret lies with Charlotte." - The secret lies with Jesus Christ!

The 'awe' of the initial understanding/sight of the treasure!

The 'light' showing us all the treasure - The H.S. enlightening us with all the treasure that is ours in Christ!

The treasure is greater than we could ever imagine. - Rejoicing and worshipping!

SLIDE –Pg. 1156 **Our Spiritual Treasure**

Take your Bibles, please and open them to the New Testament book of Ephesians 1 as we look today at "Our Spiritual Treasure". If you didn't bring your Bible with you today I would encourage you to reach forward and grab that burgundy colored Bible and turn to page 1156. (1st Service – Video Café – Raise hands for a Bible and someone will come by and hand you one! Keep it up!)

SLIDE – **Blessings**

Ephesians 1 starts by addressing the saints/Christians/believers in Christ! So this book is written to we who are currently saved/saints/Christians! And these first 14 verses are our “Spiritual Treasure House” showing us 9 different spiritual blessings that we received when we became a Christian.

And to help us see WHO blessed us and WITH WHAT blessing we received and WHEN we received this blessing I have given you this chart with the hopes it will reveal some understanding of what is in these verses. Look at it with me...

SLIDE – The Spiritual Blessings

Verses	Who?	With What?	When?
vv. 3-6	The Father	He chose us He adopted us He graced us	Eternity Past
vv. 7-12	The Son	He redeems us He shows us He directs us	Past/Present and Future
vv. 13-14	The Spirit		Present/Future

So we see that we have the entire Trinity (Father; Son; Holy Spirit) giving us spiritual blessings. Last week we looked specifically at the three blessings the Father gave to us! Today we are going to focus on the blessings the Son gave to us and we will see that all three of these blessing began in the past; are still taking place today and are going to take place until the end of time!

READ vv. 7-10

SLIDE – What Does Christ Do For Me When I Accept Him As My Savior?

1. He redeems me (mind you this is three of many)
Just what does it mean for Christ to ‘redeem’ me?

SLIDE –

He purchases me and sets me free!

The idea of redemption is really one that is not complicated to understand, it’s that we just don’t see it happening too much any longer in our society. Let me give you an illustration and then come back and describe this a bit better...

ILL - Man walking sees a boy selling birds in a cage!
Purchases them...sets them free!

That is what Christ did for you and me. We were in the cage of...

SLIDE – FROM...

- Sin
- Satan
- System of the world

Jesus Christ came along and loved us and because He was the perfect sacrifice He shed His blood on the cross; gave His life for me! That was the redemption price. His life! He brings His blood to sin; Satan; and the system of this world and He paid the price that was being asked for me. THEN...when He bought me He opens the cage door and sets me free (from sin; Satan; and the system of the world.)

Now we need to be sure we understand this so allow me to unpack it another way...

READ v. 7

SLIDE –

“In Him we HAVE redemption” - Present durative (listen)

- I got redeemed at a point in time; (Salvation)
- I am still being redeemed today;
- I will always be being redeemed!

I.e. - when I got saved I get redeemed from sin; Satan; and the system of this world and there will never be a time that I am not being redeemed! The purchase is done! It never has to be done again. Do you know what this insinuates? It is telling us that salvation is forever! When we get saved we cannot lose it! We call it ‘eternal security’! I can never become captive again! I am set free!

APPLY -

Did you ‘really’ catch this? So many people struggle with not knowing this truth!

- You cannot become captured again
- You cannot ‘do’ anything that gets rid of your freedom
- You cannot go back into that cage
- You are set free to live for Jesus Christ!

It doesn’t matter how you feel or how bad you think you are! What you have done! You are free! You HAVE redemption! How does that make you feel! Wonderful!

SLIDE –

“Through His blood” - that was the purchase price!

Now we have communion today and when that cup is passed around we are to be thinking of this very thought as we hold that cup in our hands. It is by Christ going to that cross and giving Himself for me that I am free from sin; Satan; and the system of this world and can live for Him!

SLIDE –

“The forgiveness of sins” - wipe the slate clean!

ILL - white board...Some of you need to hear this! Satan has you all beat up thinking you are some terrible person! Think: all because you aren't 'good' enough or haven't 'done' enough! RIGHT!

SLIDE –

- How far are my sins gone away?

SLIDE –

Psalms 103:12 - as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

SLIDE –

Micah 7:18 - Who is like you...who hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

SLIDE –

Isaiah 43:25 - "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."

SLIDE –

Isaiah 44:22 - "I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you."

SLIDE –

“In accordance with the riches of God's grace”

ILL - I have \$5,000 in savings. You have a need and come to me.

I give - \$50 - “out of my riches”

I give \$4,000 - “according to my riches”

SLIDE –

- How many of my sins are redeemed?
God has more grace than I have sin!

READ v. 8

SLIDE – What Does Christ Do For Me When I Accept Him As My Savior?

He redeems me...Second...

2. He shows me

READ vv. 9-10

Just what does Christ 'show' to me? The mystery of His will!

SLIDE –

What is 'the mystery of His will'!

In the technical sense what he is teaching us is that before the coming of Jesus Christ to die for us on the cross we only knew about the future what had been told us in the Old Testament. And that was that the Millennium Kingdom would come one day. The Old Testament did not tell us anything about the Church age; the rapture; the return of Christ; that the Holy Spirit lives in us; that Satan has no power over us except to lie to us in our minds; those items. NOW we do know about those items. Those were a mystery to all Old Testament saints. The only future they knew about was that the Millennium would come. Now we know them.

But without getting real technical here allow me to be much more practical...okay?

ILL - Before you came to know Christ as your Savior how much of the Bible did you 'understand' when you read it?

If you are like most...you will confess 'not a whole lot'. I would read it to be a good person but I didn't understand it like I do today.

Folks...It wasn't because you weren't smart! It is because it was 'hidden' from you! You see, when you and I trust Jesus as our Savior He puts in us the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit...

SLIDE – John 16:13

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come.

One of the greatest blessings we receive when we come to Christ is that the Holy Spirit will teach us what the Bible says! He will teach us what we couldn't understand when we were not saved! Mysteries.

Here is another verse. Jesus is talking with His disciples but it applies to exactly what we are talking about here...

SLIDE – Matthew 13:11

He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them."

So how about it? Do you understand more of the Bible today as you read it and study it than you did before you came to Christ? Is it making more sense to you as you grow in your relationship with Christ? It is supposed to!

If you do then you are reaping the results of being a Christian! Isn't it great to get excited about knowing more about the Bible... which in turn helps us know more about Jesus of the Bible! (That is precisely why we purpose to offer OPPORTUNITIES at Bethany; Bible studies; Life Groups)

IF NOT...and you are not living for the Lord and don't have any desire to find out more and more about the Lord...maybe you need to see if you really are a Christian. That's okay to do. Better to evaluate yourself now than at a time when you can no longer do so!

SLIDE – *What Does Christ Do For Me When I Accept Him As My Savior?*

He redeems me from sin. Second...He shows me the mysteries...

3. He directs me

READ vv. 11-12 (poor translation - "obtained an inheritance")
When you and I came to know Christ as our Savior we were made an heir (or we received our inheritance; or received all the blessings that God gave to us because we accepted Him as Savior). Now all those blessings are things like:

SLIDE – Our inheritance

Eternal life; full potential to have victory over sin; full potential to defeat temptation; the ability to detect Satan's lies; the ability to be 'wise as serpents but harmless as doves'; the capacity to love our enemies; the strength to endure through trials; the insight to not be deceived; the ability to be peace-loving, kind, and considerate; etc.
Character traits - yes! That is what our inheritance is! Like Christ!

Let's just keep it simple...here is what he is saying...

READ vv. 11-12 and explain...

Here is the long and short of what he is saying...

SLIDE –

- God has a plan for my life
- His plan has a purpose
- The purpose is to glorify Him

That is what "predestination" is all about!

Let me share two sets of verses with you and then show you a diagram and possibly you will understand it better!

SLIDE –Ephesians 2:10

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Here is another verse to explain it...

SLIDE –Philippians 2:13

For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.

The salvation comes first...then God works by creating both a desire in us and a work for us to do...then we do it...then we accomplish His purpose which is to grow in our character and to glorify Him!

Let me give you a diagram as to how this works...

SLIDE –Diagram with arrows (you may recall this...)

- Saved by grace and receive my inheritance
- God prepares works for me to do
- God encourages me to do the works
- I do the works and get more conformed and people see them and glorify Him
- People get saved....repeats....

This is predestination! Recall with me from a previous message in which we described predestination...it has to do with events or things or circumstances that God designs to conform us into the image of Christ's character...it is NOT about salvation.

ILL. - How about you? Have you been watching to see how the Lord is doing it in your life?

If one of the blessings that Jesus Christ gives to us when we come to know Him as our Savior is that He directs me/he constructs situations in my life using what He has given to me (here called my inheritance) to make it through each of those situations...do I see it?

Because to see Him setting up situations and circumstances that He will use to conform me into His image will keep me from becoming frustrated!

With all this as the backdrop he adds this...to give us all a bit of insight and encouragement!

SLIDE – Philippians 2:14-18

Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

SLIDE –

But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Do we understand how it is we can glorify God in every situation that comes our way? Because we get to a point in our understanding of Biblical theology where we see that God has His hand in everything so that His will (which is to develop Christ's character within me) will be accomplished in my life. Folks...how much better could it get?

Wow! What a treasure house of 'spiritual treasure'!! And it is all ours for the having!

Pray!

SLIDE – Blessings

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