

Sermon Outline

INFINITE GIFT (EPHESIANS 1:22)

I. Introduction

II. Far Above All Rule (Eph 1:3-21)

- A. Ephesians 1:3 shows us the awesome intensity of God's love for us.
 - Eph 1:3: "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."
- B. *Christ Jesus* is the Blessing, Wealth, Wholeness, Peace, and final Home that we so desperately need.
- C. We know how much God loves us, because of all the gifts that God could give us—a fuller bank account, a new house, a new position in the company, more wealth, more health in this world—God chose to give us his only-begotten Son to be our eternal life. To receive Jesus is to receive God himself.
- D. What are these blessings that we have in Jesus Christ? The blessings include:
 - our predestination in Christ (v 5);
 - our adoption as sons through Christ (v 5);
 - our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins by the blood of Christ (v 7);
 - our eternal inheritance in Christ (v 11);
 - and the gift of the Holy Spirit (v 13)
- E. Even if we do not experience the full *implications* of those blessings at this time, we have them in our possession.
- F. Indeed, the greater our faith is in God's promises, the greater our trust in Jesus, the more we will experience the benefits of those blessings in our lives.
- G. Having listed the blessings that we have in our Lord Jesus Christ, Paul goes on to...
 1. thank God for giving the church their faith in the Lord Jesus and their love toward all the saints (v 15);
 2. tell the Ephesians that he has not ceased thank God for them (v 16);
 3. pray that God would cause them (and all other believers) to understand the glorious hope that God has appointed for us (v 18).
- H. Paul prays that God would make us realize the greatness of his power toward us (v 19).

- I. This is the exact same power that God “worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places” (v 20).
- J. To know how great that power is, consider that Jesus has been exalted “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” (v 21).
- K. It is here where verse 22 comes into the picture: “And he [God the Father] put all things under his [Jesus’] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church.”
- L. This verse shows us just how much God loves Jesus and us.
 - 1. God loves Jesus so much that he makes Jesus the Head, the Lord, the King over “all things.”
 - 2. God loves us so much that he gives Jesus as Head over all things to us; that is, for our benefit.
- M. Verse 22 shows that the saving, life-giving headship of Jesus is God’s best and highest gift to you and to me. God intends for the headship of Jesus over all things to be the basis of our eternal life and happiness. The headship of King Jesus is the sum-total of God’s blazing affection for his people. *God has given this Infinite Gift to us.*

III. God, the Giver of All Good Things

- A. The main Actor or Doer in verse 22 is *the Lord God himself*. That’s the “he” to whom verse 22 is referring. It’s referring to God.
- B. Who is this God that Paul has been telling us about?
 - Eph 1:3: “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.”
 - Eph 1:17: “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,”
- C. The one true God, the only Supreme Being who is “out there,” is the God who associates himself with the Lord Jesus Christ—the God who has revealed himself to us through the person, teachings, and accomplishments of the Lord Jesus.

IV. The Firstborn Son

- A. Before we get to talking about *us*, Ephesians 1:11 talks about what God has done for *Jesus*.

- B. The order is very important, because in everything that God plans to do for his people, Jesus always comes first. Jesus is always first in God's heart and mind.
- C. There are at two reasons Jesus is always first in God's mind.
1. Jesus is the eternal, firstborn Son and Image of God.
 - Jn 1:18: "No one has ever seen God; the only [begotten] God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known."
 - Heb 1:3: "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"
 - Col 1:15-17: "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by 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."
 2. God desires Jesus his firstborn to have pre-eminence over all things.
 - Col 1:18: "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."

V. God Made Jesus the Head

- A. With those considerations in mind, what has God done for Jesus? Given that Jesus is the firstborn in all of God's purposes, God has "put all things under [Jesus'] feet."
- B. This verse flows from the previous verse, which told us that God raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at his right far above all rule and power (vv 20-21).
- C. Although glory was ordained for Jesus by God since the beginning, Jesus received this glory because he earned it by his fulfilment of God's holy Law.
 - Phil 2:6-11: "who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

- D. Jesus' exaltation is the demonstration of God's supreme love and devotion to his divine-human Son. God shows his love and his delight to Jesus by super-exalting Jesus over all the powers of creation, granting Jesus to be the Lord and the Head over all things.
- E. No matter what evil and brokenness we see in the world, this is now the solid fact that stands at the very heart of all creation: MESSIAH JESUS IS THE LORD.
- F. God's firstborn Son has fulfilled the Law and attained the right to become the true Head of the human race, the rightful King of creation, and rule all of creation from the right hand of God.
- G. The LORD God, in the person of Jesus, has ascended to his throne and has begun to reign and to bring the world back into conformity with his will.
- H. The very elements and powers of creation are under Jesus' feet. Our very lives are under Jesus' feet—because Jesus the Firstborn of God, the perfect Servant of God, has earned the right to rule.

VI. God Gave Christ as Head to the Church

- A. Having made the firstborn Son Jesus the Head over all things, God now does something astounding and generous: “[God] gave him as head over all things to the church” (v 22).
- B. The lordship of Jesus over all things is God's gift to the church. The lordship of Jesus is meant for the good of each believer, each member of the body of Christ, you and me. Because Jesus is our Head...
 1. the sins that we struggle with will not be our downfall but will be overcome.
 - 1 Thess 5:23: “Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 2. illness will not destroy us.
 3. the success or failure of our careers is not determinative.
 4. we can each have a share in his life and person.
 - Col 2:19: “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.”
 5. physical death will not be the end of our stories.

Because Jesus is our Head, you and I are no longer helpless slaves to this old world, dependent on it for our life, meaning, dignity, purpose, or sense of right and wrong. Instead, as New Testament scholar Klyne Snodgrass puts it, “Life's center of gravity is not earthly life; it is in the heavenly realm

with Christ and God. As the Exalted One, Christ is Lord, and his exaltation is determinative for life and for the church.” (*Ephesians*, 75). Who we are is no longer determined by how much we earn, how well do, how highly or poorly people think about us, or who runs the governments of the world. No. Who we are is now and forever determined by the new Head, the new Lord, whom God, out of his everlasting love, has placed over us. Jesus Christ is our Lord—and we are in Jesus Christ. That is all that matters. Jesus will care for us, even when the world does not. Jesus will love us, even when we fall into sins so deep that we are so filled with shame and guilt. And Jesus has promised to bring us home, because where the Head is, the body will follow. The Lord Jesus is God’s infinite Gift to us. In him, we are complete. In him, we are free. In him, we are embraced by the everlasting love of God. Jesus is Lord!

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today’s sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything with which you disagree or found difficult to accept?
3. What does Eph 1:3 show us about God’s love toward us?
4. What are these blessings that we have in Jesus Christ (see vv 5, 7, 11, 13)?
5. Based on vv 20-21, what did God do to Jesus?
6. Based on v 22, what has God done for Jesus and the church?
7. Why is Jesus first in all of God’s works (see Jn 1:18; Col 1:15-18; Heb 1:3)?
8. Based on Phil 2:6-11, how did Jesus attain headship?
9. In God’s plan, what has Jesus become (in relation to creation)?
10. Having made Jesus head over all things, what has God done for the church?
11. How is the lordship of Jesus good news for us?