**Lessons from a Lockdown**

Rommel J. Casis

**Day 32**

**Ephesians 1:3-14**

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment —to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. Do I praise God for all the blessings I have received?
2. Based on the scripture above, what are the spiritual blessings I have received from God?
3. Which of these blessings mean the most to me? Why?
4. What should be my response to all these blessings?
5. What prevents me from seeing God’s spiritual blessings in my life? What should I do?

***Insight:***

Paul lists spiritual blessings available to all Christians. These are blessings made in heaven. He writes that we have *every* spiritual blessing in Christ. For as long as we remain in Christ, we have all these blessings.

The reason for these blessings is because Christians have been chosen by God to be holy and blameless in his sight. There is a purpose for these blessings. While we do not earn these blessings, they should produce a result in our lives. These blessings are intended to inspire us to be holy and blameless. Has God’s blessings inspired to be holy and blameless? How have we allowed God’s blessings to affect us?

*Adopted.* One of the blessings of being a Christian is that we have been adopted as a child of God. We are now part of God’s family. Some children dream of being part of a royal family. As Christians we have something infinitely better. There is nothing better than to be part of God’s family. Being able to call God, “Father” as Jesus did and call on him for help anytime brings us great comfort and confidence as we go through each day. We know that whatever happens, God’s family will be there for us. Because of this blessing we are joyful.

*Forgiven.* By dying on the cross, Jesus paid for our sins. He took on the punishment that we deserve. So, by grace we are forgiven. God rescued us from eternal punishment. We no longer have to be burdened by the guilt of our sins. We are no longer slaves to sin so we don’t have to sin anymore. Because of this blessing we overcome sin.

*Taught.* Godhas made known to us the mystery of his will. Through the Word of God, we now know God’s plan for us. We are no longer lost. We know how to live our lives as we base our decisions on God’s Word. Because of this we now have the privilege of revealing this mystery with others as Christ’s ambassadors. Because of this blessing we share our faith.

*Sealed.* We have been included in Christ and marked with a seal, the Holy Spirit, “who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession.” This seal means we belong to God. This is God’s way of telling us: “You are mine.” We are God’s possession and he will protect us. Because of this blessing we are secure.

Every blessing we have is in accordance with the riches of God’s grace, which he lavishes on us. What could we have done to deserve all of this? Nothing.

Grace is the idea that those who deserve nothing are treated as if they deserve everything. (Thomas Jones)

In fact, because of our sins what we deserve from God are curses not blessings. But God gave us blessings and he continues to bless us. This is grace and this should be what motivates us every day.

Paul’s response as he remembers these spiritual blessings is to praise God. We should do the same as we too have been chosen for the praise of his glory. As Christians we should always be praising God for all the spiritual blessings we have received and enjoy. To do this we need to always remind ourselves of God’s spiritual blessings.

May this lockdown be a time we praise God for his many blessings.