

God's People
Part 1: Who We Are
Privileged
Ephesians 1:1-3

Introduction: The word “privileged” is often used in our society for those we feel are given more health, wealth, and/or opportunity than we were given. It’s implied that “privilege” isn’t earned but is rather given, to the extent some in our society insist that those who are “privileged” should feel so guilty that they were given something by their parents or the society they were born in that others were not given, that they should give up a significant part of their “privilege” to those deemed “unprivileged” by others so that in the end everybody has the same thing. Ironically, the new privileged class becomes the people who decide how much of what other people have gets distributed to whom.

At the basis of this unethical ideology is the concept that “privilege” isn’t earned but rather given, which is fundamentally nonsensical. If you were born into a wealthy family, that family didn’t become wealthy because somebody accidentally gave them a billion dollars, but rather because at least one generation in that family put their talents to work with such tenacity and wisdom that they became financially successful! A privilege that’s inherited is a privilege that somebody earned and, in so doing, earned the right to determine who they were going to give that privilege to. Ethically, the person who should get to choose the trajectory of their privilege is the person who earned it.

Now, some ask, what about those who earned their privilege through unethical or immoral practices? Society has to be the judge of that and then live with the consequences, because no matter what, whoever is in charge of redistributing privilege becomes the new privileged class. For instance, in the name of fairness, communists killed all the people they considered to be the privileged aristocracy in their societies, people they deemed to have unethically gained and mishandled their wealth. But, ironically, in doing so, they also destroyed the freedom and opportunity for everybody to earn privilege, that is, for everybody else other than the leaders who were privileged to be in charge of the government—the new monarchy and aristocracy! In addressing one problem, they created an even bigger problem that was ironically even more protected and weaponized than the previous privileged class!

My point here is that privilege is always embedded in the system, and it’s always something that someone had to earn at some point. For instance, when it comes to me being a child of God, the greatest privilege I could ever have, I have no ability whatsoever to earn it, but that doesn’t mean it wasn’t earned, nor that the one who gave it to me wasn’t ethical in the acquisition of it or in the giving of it.

Today and over the next few weeks, we will examine the privilege of being a child of God. We will examine how this privilege was earned and granted to us, and what it means that we have it, but the first thing I want us to see is that we are indeed privileged! Who I am as God’s child, as one of His people, is the most incredible privilege in the universe, and I did

nothing at all to deserve it; as a matter of fact, everything I did and do is generally in opposition to it.

The Apostle Paul begins his letter to the church in Ephesus, not hiding his head in shame regarding the privileges he and the church had been given in Christ, but rather declaring privileges that can only come from Christ and praising God for granting them.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 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,

Proposition: In Ephesians 1:1-3, Paul points out three privileges that can't be earned.

The first privilege in Ephesians 1:1-3 that Paul speaks about is that,

(1) We are privileged to have an eternal purpose. (1:1a)

- A. 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,**
- B. The text begins by describing the distinct purpose to which Paul was called, but, as we will see later, everyone who repents and believes in Jesus is also given an eternally valuable purpose in the Kingdom of God. Specifically, in Romans 12:3-8 and 1 Corinthians 12, we learn that everybody who is in Christ is given a specific GRACE or GIFT to serve in His Kingdom. There are all kinds of ways God blesses us to serve with Him in His cause, but in every way we are called and gifted to serve with Him, it is all for the same eternal purpose—to unite all things in Him (Ephesians 1:10).**
- C. Therefore, Ephesians 1:1a is all about what God graced Paul to do in God's eternal purpose, and it's significant, but we can't miss that it's to the same purpose as what we are graced to do in the Kingdom of God—bring His life to His people so that all are united in Him!**
- D. Now, some of you might be thinking I'm reading too much into an 11-word English translation of the Greek! Specifically, you might be thinking that the passage doesn't say anything about it being a privilege for Paul to be an apostle. Well, let's take a minute and flesh out what's in here.**
- E. First, it's important to remember that Paul's name was originally Saul. After repenting and believing in Jesus, Saul began referring to himself as Paul. The New Testament was indeed written in Greek, but Saul was also a Roman citizen, and the Romans spoke Latin. The name "Paul" in Latin means "small." My point is that, even in the name he used, Paul didn't view himself as deserving anything, and certainly not his apostleship.**

- F. What's an apostle? Well, K. S. Wuest states,
- G. **"He designates himself an apostle; the Greek word is *apostolos*, from the verb *apostellō*, "to send one off on a commission to do something as one's representative." The word was used in an official capacity to refer to an ambassador or envoy. Paul considered himself an official envoy or ambassador of Christ Jesus."¹**
- H. The eternal PURPOSE in Paul's apostleship was not in being an apostle but in being "an apostle of JESUS CHRIST!"

Note: "The Greek text has these names in the above order. "Christ" is the transliteration of *christos* (χριστός) which means "anointed," and this Greek word is the translation of the Hebrew word which we take over into English in the word "Messiah," and which itself means "The Anointed One." However, in the Church Epistles, the word does not refer to our Lord in His official capacity of the Messiah of the Jewish nation, but as The Anointed of God, the Person chosen from the Godhead to be the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King to accomplish the purposes of God in the plan of salvation. The name "Jesus" is the transliteration of the Hebrew word which comes over into English in the name "Jehoshua." It is *Iēsous* (Ιησους) in the Greek language. The Hebrew word means "Jehovah saves." In it we find the deity, humanity and vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus. God incarnate died for sinners to satisfy the just demands of His law which sinners violated."²

- I. So where does privilege come into play here? Paul doesn't receive the tremendous responsibility and privilege of being an Apostle of Jesus Christ by virtue of having earned it or deserved it, but "**by the will of God.**"
- J. To be an apostle is to be officially sent out to authoritatively represent somebody. Paul had no concept of him ever earning the right to be that for JESUS CHRIST!! For those who are new to the Bible, Paul wasn't saying that to try to sound humble. Before giving his life to Jesus, Paul killed Christians! He did everything possible to oppose God's purpose in Christ; to not just silence it but to totally destroy it! Listen to God's Word and notice who assisted in the execution of the first follower of Jesus and who was "ravaging the church,"
- K. **1 And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 Devout**

¹ Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 4, p. 15). Eerdmans.

² Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 4, p. 15). Eerdmans.

men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. 3 But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison. (Acts 8:1-3)

- L. Then, in Acts 9, this happened,
- M. **1 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. 4 And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" 5 And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 6 But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." 7 The men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. 8 Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. (Acts 9:1-9)**
- N. My point is that Paul KNEW he hadn't earned the privilege of being in the Kingdom of God, much less have the right to have a purpose in it. Imagine how crazy it was for him to know he was officially commissioned to destroy what Jesus created, but now GOD was sending him to build it up as an official authoritative representative of Christ Himself, the very one He was trying to rid the world of! Paul was blown away by the privilege of being an Apostle, not because of the authority it carried, which was a responsibility, but because of the purpose it supported—Christ's!
- O. **9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed. (1 Corinthians 15:9-11)**
- P. Paul is saying he's totally unworthy to be an apostle (vs. 9). His point isn't that he is an apostle but rather the purpose—Jesus! The point is that people believe the Gospel and, as such, repent and believe in Christ and are thus found in Him—Christ's purpose!
- Q. In the EXACT same way, every single person who has repented and given their life to Christ has been given the privilege to serve in the purpose of Christ. You didn't earn the right to have a life with an eternal purpose. You were given the privilege of a life in Christ that, no matter if it's measured by a few years or a lot of years on this earth, is an eternal life serving an eternal purpose bigger and

more important than any purpose on this planet—to point people to JESUS and the life that is ONLY found in HIM!

The second privilege in Ephesians 1:1-3 that Paul speaks about is that,

(2) We are privileged to be Saints. (1:1b-2)

- A. To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**
- B. The following are some excerpts from a variety of commentators for those who want to geek out a little on who the letter is addressed to or not addressed to:**
 - 1.** “The oldest copies of this letter do not include the Greek phrase *en ephesō* (“in Ephesus”) in Eph 1:1, which may indicate that Ephesus was not the original destination. Ephesians might have been a circular letter—one that was intentionally written for a wide audience and sent to multiple places. If so, it could be the letter mentioned in Col 4:16 as being sent to the church at Laodicea. The reference to Ephesus might have been inserted later, perhaps to reflect the letter’s first destination. Since Paul had spent several years in Ephesus (Ac 19:10), several statements in the text implying that Paul was unfamiliar with his audience (Eph 1:15; 3:2) lend support to the circular-letter theory. It is possible that Paul was even imprisoned in Ephesus when he wrote this letter; if so, it likely was composed around ad 54–57. Paul also could have written it from Caesarea (ad 58–60) or Rome (early 60s ad; see note on Phil 1:7).”³
 - 2.** “The words ‘at Ephesus’ are not to be found, however, in the earliest Pauline papyrus (Chester Beatty 46) which dates from the second century. Origen in the third century did not know them, and they are absent from the great fourth-century Vatican and Sinaitic codices. The matter is further complicated by the fact that Marcion in the middle of the second century referred to Ephesians as having been addressed ‘to the Laodiceans’. Since Paul himself directed the Colossians both to see that his letter to them be read ‘in the church of the Laodiceans’ and that they themselves ‘read also the letter from Laodicea’, some have thought that this so-called ‘letter from Laodicea’ was in fact our ‘Ephesians’, and that he was instructing the churches to exchange the two letters which they had received from him. Certainly Tychicus was the bearer of the two letters. How then can we reconstruct the situation which led to these variants, some copies having ‘in Ephesus’, others having no designation and one referring to Laodicea? Near the beginning of this century Adolf Harnack suggested that the letter was originally addressed to the church in Laodicea, but that because of that

³ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Whitehead, M. M., Grigoni, M. R., & Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Eph 1:1–2). Lexham Press.

church's lukewarmness and consequent disgrace, the name of Laodicea was erased and that of Ephesus substituted. An alternative explanation was proposed by Beza at the end of the sixteenth century and popularized by Archbishop Ussher in the seventeenth, namely that Ephesians was originally a kind of apostolic encyclical or circular letter intended for several Asian churches, that a blank space was left in the first verse for each church to fill in its own name, and that the name of Ephesus became attached to the letter because it was the principal Asian city. Somewhat similarly, Charles Hodge thought that perhaps the letter was 'written to the Ephesians and addressed to them, but being intended specially for the Gentile Christians as a class, rather than for the Ephesians as a church, it was designedly thrown into such a form as to suit it to all such Christians in the neighbouring churches, to whom no doubt the apostle wished it to be communicated.' Such a more general readership would explain not only the variants in the first verse but also the absence from the letter of all particular allusions and personal greetings. All the same, the circular letter theory is entirely speculative. No manuscript carries an alternative destination. And Colossians, which Paul says he intended for another church as well (Col. 4:16), nevertheless includes some personal greetings. So the mystery remains unsolved."⁴

3. "Paul is writing to the saints which are in Ephesus. The words "in Ephesus" are within brackets in the Nestle and the Westcott and Hort texts. Tradition has it that this letter was sent to the local church in that city. But certain considerations have led recent expositors to believe that it was not sent to that church alone, but that it was an encyclical letter, sent to all the churches in Asia Minor. The oldest and best manuscripts, Aleph and B, do not contain the words "in Ephesus." Origen did not have them in his copy. Marcion called it the Epistle to the Laodiceans. Paul in Colossians 4:16 alludes to the letter from Laodicea. Marcion was familiar with the copy in Laodicea. Basil in the fourth century, mentions some manuscripts with no name in the address. Paul was intimately acquainted with the members of the Ephesian church, but he makes no personal reference to any of them in the letter, nor does he send any word of greeting to any of them, as is his habit in other letters. From the above it has been concluded that this letter was a general epistle to be circulated among the churches of the Roman province of Asia and it is supposed that the name of the church was inserted in the space provided in each instance."⁵
- C. The greeting reflects what causes us to grow—HIS grace and HIS peace! (1:2) Paul is getting ready to explain both in his letter, but nonetheless, at this point, this is simply a customary greeting that just so happens to also introduce us to one of the most amazing truths in the Bible—the GOOD NEWS! The grace (gift)

⁴ Stott, J. R. W. (1979). *God's new society: the message of Ephesians* (pp. 23–24). InterVarsity Press.

⁵ Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 4, pp. 18–19). Eerdmans.

and peace he wishes for them to abound in are not those of Rome or Greek philosophy, or what can be achieved in religion, but rather the gift and peace that come from “**God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**” He longs for them to have every last ounce of the privilege of God’s grace and peace!

Note: “Paul’s extension of **grace** (*charis*) **and peace** is different from the normal Greek letters which had only “greetings” or “greeting” (*chairein*; e.g., the apocryphal 1 Maccabees 10:18, 25; thousands of ancient papyri letters; and Acts 15:23; 23:26; James 1:1). “Grace” expresses God’s steadfast love toward man and “peace” shows the relational state as a result of that grace. Paul opened his letter to the church at Ephesus with greetings to the believers there, expressing his wish that God’s grace and peace be with them.”⁶

D. However, what’s interesting to me is that this wish is associated with people who are privileged by the Gospel in a very interesting way. He says, “**To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus.**”

1. “To the saints”

- a. “First, they are *the saints*. He is not referring by this familiar word to some spiritual élite within the congregation, a minority of exceptionally holy Christians, but rather to all God’s people. They were called ‘saints’ (that is, ‘holy’) because they had been set apart to belong to him. The expression was first applied to Israel as the ‘holy nation’, but came to be extended to the whole international Christian community, which is the Israel of God.”⁷
- b. “The letter is addressed to the saints who resided in Ephesus. “Saints” (*hagiois*, “holy ones”) are those set apart for God’s use. They are a part of the universal church by virtue of their salvation in Christ.”⁸
- c. “**saints**” The Greek word used here, *hagioi*, refers to those who are set apart or who belong to God, not to the moral quality of being without sin.”⁹
- d. “Paul addresses his letter “to the saints.” The word is *hagios* (ἀγιος). It is one of the great doctrinal words in this epistle. The word demands a careful and full treatment. Paul took it right out of the terminology of the pagan Greek religions. He had to. There were no other terms which he

⁶ Hoehner, H. W. (1985). [Ephesians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 615). Victor Books.

⁷ Stott, J. R. W. (1979). [God’s new society: the message of Ephesians](#) (p. 22). InterVarsity Press.

⁸ Hoehner, H. W. (1985). [Ephesians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 615). Victor Books.

⁹ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Whitehead, M. M., Grigoni, M. R., & Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Eph 1:1). Lexham Press.

could use so long as he was confined to the Greek language. There it meant “devoted to the gods.” For instance, a Greek worshipper would bring an offering to the god as a gift. He devoted it to that god. Or, the Greeks would build a magnificent temple and devote it to a certain god. The building was thereby set apart from any secular use, and separated to a religious one. It was consecrated to the worship of that particular Greek god. The building was therefore holy, holy, not in our sense of the term, pure, for the Greek temples were filled with immoral practices that were part of their religious worship (the temple at Corinth housing 3000 “sacred” harlots), but holy in the sense of being non-secular, and therefore religious in nature, set apart for the worship of the Greek divinities. The term was also used of persons who were devoted to the service of a god, separated to the service of the god, thus *hagios* (ἀγιος), consecrated, non-secular in character, but on the other hand, distinctively religious in nature and occupation. This is the genius of the Greek word translated “saint.” The verbal forms *hagizō* (ἀγιζω) and *hagiazō* (ἀγιαζω) mean “to hallow, make sacred,” especially by burning a sacrifice. The foregoing estimate of *hagios* (ἀγιος) is taken from *Greek-English Lexicon* by Liddell and Scott. We turn now to the *Biblico-Theological Lexicon* of Herman Cremer which specializes in the great doctrinal and theological words of the Greek New Testament. Cremer says that *hagios* (ἀγιος) “is the rarest of five synonyms which the Greeks had to express the idea of holiness, so far at least as they knew such an idea. In biblical Greek on the other hand, of the Old as well as the New Testament, it is the only word by which the *biblical* conception of holiness is expressed, that conception which pervades the Bible throughout, which molds the whole divine revelation, and in which, we may say with perfect truth, are centered the fundamental and leading principles and aims of that revelation. What constitutes the essence of holiness in the biblical sense is not primarily contained in any of the above named synonyms (*hieros*, *hosios*, *semnos*, *hagios* (ἱερος, ὁσιος, σεμνος, ἀγιος)); the conception is of purely biblical growth, and whatever the Greeks surmised and thought concerning the holiness of Divinity in any sense remotely similar to that in which Holy Scripture speaks of it, they had not one distinct word for it, least of all did they express it in any of the terms in question. ... As Greek of itself did not possess the right word for it, the only term presenting itself as in any degree appropriate—*hagios* (ἀγιος)—had to be filled and coined afresh with a new meaning; and thus *hagios* (ἀγιος) is one of the words wherein the radical influence, the transforming and newly fashioning power of revealed religion is most clearly seen. Of all the ideas which, within the world subjected to the influence of Christianity or in the modern languages, are bound up in the word *holy*, none are to be found in the ancient tongues, Greek or Latin, in the terms above named, save those of ‘the sublime,’ ‘the consecrated,’ ‘the venerable.’ The main element—the moral—is utterly wanting. Hence it is not merely a topic

of linguistic interest; it is a significant moral phenomenon which here presents itself to our inquiry.” The word *hagios* (ἅγιος) when applied to God signifies “His opposition to sin manifesting itself in atonement and redemption or in judgment. Or as holiness, so far as it is embodied in law, must be the highest moral perfection, we may say ... holiness is the perfect purity of God, which in and for itself excludes all fellowship with the world, and can only establish a relationship of free electing love, whereby it asserts itself in the sanctification of God’s people, their cleansing and redemption” (Cremer). The words, “saint, sanctify, sanctification, hallow, holy, holiness” in the New Testament are all translations of this same Greek root *hagi* (ἅγι). The verb means “to set apart for God,” and refers to the act of the Holy Spirit setting apart for God the sinner who has been elected to salvation, taking him out of the first Adam and placing him in the Last Adam. This is positional sanctification, an act performed once for all the moment the sinner places his faith in the Lord Jesus as his Saviour. This is followed by progressive sanctification, a process that goes on all through the earthly life of the Christian and continues throughout eternity, in which that person is being gradually conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus. That person is called a *hagios* (ἅγιος), a set apart for God person, a consecrated person. He is, as such, looked upon as a non-secular person, a distinctively religious person, in that he has been set apart for God, His worship and service. This he is positionally. It is easy to see that this set apart position of separateness demands a separation of life in his experience, separation from the age system of evil, separation in his own sphere of life from everything that would interfere in the least from the worship and service which is due to the God to whom he is set apart. This is a saint in the Bible sense of the term.¹⁰

2. I love that he adds that the believers in Ephesus are **faithful in Christ Jesus.**
 - a. They are those who, in their identity, “trust in Christ Jesus.” These Saints are necessarily Saints who trust in Jesus and are known as such; this is what a saint is.
 - b. “Next, they are also **faithful**. The adjective *pistos* can have either an active meaning (‘trusting’, ‘having faith’) or a passive (‘trustworthy’, ‘being faithful’). RSV chooses the passive here, but the active seems better since God’s people are ‘the household of faith’,⁸ united by their common trust in God through Jesus Christ. At the same time, J. Armitage Robinson may be right in suggesting that ‘the two senses of *pistis*, “belief” and “fidelity”, appear to be blended’. Certainly, it is hard to imagine a believer who is not himself believable, or a trustworthy

¹⁰ Wuest, K. S. (1997). *Wuest’s word studies from the Greek New Testament: for the English reader* (Vol. 4, pp. 16–18). Eerdmans.

Christian who has not learned trustworthiness from him in whom he has put his trust.”¹¹

c. “Thirdly, Paul’s readers are ***in Christ Jesus***. This key expression of the letter thus occurs in its very first verse. To be ‘in Christ’ is to be personally and vitally united to Christ, as branches are to the vine and members to the body, and thereby also to Christ’s people. For it is impossible to be part of the Body without being related to both the Head and the members. Much of what the epistle later develops is already here in bud. According to the New Testament—and especially Paul—to be a Christian is in essence to be ‘in Christ’, one with him and with his people.”¹²

E. So putting that all together, those who are the ones who are known as those who trust in Jesus, who do so because grace and peace have been given to them and will continue to be received by them, are SAINTS (those who are uniquely, in a holy way, set apart to belong to God differently than the rest of the Universe!). If that’s not privilege, then I don’t know what is. I couldn’t earn that. It was indeed earned, but not by me, so much so that there is nothing in this privilege that should lead to arrogance, but rather gratefulness, allegiance, and a massive sense of responsibility not to squander it!

This leads us directly to the third privilege in Ephesians 1:1-3.

(3) We are privileged to have God and His life. (1:3)

A. **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. The beginning of verse three returns to what I said a second ago, which should already be clear. This is all to GOD’s praise and Christ’s credit - **3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ**

1. “God is here designated as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. That is, he is at once God and Father, sustaining both these relations to Christ. Our Saviour used a similar form of expression, when he said, ‘I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God.’ John 20:17”¹³
2. “This God who is to be praised is the One **who has blessed us**. This is a verbal form (*ho eulogēsas*) of the adjective “praise” (*eulogētos*), at the beginning of the verse. The verb means “to speak well of, eulogize, extol”; here it means “to benefit, prosper.” This word is not used in classical Greek

¹¹ Stott, J. R. W. (1979). *God’s new society: the message of Ephesians* (p. 22). InterVarsity Press.

¹² Stott, J. R. W. (1979). *God’s new society: the message of Ephesians* (pp. 22–23). InterVarsity Press.

¹³ Hodge, C. (1858). *A commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians* (p. 27). Robert Carter and Brothers.

literature. For example, Zeus is not said to have bestowed any specific act of blessing on anyone. Rather he is said to have caused good luck or good fortune. However, the verb *eulogeō* is used over 400 times in the Old Testament, indicating that God bestows benefits to His children in every Age.”¹⁴

C. Specifically, in all who Christ is and in all that Christ did we have been blessed, that is, we have been PRIVLEDGED to receive, “**every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places**”, which in short means **everything entailed with GOD and HIS life!**

1. “Paul’s use of the past tense participle “has blessed” points to this blessing or prospering of believers as having occurred in eternity past. With what are believers blessed? **With every spiritual blessing** (in the Gr., this phrase precedes the words “in the heavenly realms”). **“Every spiritual blessing (eulogia) refers to every spiritual enrichment needed for the spiritual life. Since these benefits have already been bestowed on believers, they should not ask for them but rather appropriate them by faith.** Similarly Joshua was not to ask for land since God had already promised it to him (Josh. 1:3–4). But he was to enter into the enjoyment of that provision.”¹⁵
2. “‘Blessings in heaven.’ ... The old writers, therefore, were accustomed to distinguish between the *coelum gloriae*, the heaven of glory; *coelum naturae*, the visible heavens, and *coelum gratiae*, the heaven of grace here on earth. These blessings connected with this heavenly state, are conferred upon believers *in Christ*. It is as they are in him, and in virtue of that union that they are partakers of these benefits.”¹⁶
3. **“every spiritual blessing** Refers to the range of blessings in Eph 1:3–14 made available in Christ ... The blessings listed in this passage should be understood in their entirety, rather than as individual blessings. **Together, these blessings express the full scope of God’s redemptive activity.”¹⁷**

Let me first say, if you’ve never given your life to Christ, then let today be the day you finally repent and believe in Him! RECEIVE the privilege HE purchased for you with HIS own blood!

However, if you are already a believer, then here’s what I would like for you to think about at this point.

¹⁴ Hoehner, H. W. (1985). [Ephesians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 616). Victor Books.

¹⁵ Hoehner, H. W. (1985). [Ephesians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 616). Victor Books.

¹⁶ Hodge, C. (1858). [A commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians](#) (pp. 28–29). Robert Carter and Brothers.

¹⁷ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Whitehead, M. M., Grigoni, M. R., & Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Eph 1:3). Lexham Press.

Challenge: Biblically, privilege is NOT entitlement, it's a RESPONSIBILITY! What are you doing with your privilege in Christ?

1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. (John 15:1-6)

If you're on a sports team and you don't play or participate in practice outside of running through warm-up drills, then you likely don't feel like you have a purpose for being on that team, because honestly, you don't! You had better have some sort of role as a serious source of encouragement to your teammates, or you will soon find out you're not on the team at all. Why would you? You don't have a purpose. All you do is make warmups last longer!

When somebody gives you a job to do on a team, sports, work, education, or whatever, they are giving you a purpose to be on the team. If you don't have a job on the team, then you don't have a role in helping the team fulfill its purpose; as such, you are wasting your time and energy, as well as the team's, by being on the team.

If you work for a company and all you do is show up to work and just sit there with nothing to do, or what you do doesn't fulfill the purpose of what the employer is trying to do, then you have a good reason to believe that one day soon, there will be a pink slip sitting in your chair waiting for you!

My point is that as a child of God, you were not given the privilege of being IN CHRIST, abiding IN HIM, a branch on HIS vine, so that you could brag about it while sitting around doing nothing with it. This privilege is assigned to a purpose, the purpose of HIS Kingdom!

This privilege is meant for you to live and thus to live your life IN HIS LIFE!

This privilege is meant for you to be able to walk in freedom from the sin that entangles us and destroys us, not in it!

This privilege is intended to enable you to experience God and His life, so that you become a beacon of light to those around you, and as such, give them the opportunity to receive this privilege.

So what are you doing with it? Are you abounding in your privilege or squandering it in sin? Are you seizing the opportunity of your privilege and living so abundantly in HIS life

that you are spilling it over to everybody around you? Is your life bringing HIS life to your family and friends? Do they see you as one who has truly been set apart to God or as one who lacks the faith to abound in His privilege?