

Sunday 3 June 2018

Speaker: Martin Armstrong



To Be A Transforming
Community Committed
to Jesus Christ

Sermon Summary

I Praise God for Every Spiritual Blessing in Christ (Ephesians 1)

1. The Apostle Paul is in prison, chained to a guard, shut off from friends and loved ones, yet these irritating circumstances, help produce a wonderful letter. Many of the most precious things in life come through times of extreme difficulty. Discuss
2. Ephesus was a huge city, port and commercial centre, situated at a major travel crossroads. It was the doorway to Asia, for travellers from Persia, Egypt, Greece, & Rome. Have any of you been there? Why is it not so important today?
3. There is more known about the church at Ephesus than any other church in the NT. What things do you know about it?
4. Paul is 'a prisoner in chains'. People were worried about him. What does he say in his letter that indicates he is still in good heart, with lot's of passion and enthusiasm?
5. Verse 3 '*We praise God because we have every spiritual blessing in Christ*'. Just as a new born baby, doesn't know their eye colour or that they'll be crawling around in a few months time, newborn babies in Christ, don't fully know, who they are, or what lies ahead, or understand all the spiritual blessings that God has placed inside them. Discuss what these spiritual blessings may be
6. Hettie Green is still known as 'America's greatest miser'. She died in 1916 and left an estate worth \$100mil, over \$1B by today's value. She was so miserly that she ate cold oatmeal to save the expense of heating the water. Sometimes we can develop a tight-fisted mentality, when it comes to our physical or spiritual riches. Give some examples of how that might happen?
7. I used to go snorkelling & scuba diving off Niue Island, and encountered an underwater world, beyond anything I had experienced before. Has anyone discovered a new realm in the physical or the spiritual that is beyond their normal experience?

8. Verse 4 '*We praise God for choosing us in Christ*'. Paul is not emphasizing the choosing of individuals but the choice of those who are 'in Christ'. How could we illustrate this by being selected to represent our country in the Olympic Games? We're not to ask '*am I lucky enough to be one of the elect*' but '*have I realized that Jesus is the elected one of God & have I linked myself with him?*' Discuss
9. When we die we leave every physical blessing behind. We may have many material blessings on earth... but if we have no spiritual blessings in the heavenlies - we are desperately poor. Discuss
10. Think back on your Christian experience. Share about how tenderly Christ drew you, to himself, how He arranged for you to meet certain people or to be at a certain place at a certain time.
11. Thank God for his grace and favour and pray for each other.