

Katapult to God's Blessings – Ephesians 3:14-21

I. Introduction:

- A. I've given this message the title: "*Katapult to God's Blessings*," spelling the word catapult with a "k" not a "c."
1. I want to give you that up front, to create a little curiosity. But you will have to wait for my explanation.
- B. I hope that you are **yearning** for God's blessing today. I hope you are **expecting** God's blessing.
1. And by "*blessing*," I mean anything which our gracious Lord would like to give us.
 2. I hope you are as open to the grace, mercy and kindness of God as I am trying to be.
 3. I want to be ready for in whatever way He wants to use us, empower us, or bless us.
 4. And if I know my own heart, I am willing to make whatever sacrifices are necessary to receive His bounty.
- C. Of course, when it comes to blessings the greatest and most important is salvation.
1. As children of the god of this world, we entered into physical life already heading toward the Lake of Fire.
 2. But God, in His grace, not only sent His only begotten Son to die the sinner's death, but He also came to us specifically, enabling us to see, understand and **trust** Christ and His great sacrifice on the cross.
 3. He has regenerated many, giving us faith to believe on the Lord for eternal life.
- D. But salvation and deliverance from the penalty against us are just the beginning of God's gracious gifts.
1. In fact, Heaven is just one of the crumbs which has fallen from the Master's Table.
 2. Jesus not only speaks of "*eternal life*," but also of "*abundant life*" – and not just for the future, but now.
 3. In **John 10** the Lord declared "*I am come that they* (speaking of God's children like you and me)..."
 4. "*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*"
 5. For the next few minutes, I'd like us to put our heads & our hearts, together to consider this **abundancy**.
- E. But we begin with a universal problem: we live in physical bodies. We live in corrupt and dying flesh.
1. And that flesh provides a petri dish for cultivating both joy and sorrow – for grace but also judgment
 2. Bodies are physical, but life is more than just the body.
 3. And Christ's abundant life is more than living well while in this flesh and in this world.
 4. However, as long as we are focused on enduring the thorns in our flesh, keeping the bills paid, and rejoicing in the prosperity of our children, we will never fully understand what Jesus is talking about.
- F. How do I know that God's greatest blessings are not confined to physical things?
1. I know, because we are all dying, and all our earthly and physical things, good and bad, are temporary.
 2. Some of God's saints live only a few short years, while others endure the problems of life for a century.
 3. But we all die. Our time on earth is just a blip on the radar of God's vast eternity.
 4. There must be more than our hundred years in this world.
- G. Furthermore, we know that the very best and most blessed earthly life is little, because Jesus died.
1. Our Saviour paid our price and then ascended into Heaven from where He now intercedes on our behalf.
 2. And in that Heavenly light, we are told to "*set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*"
- H. With that I return to yearning for God's blessings, including a desire for a God-honoring, soul-stirring, revival.
1. While, "*looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith*," I long for other lost souls to join our gaze toward Christ sitting on the right hand of God.
 2. With our affections on things above, what is wrong with pleading with our beneficent God, to shower upon us the full inventory of His blessings today?

II. I hope you don't think I'm out of line in these yearnings, because I have Biblical precedence to follow.

- A. **II Corinthians 9:15** says, *"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."* Consider the word *"unspeakable."*
1. I know that the context is speaking about salvation, but the principle is much broader than that.
 2. The infinite God – the God who effortlessly created the incalculable resources of the world – possesses an inventory of wealth that makes the universe look like nothing more than a homeless encampment.
 3. The word *"unspeakable."* doesn't mean that we are forbidden to speak of God's gift.
 - a. It's just the opposite; we should shout about it from the roof tops.
 - b. *"Unspeakable"* means that this gift is so wonderful, so excessive, so fabulous that no human language is capable of fully describing it.
 4. **Salvation**, of course, is an unspeakable gift, but, as I have said, salvation is just the beginning.
 5. And when Paul says, *"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift,"* he is not saying that we should thank the Lord is hope, because it is reserved in Heaven for us.
 6. And it is not like some trust fund with a stingy administrator to whom we have to beg for a few dollars.
 7. No, we have access today to unspeakable gifts, and the more thankful we are for these blessings the more of them we are actually going to enjoy in this life.
- B. For the last couple weeks, in my personal reading and devotions, I have been brought back to **Ephesians 3**.
1. Skipping over a dozen things in these verses, let me take you to a couple of *"unspeakables."*
 2. Paul says in **verse 8** – *"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the UNSEARCHABLE riches of Christ."*
 3. If you would like to confine those *"unsearchable riches"* to salvation from sin, be my guest, but they appear to me to introduce all the rest of the chapter –
 - a. The **fellowship** of the **mystery**, **verse 9**. The **manifold wisdom** of God, **verse 10**.
 - b. The **boldness** and **access** with **confidence** we have to God through faith in Christ, **verse 12**.
 - c. And these are just the beginning.
- C. **Verse 8** speaks of the *"unsearchable riches of Christ."*
1. *"Unsearchable"* is a rare word in the Bible, used only twice in the New Testament, although **Job** twice used a similar Hebrew word.
 2. **Job** says in **5:8** – *"I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause: which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number"* – marvelous, unsearchable and numberless.
 3. What does *"unsearchable"* mean? It doesn't mean that it is so lost that it will never be found.
 4. No, it means that the riches of Christ are so incredible that they can't be measured. They are boundless.
 5. Many of God's gifts are like the love of God itself.
 - a. As Paul says in **verse 19** – that love *"passeth knowledge."*
 - b. And **yet**, it was his prayer that you and I *"may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height"* of that love.
- D. But it is one thing to **know** about some of God's blessings, whatever they are, and it is another to possess and enjoy those blessings.
1. **And** it is one thing to **experience** a few of God's blessings, but it's another to be blessed with them anew and again day after day. That is the potentiality which Paul is laying out before us.
 2. But again, I remind you that the best of God's blessings are not physical, not temporal, and not secular.
 3. **Verse 16** – *"That God would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."*
 4. **Verse 20** – *"that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."*
- E. Would it be inaccurate to say *"that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God"* is the Biblical description of *"revival?"* As I tried to say the other night, different people define revival differently.
1. But the kind of revival I would like to see is the presence of God in all His fullness in my life and church.
 2. *"To be filled with all the fulness of God"* demands personal holiness, because God is absolutely holy.

3. It must also refer to all those things which we call *“the fruit of the Spirit.”*
4. Isn't *“to be filled with all the fulness of God”* the source of Biblical joy?
5. Isn't *“to be filled with all the fulness of God”* the way to peaceably move through the thorns & scorns of life?
6. *“To be filled with all the fulness of God”* refers to access to the omnipotence of Jehovah Elohim.
7. And since the Son of God wept over Jerusalem, *“to be filled with all the fulness of God”* should give me the same burden for lost souls that He had.
8. **Verse 16** – *“That God would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”* **Verse 20** – *“that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”*

III. Remember that title which I have given this message: *“Katapult to God's Blessings.”*

- A. Now I'll try to explain myself. Do you see the words *“according to”* in **verse 16**?
 1. Paul prayed, *“that God would grant you (to us), ACCORDING TO the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”*
 2. The pair of words – *“according to”* is translated from the very common Greek word *“kata.”*
 3. By *“common”* I mean it is used about 500 times, & more than a hundred times it is translated *“according to.”*
- B. Is it important? Well, just consider this illustration:
 1. Let's say that God once enabled you to be a blessing to a man who has recently become a billionaire.
 - a. For the sake of argument, let's say that you gave the gospel to this man, and the Lord saved his soul.
 - b. Now, this billionaire, who has more money than he knows how to spend, feels an obligation toward you.
 2. Somehow he learns that your car needs new tires, so he reaches into his wallet & hands you ten \$100 bills.
 - a. Out of his wealth, which includes nine zeros, he gives you cash consisting of three zeros.
 - b. You can check my math later, but I think that is less than one thousandth of one percent of his capital.
 3. Couldn't you say that he gave you that money *“from”* his vast wealth, or *“out of”* his wealth?
 4. He gave you a gift *“from”* his wealth, but it was not *“according to”* his wealth. It didn't match his wealth.
 5. If he gave *“according to”* his wealth, his gift would have had to better reflect his entire portfolio.
 6. Paul says that the blessings of God are not given **out of** the riches of His glory, but **according** to those riches.
 7. Look at **verse 20** – *“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us...”*
- C. Now, for what are you asking the Lord?
 1. Are you pleading for the salvation of your friend? For the growth of your church?
 - a. For evidence of the Holy Spirit in life? For wisdom in regard to some important decision.
 - b. Do you think that your need or your desire even begins to tap the wealth of the infinite God.
 2. Remember we aren't talking about **seeking first** the kingdom of **this world**, but the kingdom of God – spiritual things.
 3. For what are you asking the Lord? Why can't you ask Him for the really big stuff?
 4. Our infinite God *“is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or (even) think (or imagine)...”*
 5. Paul verbally creates for us a catapult into the enormous blessings of God.
- D. Do you believe that God **is able** to do the miraculous? Certainly. You know that He is omnipotent.
 1. Do you believe that God **will actually do** those things? Well... that requires faith.
 2. That is just the point. Let's ask the Lord for greater faith to trust the Lord for greater blessings.

IV. How does God act? By what rules does He work?

- A. With our limited resources, we may not be able to help our friend to the extent he/she really needs.
 1. If he is in need of a new heart, there is nothing we can do.
 2. Or perhaps we actually can meet someone's need; we buy our friend the tires his car needs.
 3. This month I may have an extra \$1,000 to give to him to help him, but next month I may not.

- B. But remember, our God does not have limited resources.
1. And besides, God's standard is not our need, but rather His unlimited supply and His unlimited grace.
 2. God's standard is Himself, not us.
 3. **Verse 20** refers to Paul's prayer that *"that we might be filled with ALL the fulness of God."*
 4. That is really bold Paul; *"ALL the fulness of God?"*
 5. Yes, it is bold, but that was the measure of faith Paul had that day. And today, we need all that fulness.
 6. Our speaker later his morning will need all the fulness of God for work God has given him, and so do we.
 7. Do we have sufficient faith to trust the Lord for more of His fulness?
- C. Probably none of you ever heard this, because you have frequented that establishment, but McDonalds' clerks used to ask: *"Do you want that order supersized?"*
1. As far as I know, they were the only fast food chain to use that expression, and they have since stopped.
 2. But did you know that the expression could have begun 2,000 years earlier and within the pages of the Bible? Paul loved that kind of term.
 3. He often took ordinary Greek words and thoughts and supersized them with the prefix *"huper,"* or *"hyper."*
 4. For example in **Ephesians 2:6** he said, God *"hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the EXCEEDING riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*
 - a. *"Exceeding riches"* are literally God's **hyper-riches**. God has supersized His riches for all to see.
 5. **Ephesians 1:19** speaks about God's **supersized greatness** in his power to usward who believe.
 6. Elsewhere Paul speaks of Christians with **hyper-joy, hyper-peace** and **hyper (supersized) grace**.
- D. And then in **verse 20** he creates a new word, telling us that our God has a **supersized ability to bless us**.
1. *"Now unto him that is able to do EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us..."*
 2. In **II Corinthians 9:8** he says, *"God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency, in all things, may abound unto every (all) good work."*
 3. In Christ is not only a full measure of God's blessings, but a super-full measure of divine all sufficiency.
 4. In the Lord, we have the opportunity to be **super-conquerors** through him that loved us.
 5. *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that you labour is not vain in the Lord" – I Corinthians 15:58.*
- E. Do you really think that God wants you to be just **a little happy** today?
1. Does our omnipotent God plan to give us **partial victories** over our temptations?
 2. Doesn't Paul imply that the Lord wants to **fill** your life with His peace, joy, and power in such a way that it is **flowing over** you, **pouring out** of you and **flooding** the area around you?
 3. The word **"overflowing"** isn't sufficient to explain the words Paul is using.
- F. So we go back to our billionaire friend, who is anxious to help us in meeting our needs.
1. On this occasion he knew we were coming to visit so he has filled his wallet with \$100 bills.
 2. But instead of just laying the money on his desk, he is expecting us to ask him for it. But we're too shy.
 3. Or he has already agreed to help us, but some paralysis in our hand is keeping us from reaching for it.
 4. What's wrong with us? Why don't we believe his offer and take his kindness?
- G. Again, for what sort of spiritual things are we yearning? The general term might be **"revival."**
1. More specifically, I long for the complete & absolute leadership of the Holy Spirit in my life & in our church.
 2. The question is: am I willing for the Lord to take complete control of my life?
 3. Do we want the Lord to use us to bring lost souls to Himself?
 4. We yearn to see God's miraculous hand, not in physical things necessarily, although we wouldn't refuse them; we want the Lord's spiritual and eternal blessings.
 5. We want people to realize when they come into this auditorium that God is here.

6. I don't think God intends to keep things from us. He's not hiding himself so that we can't ask Him for these.
7. I believe that the Lord wants to display His glory through blessing His people, but are we ready?

V. Notice once again the benediction of Paul's prayer in *Ephesians 3*.

- A. *"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."*
 1. The Apostle combines a couple of his favorite words in **verse 20** – "abounding" and "super."
 2. He coins a new word which is translated, "exceeding abundantly."
 3. He says that God is able to do things far **beyond all measurements**, more than **overflowingly**, beyond what we think we need, and then more abundantly than that.
 4. This is the essence of "revival," and this is what I would like to see here in this place.
- B. But we must clearly understand the context of these superabundant blessings.
 1. *"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."*
 2. In all our yearning, in all our praying, in all our expectation, we must desire the glory of God in the context of Christ's assembly, the church.
- C. It is my prayer that the Lord bless us with personal revival, in whatever way He would like to define it.
 1. I believe that He will do that, if we humble ourselves, and pray and seek His face.
 2. In that humility, there must be a surrender of ourselves to God's will and Christ's glory.
 3. If there is any desire for personal benefit, self-aggrandizement, or private notoriety, the Lord will not apply this promise to us.
 4. To enjoy revival we must look beyond ourselves.
 5. In order for us to enjoy the overabundant blessings of God, our prayer must be: *"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."*