

## Knit Together

Ephesians 1:15-16 Sunday AM, May 14, 2023

**Prelude – Scripture: Ephesians 1:3–16** (NASB95) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love <sup>5</sup> He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace <sup>8</sup> which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him <sup>10</sup> with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him <sup>11</sup> also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. <sup>13</sup> In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory. <sup>15</sup> For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup> do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;

With his identity and mission firmly fixed with and under Christ, Paul gives testimony to God's grace to all the saints. Who are the saints?

They are described as those who live a life of faithful obedience—those who willingly submit to the Lordship of Christ. What gracious gifts do these saints receive? **Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places**—specifically, chosen **in Him before the foundation of the world**. And this choosing leads to God-defined mission—He chooses saints **to be holy and blameless**. God MAKES us holy through the work of Christ to make His righteousness ours, but then, by His Spirit, He makes us willing to obey Him—to keep His commandments. But Christians are not merely chosen, placed on God's side, and given a job, they are predestined to adoption as sons/daughters through Christ. How is this possible?

Because they have been redeemed—purchased by the blood of Christ, a cost sufficient for the otherwise impossible gift of forgiveness of our trespasses. And last week, we added another gift of God's grace. Those believing in Christ shown by faithful submission to His Lordship are sealed in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise. They are totally secure in their position with Christ whose promises don't end here, but point ahead! The Holy Spirit of God is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession. There is so much more to come! This means that your life today is real, your work, your relationships, your health, your pain, your blessings, but so is a life of spiritual blessing that culminates with an eternity together with the One who redeemed us! Saints are HIS and will praise and serve Him forever. Church, join the worshippers by singing His love and grace!

### \*Hymn #526: All That Thrills My Soul

There is no greater treasure for any Christian than Christ Himself. There is no way to God other than the miracle of God opening our eyes to the gospel and a life of service. These are treasures YOU can possess. However, today, we focus on the WE, not the ME of salvation. <sup>15</sup> **For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints.** Not merely faith and love, but faith and love evidenced among the group of believers as they live and serve together. Today is mother's day. Good day? Hard day? Perhaps we've focused too much on our experience of mothering or on our own experiences with our mother and have forgotten the simple fact that mothers are a gift. If you are here, your mother is a gift from God allowing you to be here. If you have children, they are not yours, but under His hand. When we can accept that our experiences good and bad were/are under the hand of God and were NOT to replace Him as the true giver of life, love, and care, we can appreciate any part of mothering showing any godlike characteristics. And you can also recognize He called you to Himself and brought you from death to life so a new sphere of relationships could be paramount--mother others and be mothered by others He brought to life. Christian, live your faith in Christ by reflecting His love and service among the people of God. Remember Maundy Thursday . . .

### \*Hymn (Powerpoint): Love Each Other (All the room was hushed and still) \*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn

**Choir: My Faith Still Holds Scripture: Daniel 9:1–19** (NASB95) In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—<sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign, I,

Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was *revealed* as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *namely*, seventy years. <sup>3</sup> So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek *Him* by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup> I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. <sup>6</sup> "Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup> "Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You. <sup>8</sup> "Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. <sup>9</sup> "To the Lord our God *belong* compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; <sup>10</sup> nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup> "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. <sup>12</sup> "Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done *anything* like what was done to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> "As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. <sup>14</sup> "Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. <sup>15</sup> "And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked. <sup>16</sup> "O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people *have become* a reproach to all those around us. <sup>17</sup> "So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. <sup>18</sup> "O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. <sup>19</sup> "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

### Offering: \*Doxology:

While the focus is on the WE, it must start inside the ME. The testimony of their faith in Christ Jesus and their love for the saints had spread. Are you known for your faith in Christ Jesus? Are you known for a resulting love for all the saints? Keep looking to Christ until you see what heaven says makes Him worthy of all praise.

### \*Hymn #525: I Will Praise Him

Our passage this morning says that Paul gives thanks to God for their faith in Christ and love for the saints while making mention of them in his prayers. Regular, organized prayer was a regular part of Paul's day. These believers were a regular part of his prayers. The women are working through an amazing book by DA Carson examining the content of some of Paul's prayers on behalf of believers, and our Scripture reading from Daniel spoke of God's representative praying on behalf of God's people. Daniel, like Moses and Ezra, identified with the people even while asking God for mercy because of their sinful disobeying God's commands and dishonoring His holy name. God, be merciful to us and restore your people! Do you pray like this? Are we part of those prayers. As Pastor Jahn preaches, contemplate lives knit together under one Lord, shown by owning one another in our affections and daily prayers resulting from a living faith in Christ.

### \*Hymn (Powerpoint): Before You I Kneel Message: Knit Together Ephesians 1:15-16

### \*Hymn #187 (Red): Blest Be the Tie \*Prayer