

Praising God

"...in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory."

Ephesians 1:12 (NIV)

Our text today speaks of bringing praise to God. The instrument—or instruments—of praise to God are His people. In Ephesians 1:6 (NIV) we read "...to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves." So the grace that God lavishes on His chosen people shows Him to be wonderful and that is praise indeed.

Numerous times in Ephesians 1 the words "glory" and "glorious" appear in the text and it all points toward our great God. And Paul tells us again and again that the glory of God is a redeemed people.

See the many remarkable blessings freely given to all of God's people. We read in v. 3 that we have all spiritual blessings, v. 4 we are holy, v. 5 we possess sonship, v. 6 we have forgiveness of sin, v. 8 we possess wisdom and understanding, v. 13 we have the Holy

Spirit, v. 19 we enjoy resurrection power to overcome all evil. What more should we ask of God? Absolutely nothing! We have all spiritual riches in Christ Jesus. We are spiritually wealthy.

Suppose we lack good health; suppose we lack many faithful friends or family members; what if we are among the materially poor of the world; does that matter when we remember all we do have in Jesus? Absolutely not! Christians need to review their wealth in Jesus Christ and learn to be content whatever else we lack. What we possess in our Saviour magnificently demonstrates the glorious grace of God.

Can you live without some of the things non Christians delight to have such as fame, wealth, large homes, expensive cars, lots of expensive clothes? If you really understood how much the Lord has lavishly

poured out to you—you would wonder why you ever sought the things you must leave at death. All you carry out of this world is what the Lord has richly given to you. You will take nothing of what you earned for yourself.

Read again Ephesians 1 and see the breathtaking immensity of your inheritance in Jesus Christ. Christian, whoever you are, wherever you live in this sin sick and painful world, you should be able to say with the hymn writer, "Take the world but give me Jesus". Do not shame your Saviour by longing for the tinsel of this world. Turn again to Him and delight yourself in Him and the perfect redemption He accomplished for you at the cross and through the empty tomb. Spend your time lost in wonder, love and praise.

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