

Series: Ephesians
Title: Holy and Without Blame
Text: Ephesians 1: 4
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Ephesians 1: 3: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

TITLE: Holy and Without Blame

Included in that chief spiritual blessing of election in Christ, are these two spiritual blessings: that we should be:

1) Holy—God is holy. Therefore without holiness no man shall see the Lord. (Heb 12: 14) To be sanctified is to be made holy, to be given a pure heart, a pure conscious within; and to have our bodies washed with pure water without. It is how a sinner is made to have communion with God. By God making us one in spirit with the Lord Jesus our Sanctification.

2) and Without Blame—This may include holiness. But let's look at it as being made righteous. To be without blame is to be made righteous, justified, before the law of God. God is righteous. Therefore a person guilty of breaking the law of God cannot come into his presence.

Proposition: These spiritual blessings of being made “holy and without blame” and being kept so, is the work of the triune God through the blood of Christ Jesus to the praise of God's grace.

Divisions: 1) First, we will see it is God who does this work 2) Secondly, a few words on why the elect are made holy and without blame; 3) Thirdly, a few words on how the elect are kept holy and without blame.

I. FIRST, IT IS GOD WHO MAKES THE ELECT HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME.

God the Father

First, God the Father made his elect holy and without blame by eternal election—“God the Father blessed us with all spiritual blessings”—holiness and righteousness--“according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:”

God the Father sanctified his elect when he chose us in Christ, as we read in Jude, “to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.” (Jude 1)

Also, because God the Father chose us in Christ our Righteousness we have always been without blame before him. Though all the elect of God broke the law when Adam sinned and though we transgressed as soon as we were born; though we were conceived by corrupt seed with an unholy, polluted nature, still, the first sight God had of his elect when he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, how God always sees his elect. As we saw last time, the kingdom prepared for us, which we shall receive in the world to come, was prepared for us from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34).

So, first, God the Father receives the glory for making us holy and without blame before him in love, according as he chose us in Christ Jesus.

God the Son

Secondly, God the Son, Christ Jesus, makes his elect holy and without blame. The theme of Ephesians is the wisdom of God our Father, that after the world by wisdom knew not God, after that great division entered in because of our sin, God would bring his people together in one, in Christ and by Christ, our risen, glorified Head. So first God the Son became one with his elect in human flesh and became the GodMan. It was becoming to God the Father for Christ to be made one with us and suffer.

Hebrews 2: 10: For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11: For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,...14: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15: And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

It was becoming to God the Father—becoming to his perfections, his wisdom, his justice, his grace, and his purpose to exalt his Son and children—to make Christ Jesus our perfect Captain, Author and Finisher of our faith, by suffering on the cross. Also, it became us for Christ to come and serve in holiness for us.

Hebrews 7: 26: For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Such an high priest becomes us because he meets all our need.

He is holy and without blame so he could lay down his life and justify us of all our sin. He is holy and without blame so he could enter into the holy place into God's presence, with his own blood, to sanctify us and to be our sanctification. And when Christ finished the work, he perfected his people forever.

Hebrews 10: 1: For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2: For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins....5: Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6: In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7: Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8: Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; 9: Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

Christ abolished the old covenant, fulfilling all the old covenant. And Christ is the Minister of the better testament, which is the everlasting covenant of grace written on the heart.

Hebrews 10: 10: By the which will WE ARE SANCTIFIED through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Now the Captain of our salvation—the Author and Finisher of Faith—is our risen Head and Husband.

Ephesians 5:25: Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it;

Christ made the elect to be without blame when he gave himself and suffered in place of his people on the cross, justifying his elect so that now we are without blame by his blood. And as promised, God the Father raised him to be Head over all things to his church that he might fill all in all. So he sends the gospel to us with the Holy Spirit. Here is how he makes us holy in our hearts.

Ephesians 5: 26: that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Our Head, our Prophet, Priest and King, ministers to our hearts the gospel: *he saved us and called us with a holy calling*—he gave himself to save us, then called us to tell us. Here is that end God the Father sent Christ to accomplish

Ephesians 5: 27: that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So we see that first, God the Father made us holy and without blame before him putting us in Christ. Secondly, God the Son, Christ Jesus, makes us holy and righteous by his work.

Colossians 2:10: And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.

God the Son

Thirdly, God the Holy Spirit makes his elect holy and without blame.

Hebrews 10: 15: *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16: This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;

God the Holy Spirit also bears witness, that we are holy and righteous in Christ. The word “laws” means words. Through the Spirit, Christ writes “the words of eternal life” on our heart. The very words we see in this chapter: we are “perfected forever by his one offering.” The following words:

Hebrews 10: 17: And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18: Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more offering for sin.

This is when our conscious is purged by the blood of Christ, this is when we are sanctified, when of God Christ is made unto us Righteousness and Sanctification, when we cease trying to make ourselves holy and righteous and rest in Christ. Now, because God has made us holy and without blame, our holy and righteous God can, and will, receive us and have communion with us.

Hebrews 10: 19; Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20: By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21: And *having* an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

So now in Christ the Holy One of Israel, we have blessed communion with God, in one spirit by him.

Psalm 45:13: The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold.

II. BRIEFLY, LET'S CONSIDER WHY WE ARE MADE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME.

God has made us holy and without blame for us to serve him.

Romans 6: 22: But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

We serve him in newness of spirit, not the oldness of the letter.

Romans 7: 6: But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

Illustration: Like the vessels and priests in the tabernacle, we have been chosen, set apart by God, purged by blood, sanctified by the Spirit, for God's holy use, for God's glory, to publish the good news of God's Son, for the good of God's house.

Romans 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. 3: For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4: For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6: Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7: Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8: Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. 9: Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10: Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11: Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12: Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13: Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

We are separated to serve God: chiefly, publishing the good news of God's Son, his gospel, for the calling out of his sheep and for the edifying of our brethren. That is our chief purpose.

III. LASTLY, HOW ARE WE KEPT HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME? BY GOD.

We see why God separated us, but because we live in this body of death, we often do a foolish thing: we try to conform to this world. I know this about you because I suffer from the same infirmities in my flesh.

Satan is a crafty beguiler. Our flesh lusts for the smile of this world which brings great weights upon us. It is our lusts to have bigger, better and faster than we need. We get ourselves in bondage and debt to this world. The applause of this world comes with a heavy price.

Before we know it, we are stretched thin. Our focus turns from God and his house and many arrows pierce us through. We have just so much strength, just so much time, just so much money. We become overwhelmed feeling like the government is on our shoulder. Our hands hang down, our knees grow feeble. We want to serve God but we do not see how we possibly have time. Our minds have become so entangled that we can't be renewed in the spirit of our minds, because we have been turned from the only one who can renew us.

Without realizing it, we have become conformed to this world. And we are so frantic to keep up, we neglect the One who has the power to open so that no man can shut, to shut and now man open, who has power to provide all our needs for us. We essentially say, “Father, I will get to you, and your house, just as soon as I can free up some time from my own work.”

Illustration: When our children do that to us, we deal with them usually like the sinners we are. Thankfully, our Father does not chasten us in an unholy ways; so as to teach us unholy ways.

Hebrews 12: 10:...but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of HIS holiness.

As our gracious Father did in the beginning, he sends Christ, who ministers the Spirit to our hearts through his gospel. The Holy Spirit speaks into our hearts, saying, “Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; 13: And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.” (Hebrews 12: 12)

He guides us into the Truth, saying, “lay aside every weight, and the sin which [is] so easily besetting [you and run straight] “unto Jesus the author and finisher of [your] faith...[who] is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12: 1-2)

The Holy Spirit speaks into our hearts, saying, “[Look] diligently [to Christ] lest [you] fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.” Lest you trade all the riches of his grace for those temporal riches and that temporal bread you’ve been running after. (Hebrews 12: 15-16)

Christ our High Priest says, “Remember, you can draw near, I have washed you, your heart has been made pure and your body washed with pure water. I have made you holy and without blame so you can come to me.” He says, “For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,...But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,...and to God the judge of all...and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Hebrews 12: 18-24)

The Spirit says, “Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify [you] with his own blood, suffered without the gate....go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have [you] no continuing city, but we seek one to come.” You probably started out in this way with good intentions, thinking you could better serve Christ, but he says now return to Christ, “By him therefore...offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of [your] lips giving thanks to his name. do good and...communicate.” He says, “For all this sorrow is because you are worried and serving you and yours, when your true happiness is serving the Lord and his brethren.” He says, “for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” (Hebrews 13: 12-16) For this is why the triune God separated you and made you holy and without blame before him in love—to serve him in newness of spirit, praising him and being a help to your brethren.

Now, this chastening is not pleasant for the moment, “nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Hebrews 12: 11) Because when our gracious God has once again translated us out of darkness into his light, as we “walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, [fellowship with God and his Son] and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (Colossians 1: 13; 1 Joh 1: 7) This is how we are kept holy and without blame.

Then in the midst of our cares, he gives peace reminding you the government is on the shoulder of your all-powerful Head. The weight rolls off. Your hands are strengthened. Finally, again you rejoice in him. And once again serving him becomes reasonable service.

Brethren, holiness and righteousness is of our triune God through the blood of Christ. And we who he has washed, know, that if our faithful Father did not continue to keep us in Christ our Holiness and Righteousness, we would become fully conformed to this world in a heartbeat.

Hebrews 13: 20: Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21: Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Amen.