Blessed – Ephesians 1:3 (ESV), “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places”

Every word in the worship vocabulary of the Bible has a particular nuance involving actions of the body. “Bless” involves the hands and the knees. The Greek word for bless is used to translate the Hebrew word *barach*, a word involving the posture of kneeling. To bless is to bring a gift to another while kneeling out of respect. To ‘bless’ means to come before another, go down on one’s knees, stretch out one’s hands and offer a gift. To ‘bless’ God therefore, means to come before his presence, kneel in adoration and submission, lift up our hands and offer a gift. To offer the only gift we have to offer; to offer our whole selves.

What is amazing is that Paul declares here, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed **US** with every spiritual blessing …

Blessed us – we bless the God who has blessed us … God has come to us, knelt before us, stretched out His hands to us, and given us a gift – actually a ton of gifts – The Living God has come to us in Jesus Christ, He has gotten down on his knees in Jesus Christ .. The Living God has opened his hands, and given us the gift of Himself in Jesus – and with Jesus, He has given us everything else we need to be all God made us to be – Mercy – What Paul is celebrating in his theme sentence is the full implications of the benediction he heard all of his life as a Jew … God instructs the priest to say over the people …

The Lord bless you and keep you … The Lord makes his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance on you, and give you peace … The God says, “So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I them will bless them”

May the Father come to you, get down on His knees before you and stretch out his hands to you with a gift. That is why He can Keep you, He has come close to you, and stretched His hands out to take hold of you… Yahweh make his face shine on you .. Not from way above you, looking down on you but from right up in front of you… Yahweh lift up his countenance on you …” Since he is kneeling before you He has to ‘Look up” to see you. Wow – the God we bless blesses us – the Great and Awesome God, the Creator, has come to us in Jesus Christ, knelt down before us and given us the greatest gift He could ever give … God so loved that he gave his one and only begotten Son .. and with him ‘every spiritual blessing” every blessing the Spirit has to give!

"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, just as **He chose us in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blameless before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of His will."

First it says that I am chosen – handpicked – noticed, not left behind but chosen and that this was predestined – it was always God’s plan

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who predestined us– predestined us for what? to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself."

And I like this last part, "according to the good pleasure of His will."

Going over this verse something connected in my heart, **a sense of belonging.**

And I realized, God the Father in heaven chose me – he adopted me,

He made it possible through his son Jesus Christ and brought me into his family. And I am a son of God – he wanted me.

It was his will - it gave Him pleasure - God chose me because He wanted me and it was His pleasure to adopt me as His son. I come from the FATHER \_

And I realized I am a son of God. I think that's the deepest thing about me. I think that's the most important thing about me, that I am His son

The richest answer I can give to the question, what is a Christian, is a Christian is someone who has God as his father. That's what we have. We are His sons, we are His daughters. We have a father in heaven, and we belong. We're not fatherless.

We have a father that we belong to and He loves us and He cares about us. And it's in His heart to provide for us and to bless us.

**Through the work of Jesus on the Cross**

– Jesus was cursed so we could be cured

– Jesus was rejected so we could be accepted

-Jesus experience the wrath of God’s righteous judgement so we could be released from the weight of sin and shame

- Jesus was broken on the cross so that our shattered destiny, our fragments could be brought back together again – we could be now be made WHOLE

- Jesus became sin so that we could become the righteousness of God in Him

- Jesus was wounded so you could be healed

**This is your new identity**