

**EPHESIANS***Part 2*

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”*

*Ephesians 1:3*

Paul has a way of making believers think and see higher. So many times we see things from an earthly view. Paul in a later chapter in Ephesians calls this futile thinking. Paul's aim is to get us thinking from a different mindset by challenging us to know the blessings available to us in the heavenly realms. You may have heard the phrase, “So heavenly conscious, no earthly good.” Paul would challenge that statement. The one who becomes heavenly conscious will be very good, talented, effective and righteous.

Recently our family has been watching “Extreme Makeover, Home Addition” with Ty Pennington. The program is focused on helping families who are living in homes that are basically falling apart. Many of the stories are very touching. The crew arrives on the scene and the family piles out of the house filled with smiles and tears as they meet the cast and then are whisked away to Disney Land where they will have fun while the builders construct a brand new home. The first thing that has to be done is to destroy the old clunker of a house. I have watched time and time again as the camera crew shows the family (who at this point is sitting comfortable in their condo in Florida) a big caterpillar excavator tracking up to the house and then with one fell swoop, crushes in the roof and eventually flattens the house. As I have watched that moment, even though the family is happy, there is a trace of regret. All the memories that the family had attached to that house that they survived in over the years are gone! They can no longer look upon those walls, those rooms or that kitchen.

It is the Holy Spirit's function to do an Extreme Makeover in every believer. But before a new spiritual house can be built the old one must be demolished. Paul says, “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (II Cor 10:5). We must triumph over the spiritual forces of evil (Eph 6:12) that threaten to usurp control of our minds. Jesus has triumphed over evil (Col 2:15) and secured spiritual blessings that he holds for us in the heavenly realms (Eph 1:20, 2:6, 3:10).

The first thing the Lord wants us to demolish is our self-image. Read Ephesians 1:4-10. Pay close attention to the words that Paul uses to establish our new image. See who you actually are as a new creation. Here are some of the words I have found that describe us: chosen, holy, blameless, predestined, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, wise and understanding of the mystery of His will. These are all a part of the spiritual blessings that define us. Do an expanded study of these words and others that you have come up with in this passage by looking up what they mean in a Strong's Concordance. Look up other verses that your study bible cross-references. Compile a big paragraph using what you have learned to describe yourself. After the paragraph has been constructed repeat it to yourself and pray it over yourself. Begin, the best you can, to memorize it so you can repeat it to yourself daily and declare it over and over to yourself until you really believe it. Fight the good fight of faith. This is who you really are. Destroy the old image! Be a good builder (read Eph 4:12-13).