**Blessed (Ephesians 1:3-4)**

 God has blessed us abundantly through Christ so that we might be holy in Him. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters as we continue to study subjects related to The Resurrection in this season. The letter to the Ephesians is unique in its deep theology and explanations. It shows us God’s intention and His grace. It teaches us to appreciate His plans and His salvation which pertains the Church (worldwide). The purpose of the Apostle is to reveal to us God’s great Plan. In other words, to express to his hearers that God will (ultimately) unite all of creation under Christ’s rule. It is the completion of this that Paul the Apostle is explaining, stage by stage. In the beginning of the letter, he reminds the church that God has done a great work (in and through Jesus’ salvation). It is exactly from that section that we have picked our verses for today as an introduction to the subjects that will follow in the coming weeks. Therefore, today we are going to speak about God’s blessings and their purpose. My prayer is that as we take into consideration the fact of these blessings, that we will redouble our focus and live our life with a clear spiritual goal. God has blessed us abundantly through Christ so that we might be holy in Him. Let us speak about the purpose of God’s blessings, then…

 You will recognize your life’s purpose when you are living as a follower of Christ. In other words, you can know your life-purpose when you respond to your God-given blessings by coming closer to your Creator through them. Today’s topic clarifies for us that God’s love for us through Christ is multifaceted and abundant. The Apostle says, “with *every spiritual blessing*”. These blessings are given *“in the heavenly places.”* In other words, we can enjoy them when we’re living a spiritual life. Oh, how great a blessing it is to know that God chose us before the foundation of the world so that we would live in His Presence! God had a good purpose for us from the very beginning; He had a clear plan for our lives. He created us in love to be His holy and unique people. Yes, it is true that His people consisted of one ethnicity at one time; but through Christ, every human being can now become a part of that beautiful plan of God. Not only that, but God did this out of love, so that we also would reflect that love to others… What’s more, as the Old Testament sacrifices had to be holy, so lives of believers was called to be separated and different from those of unbelievers.

 The call to holiness is similar to the following understanding: A clergyman once asked the poor children before him, "What is holiness?" Thereupon a poor little boy in tattered rags, jumped up and said, "Please, your reverence, it is to be clean inside."

 How true a statement – and yet we ask, what of us? What good are the first two phrases of the prayer given by the author of the letter to the Ephesians for us? The answer is that these can be both encouragement and clarification if we live by them as truth. The blessings that are listed in the passage in question are the encouragements because they establish that we have not been left without power or God’s help after we were converted in faith to Christ. God has already blessed us and He has especially done so *in the heavenly places.* In other words and especially if we devoted the time to do so, God has prepared for us the spiritual life by which we will enjoy His blessings, both now and when we move on to the next life. Therefore, God has already solved the issue of supplying us with our spiritual needs; we will find the latter in the Christ-centered life.

 The above is not just encouragement so that we do not look to other sources of it, however: in addition, these spiritual blessings give us direction to live a holy life, also known as one separate and different from that of unbelievers. The latter (the holy life) is a process that begins with our conversion and is completed when the Lord calls us to Himself. Therefore, let us be encouraged: God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Let us not suppose that we lack any spiritual need. Second, God has given us clear direction to live blamelessly, in other words purely, as we experience those blessings.

 Thus, let us be encouraged by the blessings that come as a result of our faith in Jesus and that we have clear direction to live a holy life. There is no need to create new purpose, then! God has created us to experience His spiritual blessings in Jesus and by being a holy people. These ideas summarize God’s magnificent purpose… You will recognize your life’s purpose when you are living as a follower of Christ. God has blessed us abundantly through Christ so that we might be holy in Him.

 Therefore, let us be encouraged by the blessings; let us live holy lives through Jesus. The Lord bless you all. Amen.