

Heavenly blessings Eph. 1:3-14 8th Sunday after Pentecost July 15, 2018

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, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. Ephesians 3

Blessed with every spiritual blessing.

Dear friends in Christ, they rebooted Spiderman again last year. The third time in 15 years. And once again, they started the story of Peter Parker, who is blessed with a lot of powers. He has the powers of a spider to walk on walls, to create webs, to swing through the air. But this time, the reboot went a little different. It didn't talk about the radioactive spider that bit peter to give him these powers, it didn't focus on him being confused what to do with them, it didn't show him try to cash in on them, and it didn't show that his inaction let his uncle Ben, the man who had raised him, who had been a father to him, die. It skipped the origin story, how he got his powers. It skipped how his gaining his spider blessings changed who he was.

Now they didn't skip it because it wasn't important. They skipped it because they thought everyone knew that story and they wanted to tell a different story. But when they skip ben's death, they are left with a peter who seems younger, who isn't dealing with so much guilt and so much responsibility. Peter is different with out his origin story.

Paul could have told a different story too. He could have jumped right in and told husbands and wives how to treat each other. He could have just told children how to obey their parents and parents how to care for their children. He could have begun with how to be a faithful worker, or with taking care of those who are often exploited. These are things that the Ephesians need to hear, but they are not the story Paul tells. Because if these things are not rooted in God, and who God's people are, they really don't matter. What the people do does not matter as much as who they are in Christ.

So Paul begins with an origing story, that talks about all the gifts God has given. Not a random bite of a spider, but a choosing before the world was even created. God chose the ephesians and he chose us to be holy and blameless before he spoke a word of creation. And Jesus came not so that we might be saved, but so God would save his precious chosen ones. And he didn't save them a little, but he baught them back from satan and death, he forgave their sins. His salvation is completer Both against enemies of satan and from our sinful selves. That is how great his grace is. Our redemption is that we are joined to christ, and all creation is redeemed as it is united in him. WE have a better promise than the land, for we have a kingdom. His word tells us and ushers us in, the spirit given in baptism and the word confirms it, we are secure in christ.

WE are like children who see their mother and father hug. who rejoice in the story of thier mother and father because it tells them they were born in love and loved. Children who rejoice in their parents hug and want in on it to. There is no more secure place for them to be than in the center of their parents love.

And pauls letter is not just for the ephesians. We also are blessed today as we gather as God's people to worship him today. And there are lots of stories we could tell. About how we visit the lonely and those in hospitals and pain, about quilting and crocheting for those in need, about

working hard and giving to support a church, or even about golfing to support kids learning about Christ in school.

But that is not our story, it is not who we are. We are chosen. God united us to his son in the waters of baptism and we begin our service as we begin everything, in the name of the father and the son and the holy spirit. HE forgives our sins that would separate us from him, so that we know our sin has not removed us from the family but is forgiven. He gives us the word that makes known the mystery of Christ, and he lets us participate in that mystery as we take the very body and blood of Christ. The salvation he gives us is complete. We are the children of God, united in the Son Christ, sealed by the spirit. That is how we worship, and that is how we live.

WE are not a to do list, not even a good to-do list filled with good deeds. WE are children of God. WE share the good news that the love we are born in may be shared by all. So we love our children and spouse because we are enfolded in the love of the father. We comfort our friends with the comfort we have in Christ's body. We have every spiritual blessing as Christ's people.

Today rejoice. Not because you have powers or blessings, not because you are a spierman, but rejoice in who you are, a people chosen and loved by God. Rejoice in who you are as you remember where you came from. Rejoice in who you are as you share where you are going. Amen.