

Grace Bible Church
Pastor Teacher
Robert R. McLaughlin
Tree of Life
Weekly Review
111818

The first thing GOD ever did for us is the means of glorifying HIM.

Blessings have been created and designed just for us so that we can reflect our gratitude toward the LORD for the fantastic blessings HE created just for us knowing that we would be overwhelmed by His love and care for all of us personally.

This was a part of our LORD's promises and blessings that HE knew would cause us to be thankful for all the things HE has done just for us as an expression of HIS love just for us.

Therefore, as a part of our obedience and gratefulness for all the LORD has done for us is found in passages like:

EPH 5:20, We should always giving thanks for all things in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ to GOD, even our Father;

PHI 4:6, Be anxious for nothing (stop worrying about anything), but in everything by prayer and supplication with an attitude of thanksgiving let your requests be made known to GOD.

Then the apostle Paul gets us right to the main principles concerning what the LORD does just for us; Col 3:17 And whatever you do in word or deed, {do} all in the name of the LORD Jesus, giving thanks through Him to GOD the Father.

Then to those believers who were worried that the Rapture had already come and they were left behind, the apostle Paul says in **1TH 5:18, In everything give thanks; for this is GOD's will for you in Christ Jesus.**

Now, with the passages that I have just mentioned to you, as well as the ones I have taught you before, we all need to come to this simple conclusion that:

One of the main principles that most believers don't seem to understand concerning these blessings is Why? Why does the LORD desire to bless us concerning His blessings and one of the main reasons for those blessings which is the fact that: (Are you ready)?

Here it is, it is simple yet profound: the first thing GOD ever did for us is the means of glorifying HIM. And what is the first thing that the LORD did? The first thing GOD He did was to bless us in EPH 1:3; and then He chose us, or elected us to have HIS highest and best from those blessings; EPH 1:4.

The point is that GOD receives glory for the things HE has done and for all that HE has provided, especially for those believers who have responded to HIS call without any interference from them. I say to respond to HIS call as an invitation from HIM without any human or angelic

interference designed by Satan to distract us from our PVTD and to try and deny us the divine blessings that can stagger the mind or the imagination.

Anything that Satan will can use to deny us blessings designed and created by GOD to bring glory to our LORD and our Savoir, Satan will use. And so, as we continue with our subject concerning the things that GOD has done for us that we also need to establish what our LORD was doing before HE created the earth, the angels, the animal kingdom or even males and females.

Let me illustrate this with a few doctrinal examples of GOD's love and GOD's grace for all mankind. There have been some very interesting principles that reveal to us the existence of life on this earth other than just human life or human beings.

Let me try to give you a preview of some of the major events that took place years before the human race was created. In fact, advanced Bible doctrine will cause us to receive the blessings GOD created just for us and for those we love.

Now, if you have been a member of this ministry (GBC) or (RMBM), which has had a real impact upon those believers who desire to know the truth, learn about the truth, and then apply the truth, the time for application is right now.

Look at how magnificent the grace of GOD is revealed by means of HIS love, HIS truth, HIS righteousness, HIS justice, and many other divine blessings from GOD are a means of GOD using us and revealing to us. HIS love and gratitude that HE has had for all of us.

And then there is probably no greater and clearer passage that deals with these doctrinal principles like the one in the book of James had to deal with which says concerning what our LORD's have brother James in the book of James warns us all about in some manner.

Let's read it in JAM 1 and get a glimpse or a picture of our things the LORD had done, in us; with us; and even for us.

We read in JAM 1:12-27, Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which {the LORD} has promised to those who love Him.

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by GOD"; for GOD cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.

In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures. {This} you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak {and} slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of GOD.

Therefore putting aside all filthiness and {all} that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for {once} he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the {law} of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.

If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his {own} heart, this man's religion is worthless. This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of {our} GOD and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, {and} to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Now, let's take a look at JER 4, a very interesting passage that is usable to bring glory to our LORD.

JER 4:18-22, "Your ways and your deeds Have brought these things to you. This is your evil. How bitter! How it has touched your heart! My soul, my soul! I am in anguish! Oh, my heart!

My heart is pounding in me; I cannot be silent, Because you have heard, O my soul, The sound of the trumpet, The alarm of war. Disaster on disaster is proclaimed, For the whole land is devastated;

Suddenly my tents are devastated, My curtains in an instant. How long must I see the standard, And hear the sound of the trumpet? For My people are foolish, They know Me not; They are stupid children, And they have no understanding. They are shrewd to do evil, But to do good they do not know."

Notice JER 4:23 which is a unique passage that reveal to us some of the work our LORD accomplished; **JER 4:23-28, I looked on the earth, and behold, {it was} formless and void; And to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking,**

And all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and behold, there was no man, And all the birds of the heavens had fled. I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a wilderness, And all its cities were pulled down Before the LORD, before His fierce anger. For thus says the LORD,

The whole land shall be a desolation, Yet I will not execute a complete destruction. For this the earth shall mourn, And the heavens above be dark, Because I have spoken, I have purposed, And I will not change My mind, nor will I turn from it."

In fact, let us look at some of the supergrace blessings that our LORD gave us before He created the man and the woman. We begin with a subject we noted about ten years ago which is called by the apostle Paul and us here at GBCRMBM known as the *Politeuma* Privileges.

What is the *Politeuma* Privilege?

Well, from the time of the Third Century B.C., *politeuma* was frequently used to designate a corporate body of citizens or a colony of foreigners who were residents in a foreign country while their citizenship and allegiance is elsewhere. *Politeuma* is also what we call a hapax legomena, which of course is a word used only once in the Bible. At the time Paul wrote this, and the noun *politeuma* came to mean a place of Roman citizenship, Roman commonwealth, or a Roman community! And therefore we need to go back to Philippi for a few moments to find out what Paul meant when he used this phrase.

Now, when they heard the noun *politeuma* or the verb *politeuomai*, to them it meant that they were a privilege people. In fact, one of the privileges of the noun *politeuma*, was that if you lived in Philippi as a Roman citizen who had become victorious in the Greek games and you had no taxes for the rest of your life.

Why?

Because you were a part of the politeuma privileges which were considered to be some of the greatest privileges in the ancient world at that time. It was quite an advantage then, as it would be even now! And so, when the apostle Paul dropped this word on the Philippians in chapter one and again in chapter three, he used this word because it was a short way of teaching the entire concept of being a winner in the PPOG in the Church-age. And that is another reason why the apostle Paul used this word only with the Philippians because only in Philippi did this word have enough significance to establish one of the most unusual analogies in the word of GOD. And while only used once in the Bible, the noun has enough extra biblical usage for us to understand exactly what was meant when Paul said in **PHI 1:27, Only *politeuomai* your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.**

PHI 3:17-21, Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, {that they are} enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose GOD is {their} appetite, and {whose} glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. For our citizenship [*politeuomai*] is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the LORD Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

This word actually means that we must always live our lives in the light of our eternal future. As believers in TLJC, each one of us is going to spend, billions upon billions of years in Heaven, our real home. And therefore one of the main principles which emerge is to “live your life in the light of the future.” And, if you live your life in the light of the future, then Bible doctrine will be the number one place and have the number one priority in your life.

Because, you see, while our time on this earth is very short, even if you live to be a hundred, it’s like a drop of water in the ocean compared to eternity. And therefore this metaphor develops the

concept that when you live your life in the light of eternity. Or, whatever problems and whatever adversities you have in this life; you will realize that nothing we have can compare with the eternal weight of glory which is far beyond all comparison, 2CO 4:17.

And this is one of the main reasons that all believers can focus in on because of passages and principles like 2CO 4:7-18, which says, **“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power (in us) may be of GOD and not from ourselves. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.**

For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So, death works in us, but life in you. But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, I believed, therefore I spoke, we also believe, therefore also we speak; knowing that He who raised the LORD Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you.

For all things are for your sakes, that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of GOD. Therefore, we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

This is when you also realize that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us, Rom 8:18.

ROM 8:18, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

And this is why we should live as Abraham lived in **HEB 11:9-16, By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is GOD.**

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own.

And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is a heavenly one. Therefore GOD is not ashamed to be called their GOD; for He has prepared a city for them.

HEB 11:24-26, By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of GOD, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin; considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

All of these passages indicate that we are not of this world but we have a Heavenly citizenship. And this is why we are told in **MAT 6:19-20, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;"**

JOH 18:36, the LORD said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

JOH 15:19, he said to us "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."

Now, certainly you do have problems and you do have things that are painful. You do, in fact we all do, have difficulties in our life. And the whole point is to advance to spiritual adulthood, so that the problems, the adversities, the tragedies, the difficulties of life become a blessing. For strangely enough the greatest blessings in life come to the believer who goes through undeserved suffering and reaches spiritual adulthood. And all of these principles and many more apply to the things that GOD has done and revealed for those who love Him.

All believers living on planet earth during the dispensation of the Church-age can become a special privileged group; 1PE 2:5; 2:9.

1PE 2:5, you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to GOD through Jesus Christ.

1PE 2:9-10, But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for {GOD's} own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of GOD; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

These special privileges are the unique provisions of the Church-age.

Let me give you some insight concerning the privileges of our heavenly citizenship.

- 1) The first privilege of our Heavenly Citizenship is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- 2) The second privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the PPOG.
- 3) The third privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the unique mystery doctrine of the Church-age.
- 4) The fourth privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the believers escrow account and escrow blessings.
- 5) The fifth privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the equal privilege and equal opportunity principle.

- 6) The sixth privilege of our heavenly citizenship are the two royal appointments.
- 7) The seventh privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the indwelling of the Trinity.
- 8) The eighth privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the availability of divine power.
- 9) The ninth privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the completed canon of scripture.
- 10) The tenth privilege of our heavenly citizenship is the ability to become a spiritual champion or an invisible hero.

So, we will note these privileges that are from Heaven or our *politeuma* from Heaven and see how we are to live in these privileges and how our LORD provided them for us and blessed us. And also we are to utilize these privileges that no unbeliever has. No matter how much power an unbeliever has, no matter how much wealth, no matter how much greatness, no unbeliever has what you possess as a member of the Royal family of GOD.

You possess the privileges that come directly from Heaven and the greatest privileges ever given in all of human history to individual believers. It is, without a doubt, the greatest privileges and promises you will ever receive. And in the Church-age, every believer or member of the Royal family of GOD is to utilize these unique privileges from Heaven. And this is why the apostle Paul uses the noun *politeuma* and the verb *politeuomai*.