Further Introduction To The Unfathomable Riches of Christ

**Last Sunday we expressed that:**

* The title, ‘The unfathomable riches of Christ’, is drawn from Ephesians 3:1-8, specifically from verse 8.
* Several authors have assembled or in some cases edited prior collections of these unfathomable riches in Christ. These have included: Chafer, Keathley, Thieme, Fruchtenbaum and Zeller. In general, these have been very well done.
* Various titles have been applied to these collections of teachings, including ‘Who you are in Christ’, ‘The believer’s spiritual position and possessions’ and ‘God’s spiritual accomplishments regarding the believer’.
* Romans 3:24, Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14, taken together tell us that we have the redemption and forgiveness of sins ‘in Christ’. It is because of the believer being ‘in Christ’ that these are true and accomplished spiritual facts. It is by God’s doing that we who believe are made to be ‘in Christ’.

**How is it that we have the position and possessions of ‘The unfathomable riches of Christ’?**

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 (NASU)

But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 31 so that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Ephesians 1:3-8 (NASU)

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, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace [see also Colossians 1:14] 8 which He lavished on us.

What 1 Corinthians 1:30 clearly tells us is that God placed us in Christ Jesus. What Ephesians 1:3 tells us is that God the Father is credited with blessing us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Following Ephesians 1:3 the apostle Paul lists and explains the many and rich blessings that we have in Christ.

The above passages provide for us examples of what we will continue to find as we explore the unfathomable riches of Christ: God does everything with regard to our position in Christ – our unfathomable riches. Ephesians specifically credits God the Father with lavishing upon us the unfathomable riches out of the riches of His grace.

What we did is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ so as to be saved (Acts 16:31). Our belief did not merit anything. We believed in and trusted in Christ’s crucifixion for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection, which were all His accomplishments, and He saved us. That salvation was a salvation from the horrible spiritual state that we were in, and the awful eternity that we would have faced. And that salvation was to all of the unfathomable riches of Christ. Those riches are so immense and vast as to be immeasurable, incalculable and unfathomable. And they are personal - very personal. They are in Christ alone.

**Can the unfathomable riches of Christ be tainted, lost, improved upon or enhanced?**

The unfathomable riches of Christ are all accomplished by God on behalf of the believer. He did it – not any of us. As Ephesians 1:3 tells us, every spiritual blessing of the believer is in the heavenlies in Christ. None of these spiritual blessings are located elsewhere than in the heavenlies in Christ.

As we will see in more detail as we continue to explore our unfathomable riches of Christ, our position in Christ is all accomplished by God, and not by any of us. As we will see, there is neither a threat nor an instance of loss, diminishing, or reversal of being in Christ. There is also no instance of a believer improving upon, enhancing, or increasing one’s standing in the unfathomable riches of Christ.

We should also point out that this question is parallel and similar to the question of can our salvation be tainted, lost, improved upon, or enhanced. While fully addressing those questions is beyond the scope of this elective, the Q&A elective lessons 17-21 address those questions in fair detail.

**Are the unfathomable riches in Christ just hypothetical or theoretical?**

In brief, no, our unfathomable riches are not just hypothetical or theoretical. Our unfathomable riches define who we are, our new spiritual history, our ownership, and how we view all of life and eternity. Additionally, the unfathomable riches of Christ are essential to how life is to be lived, moment by moment and day by day. And our relationship with Christ, essential to the unfathomable riches, is the basis for our ongoing fellowship with Christ.

**Are the unfathomable riches of Christ the same for believers like Noah, Isaiah, the thief on the cross, tribulation saints, or millennial kingdom saints as it is for us who are believers now, in the church, the body of Christ?**

Salvation for all people for all times is based on faith in God and His provision. Abraham, after all, was justified by faith (Romans 4:1-3), as are we (Romans 5:1). But a great many of the riches of Christ are connected to our being in Christ, which is not said to be true of people living before or after the time of the church, from Acts 2 to the rapture. It is always important to ask what is the same and what is different between various times and people.

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