



The *BIGGEST* Benefit of Salvation

[Ephesians 2:1-18](#)

First in a 4-part series titled: *Transformed*

Pastor Matt Friend – January 3, 2021

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Salvation is a divine and unmerited gift based entirely on the unconditional love and grace of God ([John 3:16](#); [Romans 5:8](#); [6:23](#); [8:28-30](#); [2 Corinthians 4:4-6](#); [Ephesians 1:3-14](#); [2:1-10](#); [3:14-17](#); [Titus 3:3-7](#); [1 John 4:9-10](#)).

As Christians, we benefit greatly from our salvation!

- Through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—His death on the cross and resurrection—our sins have been forgiven (past, present, and future).
- We've received mercy, grace, eternal life, and the promise of a future resurrection in the future restored heaven and earth.
- At the cross, Jesus took all the condemnation of our sins upon Himself; therefore, we will never face the judgment we deserve in this life or in the life to come.
- Jesus conquered our Satanic enemy and has promised their eternal demise.

But what's the greatest benefit of our salvation? Which benefit does the New Testament emphasize above all others, and why does God want us to know that? How will this truth change our desires, our motivations, and our priorities as we embark upon a new year?

Thankfully, [Ephesians 2:1-18](#) has the answer. (Notice all the benefits of salvation listed.)

Today's sermon only has two points: *what I want you to know and what I want you to do.*

#1 – Here's what I want you to know:

The *BIGGEST* benefit of our salvation is access to God Himself.

For far too long, Christians (me included) have disproportionately emphasized the benefits of salvation. It's not that we've been emphasizing things that shouldn't be emphasized, but we've often ignored salvation's greatest blessing of all: *access to God Himself.*



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For instance, we often say that forgiveness or grace are the greatest benefits of salvation. To us, they might feel like the greatest benefits, but they are secondary to the greatest benefit: *access to God Himself*.

For the sake of illustration, let's take a closer look at grace. What is grace? We often say, "Grace is a gift," but that's only partially correct. What is the gift? It's important for us to define what the gift actually is. Grace is more than the gift of forgiveness, mercy, or eternal life. Grace is God's self-giving. *Grace is access to God Himself!*

According to God's inspired letter to the Ephesians, the biggest benefit of our salvation is access to God Himself:

- This is what it means for God "to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ." ([1:3-10](#))
- This is what it means for us to be "made alive with Christ." ([2:4-5](#))
- This is what it means for us who were once "separate from Christ" to now be "brought near by the blood of Christ." ([2:12-13](#))
- This is what it means for us to "have access to the Father by one Spirit." ([2:18](#))
- Instead of us having to go to a temple and obtain access to God, we are now "the holy temple of the Lord"... "in which God lives by his Spirit." ([2:21-22](#))
- Because of all this, "we may approach God with freedom and confidence." ([3:12](#))

We see this same emphasis throughout the New Testament. ([Matthew 27:51](#); [Mark 15:38](#); [John 1:12](#); [John 14:6](#); [John 17:1-3](#); [2 Peter 1:4](#); [Hebrews 7:11-28](#); [10:19-22](#))

This is why God meets with Israel in the tabernacle and, later, in the temple. It's why Jesus shows up in human history. It's why the Spirit descends on the Church at Pentecost. It's why the Spirit comes and permanently indwells believers at our moment of faith.



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This benefit is multifaceted and known by several different names: “union,” “intimacy,” or “communion” with God; however, it all points to the same grand truth...

The BIGGEST benefit of our salvation is access to God Himself!

#2 – Here’s what I want you to do each day this year:

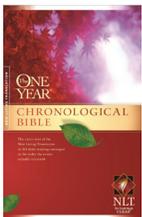
Spend time talking to God and letting God talk to you!

When the Apostle Paul became aware of His access to God, it drove him to:

- Continually commune with God, praying that we will “know Him better” and that “the eyes of our heart will be enlightened” to God’s truth. ([Ephesians 1:15-19a](#))
- Repeatedly pray to God. ([Ephesians 3:14](#))
- Fervently desire that we also will spend time getting to know God—specifically learning about His love for us. ([Ephesians 3:15-19](#))

Resource Recommendation:

A One Year Chronological Bible reading plan:



[The One Year Chronological Bible Reading Plan](#)



[The One Year Chronological Online Bible Reading Plan](#)