

## **The Wednesday Word, March 18, 2015: Every Blessing Is in Christ!**

Every so often I come across excellent illustrations of certain aspects of gospel truth. The following is one of them. Some years ago, an extremely wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. Their collection was legendary. When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. Tragically, he was mortally wounded in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there came a knock on the door. A young man stood there with a large package in his hands.. He said, 'Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.' The young man held out this package. 'I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.'

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture.. 'Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift.'

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected. The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection.

On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. 'We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?' There was silence.. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, 'We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one.'

But the auctioneer persisted. 'Will somebody bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?' Another voice angrily called out, 'We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Gogh's, the Rembrandts and the Picassos Get on with the real bids!' But still the auctioneer continued. 'The son! The son! Who'll take the son?' Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the long-time gardener of the man and his son. 'I'll give you \$10 for the painting...' Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. 'We have \$10, who will bid \$20?' 'Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters.' The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the most worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. 'Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!' A man sitting on the second row shouted, 'Now let's get on with the collection!'

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. 'I'm sorry, the auction is over.' 'What about the paintings?' 'I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the

paintings. The person who took the son gets everything!" This is exactly what has happened to the believer. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ. Ephesians 1:3 makes this explicit. It says that if we get the son we get everything. Here's what the verse says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"

When we receive the son we get everything and best of all, we don't even have to pay \$10. All is given freely, graciously and abundantly.

And that's the Gospel Truth!