

**The Inscrutable Question: Only Mature Believers Qualify to Bless & Glorify God, Eph 1:3-4;  
Doctrine of Relation; The Escrow Agreement, Heb 10:35-36**

24. The special favor and privilege for the Church Age believer is stated in Ephesians 1:3, “every spiritual blessing.” This is the Escrow Account. It was established by God as Grantor before He elected us to privilege in eternity past.
25. Thus please observe that the escrow blessings are imputed to every believer in eternity past before he could perform anything meritorious to receive them.
26. The reason that these blessings were given but placed in escrow is so that believers could resolve the angelic conflict by the performance of divine good as opposed to human good and evil.
27. Verse 3 begins with a word that is key to the entire passage. It is the verbal adjective:  
**εὐλογητός, *eulogetos*** - “blessed be God”
28. The Hebrew equivalent in the Old Testament is:  
**בָּרַךְ *barak*** - “to praise,” or “to bless”
29. When God is the object, *barak* in the Piel stem should always be rendered “praise.” When persons are the object, it can be translated “bless.”
30. This is generally true of the New Testament Greek verb, **εὐλογέω, *eulogeo***. The adjectival form found in verse 3, **εὐλογητός, *eulogetos***, is always applied to God and should be translated not “blessed” but “praise.”
31. But God does not need us to praise Him. It actually communicates the idea that God is praised in Himself because of His perfection.
32. God has sovereignly decreed that man may praise him but that praise must be from his own free will based on reciprocity. When God is the object and man is the subject, both *eulogetos* and *barak* refer to a formal greeting that expresses appreciation, gratitude, respect, honor, thanksgiving, acclaim, and tribute to the source of all blessings.
33. In the Psalms expressions of praise often develop into a doxology at the conclusion of the chapter, e.g., “Blessed be God” (Psalm 66:20; 68:36); and “Blessed be the Lord” (89:53). This is the same as giving glory to God.
34. These are expressions of gratitude that identify God as the source of all blessings. In fact the original definition of *barak* was “to kneel.” It later came to describe the manner by which an inferior greeted his superior whether by kneeling (Botterweck and Ringgren, *TDOT*, 2:279), bowing (Jenni and Westermann, *TLOT*, 1:271), or saluting (Harris, *TWOT*, 1:132).
35. Therefore, although God does not need our praise He is worthy of it. But He will not be praised legitimately by mankind unless man develops the reciprocity that motivates such expressions of gratitude and respect.
36. Those who do make such an advance will receive the transfer of the eternal escrow that was placed in their account in eternity past prior to their election and prior to the creation of the earth.
37. Note that the official date of the escrow is prior to the creation of the universe. Therefore, man does nothing to earn these blessings. They are given by grace before the believer existed.

38. This is emphasized by another interesting aspect of the escrow illustration. It is called in our legal code the “Doctrine of Relation.”

**Black, Henry Campbell. *Black's Law Dictionary*. Rev. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1968), 1452-53:**

The doctrine of “relation” is that principle by which an act done at one time is considered to have been done at some antecedent period. It is usually applied where several proceedings are essential to complete a particular transaction, such as a conveyance. The last proceeding which consummates the conveyance is held to take effect by relation as of the day when the first proceeding was had.

39. What this doctrine means is that the date of the escrow is determined by the first act of the Grantor, i.e., eternity past. The fulfillment of the Escrow Agreement occurs in time. But when fulfilled it relates back to the date of deposit. This is a technical way of illustrating that the contents of the escrow account are irrevocable.
40. The development of this illustration was done by the Colonel in his *Ephesians* series and his comments will be helpful to mention here:

**Thieme, R. B., Jr. “Spiritual Blessings for Time and Eternity.” On sound cassette 7 of *Ephesians*. (Houston: Bible Doctrine Cassettes, 1985):**

In “relation-back” doctrine, the date of the deposit of the escrow becomes very important. When the document is given to the escrow officer by the grantor for delivery to the grantee on compliance with specific conditions, the date of delivery relates back to the time of the deposit. This illustrates for us the fact that the date on our escrow deposit is eternity past. These blessings were deposited by God specifically into our account and are tailored to fit us perfectly. These blessings from eternity past do not pass to the grantee until he has performed the condition which is the advance to maturity.

“Relation back” doctrine supports the principle of irrevocability by vesting delivery from the grantor at the time of the deposit in escrow. “Relation back” doctrine is pertinent when the instruments are disposed into escrow. Something can happen to the grantor, e.g., death, but what is pertinent is the date he made the deposit. So the escrow is irrevocable and the escrow is very much alive. Also pertinent is that something can happen to the grantee. Should the believer as grantee fail to perform the specific obligations required by God as Grantor, namely, the failure to execute the plan of God ... his blessings will not be conveyed in time nor in eternity but will remain on deposit forever. God is not glorified by the loser's failure to fulfill the plan of God. This simply means that failure to fulfill the conditions does not cancel those greater blessings on deposit. They are preserved forever.

Under the principle of election, the sovereignty of God wills the highest and the best for believers and previously deposited that highest and best under escrow blessings. God as Grantor has provided equal privilege and equal opportunity to receive these blessings. Under logistical grace any believer has the same opportunity as any other believer to become a winner. To be a loser reflects on the individual believer rather than on God. In heaven there will be class distinctions between the spiritually rich and the spiritually poor.

41. We have established from verse 4 that the date the deposit was placed in escrow was eternity past. Under the Doctrine of Relation, the contents of the escrow were imputed irrevocably to the believer in eternity past but their conveyance is contingent upon the fulfillment of the condition stated in the Escrow Agreement.
42. The condition to be fulfilled is found in numerous passages of Scripture but one that seems to sum it up nicely is:

**Hebrews 10:35 - Do not throw away as worthless your confidence [ **advance to the adult spiritual life** ] which keeps on having a rich distribution of blessing [ **rewards in time and eternity** ].**

**v. 36 - For you keep on having need of perseverance [ continue the double column advance ] so that when you have executed the will of God [ fulfilled the condition of the Escrow Agreement ] you may receive the deposit which was promised to you [ the escrow account ].**

43. The believer who utilizes the spiritual assets imputed at salvation to achieve this objective has fulfilled the concept that introduces Ephesians 1:3. The English translations have “blessed be the God” (NASB, KJV) or “praise be to the God” (NIV).
44. But God does not need our praise nor are we capable of blessing Him. However, the first thing He did for us was to bless us. And by utilizing the divine operating assets imputed at salvation, the believer has the privilege and opportunity to advance in the spiritual life to the point that God can be praised and glorified by the mature believer.
45. Only God is worthy of praise by the members of the human race. But God cannot be praised by lost and condemned mankind. Thus, God has developed a system by which man may acquire His righteousness, acquire His thinking, and attain a level of wisdom by which he can legitimately praise Him and glorify Him.
46. It was God’s desire in eternity past to personally bless those who made this advance. These blessings were disposed into escrow before He even elected us.
47. Remember, election is not the same as salvation. By means of omniscience, God was able to peer into future human history and determine who among the human race would respond positively to the gospel in time. He sovereignly decided to choose these individuals to be recipients of salvation.
48. Election is God’s sovereign choice of who will be the recipients of salvation in time. This does not imply that these are predetermined for salvation without any consideration given to human free will.