

Series Name
Believers - What You're Into
Sermon Title
"This is Where God Starts with You"
Text
Ephesians 1:1-6
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The name of the new series is "Believers - What You're Into".

The title for next Sunday is "This is Where God Starts with You".

The text is [Ephesians 1:1-6](#).

Video of Sermon available here: <https://youtu.be/dH85IZY-6IM>

Sermon PowerPoint is avl [HERE](#).

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful^a in Christ Jesus:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings in Christ

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us^b for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

Sermon Auto Transcription:

Pastor Thom Rittichier

You know, it's been interesting to hear the pastors report from Afghanistan, because they talk about God's sovereignty there. And they know in a nation like this, like Babylon, there was the setting up of King Nebuchadnezzar by God the Scriptures say to be his servant. So they're recognizing this, under the sovereignty of God to see what God will accomplish worldwide great attitude, isn't it? Wow, what an amazing, amazing

thing. This morning, and we're going to turn in on amaze, return to an amazing thing for them that God has spoken and for us. So are we good here with our projection guys. Already, you know, some times there is more to something than meets the eye. Take an iceberg, for example. There's more to it than meets the eye. By the way, this iceberg is a picture of the one that sank the Titanic. I have seen it in black and white, this is a color added picture. But that's the one. And there is 90%. This image kind of represents this, there is 90% of an iceberg that's underneath the surface of the water, there's more to this iceberg than meets the eye. And boy was that tragically and horrifically demonstrated in history with the Titanic. Also, personally, by the way, how big icebergs will get I thought I put this picture up here. This is a picture here of an iceberg. And this is Greenland. And this is a house right there. And this is a public building, and work plant. And so you can see how big they get. And 90% of it is under the water. So that's only about 10% of that iceberg. This is one that threatened Greenland A while back, so I thought I'd put up there a lot of times, there is huge amount to something that we don't see a huge amount to it. And and that can happen. Not on a horrific scale like that. But also, personally, it happened to me, surely not horrifically, but interestingly, these are a pair of jeans that I got for my birthday. And I got them from my daughter for my birthday. And she asked me, so why aren't you wearing these jeans? And I told her, you know, I'm a pastor. And these are cool. Okay. How can a pastor be cool? You know what I mean? And so I did wear them for the vacation time. We did some things and I wore them. So you know, I didn't have to fulfill the job of being an uncool pastor. So I was able to wear cool jeans. And Matter of fact, she got me to the other ones have a rip down them. So you know how, and you know, when you get them, they think they're already faded and worn out. And then I began to wear these things. And I stuck my hand in my pocket. And look what I found. Here is the color that I was supposed to get for new jeans, right? And so I showed my daughter Kaylee that these and she said, Oh, it's the process that they go through to make them look old before you get them and faded. Yep. Well, that's because you're cool. They have to so if you see me wearing these, I'm not trying to be a cool pastor. I am. Yeah. living out

the provision of this gift. There's more to this than meets the eye as you can tell by this process that they put them through sometimes the process here. There's more to it than meets the eye. They actually make them that way. As a matter of fact, when I was given those my girls then asked my wife if I would know Longer wear those dad jeans that I've been wearing, you know the ones that are new when you get them. Okay, so you can see sometimes There's more than meets the eye. Also, on our journey, this came up. This is actually a picture that's taken in the Cleveland Akron metropolitan area. As a matter of fact, this is in a little park that's kind of tucked away, right there in the Cleveland accurate metropolitan area. To see what I'm looking at. That's That's me on the top of the of the rack there, that's me looking at this. And what I'm looking at is this. It's a waterfall that comes down and I actually took a picture over here of how high This is and how small the house looks. Right there. In the middle of the Cleveland Akron metropolitan area, there is this Cuyahoga waterfall. As a matter of fact, there's two parts of it, this is just one part of it. And it's interesting, if you notice here, you see what's up there. That's that's a bridge for a pedestrian way for traffic to be going across there over the top of this waterfall. And sometimes this is all underneath and those who are passing by zooming by don't even know it's there. Though it is a huge thing to look at. I decided I

would Flinn it my pictures here this morning. Otherwise, I would have showed you the cliff. On the other side, right there in the metropolitan Cleveland, Akron area. As a matter of fact, when I got off the freeway, I was right by Cleveland Clinic, not even intentionally. I've always thought about Cleveland Clinic working in the medical field, there's Cleveland Clinic, mazing. I didn't I did it. If you look here close, I'm wearing shorts, but they were kind of cool, too. They were. My point in all of this is to say the passage that we look at this morning, provides to us a whole bunch more than meets the eye for the average Christian. For us living out our lives, there is a whole bunch more to it, than what meets the eye for us. There is a lot that's underneath. And there is a whole process here that's going on that's not readily seen by us until we take some time. To look closely at it, I want you to turn with me in your Bible to the book of Ephesians chapter one, we're actually beginning a new series this morning. The series is titled this believers, what's your into, because the book of Ephesians pours out to us very clearly and distinctly what it is that we're into what it is that God has done and how he started this thing in your life, this thing of being a Christian, a believer, a genuine born of the Spirit, follower of Christ, God's the one who started this thing and what he has gotten you into. And what he has gotten you into is where there's a whole bunch more to it than meets the eye. There's a whole bunch underneath that we just kind of zoomed by sometime not paying any attention. There is a process that's been involved here that God does intend for us to know about. So that we can join him in what he's doing. This is a series from the whole book of the sesiones, which we're starting today. for believers, what you're into,

and this morning, we start here. This is where God starts with you. This is God's doing, as the Scriptures tell us and it is marvelous in our eyes, but there is a whole bunch more to see Then what readily meets the eye. The apostle Paul begins to take us there. As a matter of fact, the book is laid out as letter, verse one, it starts by saying, Paul, and instead of putting the author of the letter at the end, where it says, sincerely, Thomas, he starts it at the beginning, Paul, this is letter is from Paul, and it's got the APA systolic authority of Paul, who is an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God. This is the expression that's being conveyed to us about who's talking here. It's the will of God being spoken from the apostle of Jesus Christ, by the name of Paul, and boy, does he have a history. You can read about it in the New Testament, we are taking time to develop it, but it's a big history. That's who's speaking here, from God. Secondly, he states here that the letter in verse one is to the saints. That's how he describes it to the saints, who are in emphasis that metropolitan area, as a matter of fact, your emphasis was kind of like the Cleveland metropolitan area, it was densely populated at that point in time. One guy speaking about this, in a commentary that I've had for a goodly while, he said this, during this time that the letter was written, it came to have the title, the Supreme, Metropolitan Metro, excuse me, Metro palace of Asia, the Supreme, the biggest city of Asia. It's to the saints, who he calls faithful, or believers in Christ Jesus, that's the word that he uses there, for faithful as it's translated those who are believers in Christ Jesus. So the letter is from Paul, by the will of God as an apostle of Christ, the letter is to the believers. That's who it's written to those who were in and around that metropolitan area of emphasis. And the letter is designed verse two, to express grace, the grace of God and the peace of God that comes from God and Christ Jesus. This is intended to get you to come to a grips or grasp on what this grace that God is expressing

this favor this help to your life is in it's tended, intended to settle your soul, to grant peace, right from the start, we have this laid out to us about this letter. We call the Ephesians. The letter to the Ephesians. That is a great,

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Pastor Thom Rittichier

listing of the credentials here. And apostle of Christ, saw the risen Lord was dramatically converted, born of the Spirit of God, by the will of God writes to the believers who identified as saints those who are committed, going God's way to bring grace and peace to your life. That's how the apostle just gives us the introduction. Now, in the next three verses, he's going to talk about where God starts with you. What a blessing. This is where God's starts, verse three, what a blessing. This is where he starts with this blessing three times over, he mentions this blessing in verse three alone. And then what of this blessing he begins to unfold what this blessing is, what God has done, to get you and i into this life with him, this life of trusting him Through Jesus Christ. That's what we're going to find here. Here's where God starts with us. You know, it's interesting. That blessing is the initial feature. It's the initial emphasis, by inspiration from God, about this thing that you're in till blessing is the initial expression. It's the initial emphasis, blessing. Don't lose. Don't lose. You know, I do a lot of counseling. over the week, do a lot, visiting, talking with folks. Sometimes, the folks tell me, this is hard. This is hard. And if you notice, life has some hard stuff. Have you noticed that you noticed that there were some hard thinks, dealing with our own bend is hard. Sometimes, dealing with our old nature, which comes from that bend away from God is difficult. We get habits established in our life, that are not saintly. They're not going God's way. They're not different than the world. And it has some hard things. Note this, what you're into what you're into, as a belief, is a blessing. That's the initial expression. And emphasis. This is blessing. Now he's going to start to list for us. What a blessing this is. This is where God starts. He says this, he says it this way. blessing, the the God and Father He talks to us, first of all, about the Blessed One, that blessed one is God, the Father of our Lord Jesus.

Now, in this statement that begins with a blessing, he uses blessing as an adjective. He uses it as a verb. And he uses it as a noun, all in verse three, where he's talking about this thing that God has started in your life as a believer, and what you're really into, and he's gonna unfold that for us here. This is what you are into, from the apostle of God, by the will of God, to those who are believers, this is what you are into. Now, he used blessed, blessed B is the way the translation comes out. Actually, that's an adjective. He's describing God. Well, let me let me pause for a moment. Do you remember adjectives? The remember all the way back to your junior high, maybe or sixth grade whenever it came to you? By the way, I just share a personal note here. I remember very clearly in the seventh grade sitting in English class, and suddenly waking up in the middle of the day one day, I hadn't been asleep, but I was asleep. I looked around at an across the top of the of the chalkboards. There were all these things about English, adjective, adverb, predicate noun additive. And suddenly I woke up and said, I'm supposed to know that. I'm supposed to know what that means. And I haven't got the slightest idea what she,

what those things refer to what she's talking about. By the way, that was my wake up experience. I see Suddenly learned I was in school for a reason. In the middle of the seventh grade. Okay. happens. glad I did. By the way, do you recall what an adjective is? It's a describer. That's exactly right. According to something I googled just to be a little cool and up to date. It says this, an adjective adds detail to describe a noun, a noun, which is really generally very close a noun, which is a person to place or a thing to make it descriptively clear, to give more interest to it. That now is close. The blessed one here is who? God, God is the blessed. What in the world is that adjective describing? I want to use the word from the Greek and this isn't so I'll be cool. It's because I want you to hear what word is used here. For blessed as an adjective, it is the word eulogio. What word do you think we get an English from eulogio. You allege it is the word eulogy. You know where we hear that right? Someone gives a eulogy, usually at a funeral, where they get up and talk well of the person. Hopefully talk realistically, but talk well, of the person they talk or declare, the goodness, the adorable quality, the things that kind of cause you to remember and have affection for the individual. what Paul is saying here? Is that V. Good. V adorable. The one who is the standard of good and adorable for getting our affections is God it's the adjective that describes God, one translators? Well, actually, it was Strong's in their dictionary for this. They said that the term should be translated adorable.

The adorable God, the goodness of God, which is the standard, the good god, that's what he's using. It's descriptive detail of god that's given here as as the declaration of what is good, the blessed God, Jesus said this in Matthew, there's none good, get this. He becomes the standard of good, there is none good, but one that is God. All good deaths, derives from him. He is the giver of every good and perfect gift. It comes from above, from the Father of lights, who doesn't change and doesn't vary. That's what pastor James says. Now the scriptures go on to say like in Psalm 145, but Lord is good. He's good tool. And his tender mercies are over all the things that he does. Folks, I want you to know that what is going to be expressed and unfolded here to us, of where God starts and what he does, where he starts to get us into this and what he does in what we're into. its own overwhelming. It's overpower. It's like Yeah, when I was looking at that waterfall and seeing that water in the midst of this metropolitan area, just keep pouring and pouring. It was kind of like that is really cool. I've been to some waterfalls that are absolutely overpowering. Have you ever stood around the egg falls and seeing that roar and the continuous flowing of that. And I want you to know that is after they've reduced the amount of water that's going over it, to preserve it from eroding away to draw off a electrical power generation, and still its overall wing. Yet I want you to know that, that Niagara Falls doesn't compare at all to how overpowering what the Apostle is going to unfold to us when I was going through this, I just had to sit back in my chair, and just shake my head at the wonder of what I'm into the Grinch of what God has done to start this descriptive detail. God is glad. The Blessed ness is that God is God. This is good. This is good. This is the standard of good. And he's good to all. Psalm 145, verse 17, goes on to say he's right, he he's righteous in all this kind in all of his. That's what we're into. And the Bible echoes that from Book of Genesis all the way to the book of Revelation. Notice what Revelation says here. And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and in the sea. And all that in them is he heard every creature that's in heaven, on the earth, in, in under the earth, and in the sea. This is the worms still,

because they're kind of under the earth. This is the fish this, this is the sea monsters. This this is the man have to say that right? You know, those big Yeah, that those two, there, they're there. And then they're saying this, to him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb be blessing That's it, there be this ascription of the goodness of God and honor and glory, that same word blessing is the you the God that blessing

and might and that's going on from all this and heaven, all the angelic hosts, every creature is echoing every human being. And by the way, the next verse says here, and the living creatures that surround the throne of God, yes, the book of Ephesians is going to take us there into what's going on, on this throne of God and what it means down here to us. They say, this is true. Fifth is true. This is true. God is that good. That's where he starts with you, with his own goodness, being recognized and proclaimed a descriptive detail of God in his person. And then he says, the one doing the blessing is who God is the Blessed One, the standard of good, and the one doing the blessing. Now, here, blessing becomes the verb, it becomes action. It is the expressing of this good, the endowing with what is prospering and helpful. This is the blessing and who is the one doing the blessing here? Who question Who? God. Yeah, that's what he says, Look at he said, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who has blessed us, this is done. This is God who has blessed us. This is blessing, the the bestowing of good but the very standard of good and God is the one who is doing this. He is delivered the blessing to us. You know,

for this to be grasped. You have to be born of the Spirit. You have to be you have to be born of the Spirit, he's going to tell us a bit about this blessing. what it entails. The ones being blessed here are these are the believers, the saints that he's referred to previously. The ones who are the recipients of God's good or the believers. Now, Jesus made it very clear that there is one good God and he sent his sunshine and his rain. On Oh, that's a blessing. Psalm 145. Reverse nine said God is good too. He sends blessing, he gives them their food in do sees, he opens his hand, Psalm 145. And he satisfies the desire of every living thing. This is God Hand on. And it's tool tool. But what he is going to unfold to us is that God in giving good God who is the very standard of good gives it to those who are be leavers. To those he makes his own they are set apart, they are synced support to him and his way, in this world, there is a lot of competition. There are many competing gods, you and I all have them. One is described as their God being their own belly. connected. Imagine that. Can you imagine somebody bowing down and worshiping some big belly? Imagine it. Wouldn't that be attractive? Wouldn't that be adorable? Here's the point. We all have a belly and sometimes what we want becomes God. There are many competitions for God, many voices. This God who is the standard of good and brings good actively is a verb into your life is the one who is blessing. The believers he's bringing for good, he's gonna unfold to us what that involves. Finally, he makes clear the place of this blessing, there is only one place for it. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus, he has blessed us in Christ. That is the only place where this blessing is poured out. Now, I want you to know that there is a big history to that thing of Christ being the place of God's blessing. Matt referred to it a little bit in the story. By the way, there is a whole bunch of story to what he was talking about concerning Patrick in that song. There's a whole bunch of story that add it sounds like it's been kind of colored a bit too but there's a whole bunch of story concerning the place of Christ. Do

you know there was a time called the Dark Ages on the earth? You heard of that? The Dark Ages.

You know why they were dark and what got us out of the dark ages.

Yes, Doom and darkness and information was withheld. And it was how it was withheld by the dominant ation of the Christian dumb that took people away from Christ. The Renaissance and the Reformation brought this back as a matter of fact, Erwin lutes, or writes on this when he calls it, the story of the significance of the reformation, the rescuing of the gospel, that people are made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ, rather than some system of works, some things you have to do to be made right with God, even when it was put under a banner of Christendom. That whole thing brought darkness on the earth. It was the Dark Ages recognized in human history, the Renaissance bringing information back and they also kind of went off for Christ, the Reformation strongly proclaimed what is called solo

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Pastor Thom Rittichier

Christ alone is what makes us right with God. It is so low fee, Dave's solo, faith, solo phase, in solo Christ, faith alone in Christ alone, that makes us right with God. And it's not by what you do. It is by grace alone. faith alone in Christ alone, by grace alone, according to these scriptures alone, and that was the cry of the reformation, and rightly founded because these blessing our God are in Christ. Christ, Oh, wow. Christ, Oh, wow. over and over and over in Ephesians, he says, In Christ through Christ, it's in the beloved that we have this. It's Christ alone. This is where God starts. God starts with his own blessing, His goodness. And then he is doing the bringing of good into our lives, as believers in Christ alone. Now, having done that, we're ready for the unfolding of the specifics of this blessing. What of this blessing, here is what he's done. This is it. And I'm going to start and just read through it, then we're going to take a look at Blue bless it be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ, with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us, in him in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has bestowed on us freely, blessed us bestowing on us freely in the be loving in Christ, did you notice how many times it's in Christ in Christ, it's in Christ in Christ. That's where it is, it's in Christ. And first he summarizes what this blessing is, he calls it specifically verse three, every spiritual blessing, every spiritual blessing. Now, now this word blessing is the noun use of the eulogy. It was before us it's an adjective of God as a verb of the actions of God towards us, and now it becomes a noun here. It is a theme, a bountiful good provision that God has brought into our life a bountiful provision Good, that's what he's talking about the blessing. And he talks about it spiritual blessing in the sense that it's provided by the Spirit of God. Some people say it's spiritual in the sense that it's not material. But I can't see that in the Bible. The Bible points out that there is material blessing here. For example, Elijah was fed by a raven, that's material blessing, a widow, taking care of a

light shot was provided for her and her son in doing that, that spiritual blessing, or that's physical blessing. There is Jesus who performed miracles, giving food raising the dead, those are material blessings. And Paul, who in Philippians, chapter four, says, My God shall supply your every need, according to his riches in Christ Jesus. Now, Christianity, is not to make you materially blessed. It's not a health, wealth, prosperity, gospel. But it does bring the material blessings.

Christina was giving an account of some of the material blessings this week, as a testimony on the internet that God has brought into her life through your material, bless. But don't go to the other extreme thinking, whoa, I am surely blessed of God when I have these material. No, that's not that was an old, old idea. That's even clot about by some of the unbelievers in the scriptures. It's spiritual, in the sense God, His Spirit is in charge of bringing you good into your life, some material, some purely inner man, good, spiritual stuff, good into your life. It's every spiritual blessing. And he localized it here. First he summarizes it, then he localizes it, everyone in the heavenlies, he says, in the heavenly realm, and he talks about the jurisdiction of God, working from the realm of heaven. This is kind of like the kingdom of heaven rules. This is the realm where God rules he has done this summarized every spiritual blessing, where it comes from localise from the authority of God in Heavenlies. In the realm of heaven, by the way, the apostle Paul only uses this term in Ephesians. And he uses it five different times about this realm of authority of God. And we'll see some of those as we go through. If he's from the realm of God. Then he itemize What are these blessings, I'm going to move this up. So I can run these items here for you. First of all, this is the first one where God start what he's done. in bringing this into your life. He shows us that means he hand selected, he picked out particularly he chose us in him in Christ, before the world's founding. This is before you were born. This is before you said or did one deed. As a matter of fact, this was before anyone was born. This was before Adam and Eve said or did one thing. God acted. This is the blessing. This is the specific itemizing of the blessing. He chose you. He chose you in Christ. He shows you before he began the world. There is something here that doesn't meet the eye. There is a process that has gone on, that's not readily see, there is a depth underneath this, that we sometimes zoom right by, that what is going on in your life is a work of God by God's hand selection of you, because he knew you, and he chose you before he started this earth. That's what the Bible teaches. And that's what made me sit back in my chair and shake my head in wonder and worship of God. He knew you and chose you and we could go around the room. I know the lives of some of you folks hear that you are committed to going God's way to presenting the gospel evidences of being in Christ. And he by name by person by individual ality shows you just like he shows others that make up the church in Christ. That's, you know, nothing ever. Have you ever heard of Murphy's laws? What's Murphy's Law?

If anything bad happened to me, it will happen to me, and it will happen to me at the worst possible time. Well, let me tell you that this far, shout shadows Murphy's Law. As a matter of fact, I can tell you that Murphy's laws are under God's jurisdiction. If something bad is happening to you, it's for his purpose, nothing good ever happens to me. Let me tell you in Christ, something good has happened to you. Amen. I mean, this is like, far, far away, the greatest thing that can happen. And yet I want to read for you a quote from Charles Spurgeon on this. Because when he was talking about this thing, of

God electing us, he said something that we need to let bring in our hearts. He said this, Spurgeon said, Do not conceive, don't think that some decree passed in the ages of eternity, will save your soul, unless you believe in Christ. Do not fancy that you are to be saved without faith, that is a most abominable and cursing Harris, and has ruin thous. Lay not election as a pillow for you to sleep on, or you may be ruined, running away said that. Because some folks hope that they've been elected by God. And therefore, they're not really necessary for them to entrust their life to Christ. To hear Him as Lord, and follow his direction. Because God's already decided, so I don't need to that is not the case at all. Because the Bible says, Who ever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. God has worked this in selecting you, but you're called to trust him. trust with your life, Christ died to pay for your sin. But you have to entrust yourself to Him. Because what he is done in choosing us is that we should be holy and blameless before him in that we should be set apart to go in God's way, and that we should have no blemish in Christ before him. He did this in love. He did this in love, and we have to trust him to participate. You've got to put your faith in Christ, His death. His burial, His resurrection, his direction. He did this content of the blessing pre destined us. He marked out before he marked out before before the foundation of the world before anything happened. He marked out before that we would be as dotted as his sons through Jesus Christ. Let me say this, your salvation and your progress in your Christian life depends totally on God. It has never depended on you, it will never depend on you. It never has. It never will. It has completely depended on you are dependent on God. But you are called to trust him. Trust Him,

trust him. trust him that he's selected you trust him, that he's directed you to make your life go his way, so that it's without blemish before him. trust him that he's adopted to trust him. So you walk with Him. That is biblical Christianity. That is what we are called to. This is what he has done. Now. One last thing. He's marked it out before that we should become hit the sons of his family. And we're going to see what that actually entails a little bit later in Ephesians. But this, this is contextualized here. Why did he do this? This is what he is done. Why did he do this? He's did it because of where it takes you where it goes to the praise of the glory of His grace, which he freely bestowed upon us, in the Be Loved in Christ in him. This is God's doing, what you're into his God's doing. He started it. And there are a few reasons got a whole lot for us to be into with him as we trust. It's God's doing. So any time we encounter life stuff, life stuff, disappointments, challenges, difficulties, frustration, anger, broken relationships, our own sin, the sin of others, come to the place where you trust what God has done. Trust Him in it and go after the that it be to the praise of his glory. What you do and trusting him. You see, he is a good, good, father. election is good. predestination is good, doesn't take away our responsibility to trust. As a matter of fact, it highlights it in the midst of all life's stuff. He's got further heroes, as prayer when we sing to you, in Jesus name, amen.