

Join us for our

Family
Fellowship
Potluck

November 7th
6:00-8:00pm



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FORTRESS OF
JOY CHURCH

The Progressive Christian

When the Apostle Paul was on his missionary journey he met some interesting people. Some of them were significant and some made no difference. The encounters that he did have were recorded for our benefit and enlightenment. When he came to the coasts of Ephesus he met twelve men who were disciples of Christ. He asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost since they believed. They told Paul they had never heard of any Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:3-4 Paul said to them, what then were you baptized? They said it was John's baptism. Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying they should believe on Him who is coming Christ Jesus.

So, these twelve men were baptized in water which means they had repented of their sins. This is an important event but it did not save them!. I grew up in a church that taught me that I could not be saved without water baptism. They also taught that I had to confess my sins to the pastor and then pray for punishment. Then I had to take "holy communion" in order to enter a state of grace. And then if I sinned I lost

my place in heaven and I had to start the process over again. Let us progress along with these disciples and we will revisit "baptism".

Acts 19:5 When the twelve men heard what Paul said they were baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus.

To keep you from getting confused, let me point out to you what Paul said in the sixth chapter of Hebrews. In this letter

Acts 19:6 Then Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Now in the space of some minutes the twelve disciples experienced all three baptisms, these are progressive Christians. I watch Christians receive a promise of God and they become satisfied and don't seem to want any more. Part of the reason for this is that no one is telling them that they are entitled to more.



Acts 2:38 Repent, be baptized in the Name of Jesus for the remission of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Paul says he wants to teach the church about the doctrine of baptisms. So, baptism is not a one size fits all kind of deal. In fact, there are three baptisms we need to experience. So, when the twelve disciples were baptized in the Name of Jesus, they were born-again. Now they are progressing, they began with water baptism and now they are baptized into the Body of Christ, but Paul wasn't done with them yet.

This is not water baptism, this is being born-again where all of our sins are washed away. This is our birthday and Father gives us a gift, He is the Holy Spirit. If we will permit Him, the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. The truth is what God has prepared for us to possess over the span of our life. **The Progressive Christian.**

Will God Bless Me?

After God created man, He blessed them and with this blessing they were empowered to accomplish five things.

Far too many Christians fall way short when it comes to receiving the promises of God. The way I hear Christians talk it would appear they would be thrilled if God would just bless them a couple times a year. Would you believe me if I told you that you were entitled to His blessings every day? Well, don't take my word on it, let's go into God's Word and see what He says about blessing His people.

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said unto Adam, be fruitful, multiply, restore the earth, subdue it and have dominion over every living thing.

Adam and his descendants, it was the only **blessing** God had, it was all man would ever need. Now, when Adam sinned he disqualified himself from the **blessing** and he released the curse into the perfect world God created for him. God **blessed** Adam because he was created in God's image which is righteousness and true holiness. but now Adam bears the image of his new father the devil. Twenty-one hundred years later God appears to Abram and offers him a covenant.

Genesis 12:2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will **BLESS** you and you will be a blessing.

God only has one **blessing**, Adam disqualified himself and so God offers His **blessing** to Abram. Abram had to do one thing to qualify, he had to be willing to obey God. Abram was faithful to God and he be-

came the patriarch of the nation of Israel. God changed his name to Abraham which means "father of many nations". Abram was under the **blessing**, God took the seed of one man and multiplied it so one man became a great nation. As the nation grew God gave them



dominion over all the "ites" in the land. But when Israel disobeyed they went into captivity to the local "ites".

Deuteronomy 11:26 Behold, I set before you this day the blessing and the curse. The blessing if you obey My commandments, and the curse if you will not obey My commandments.

So, now all of Abraham's descendants have an opportunity to walk in the blessing God originally spoke over Adam. The **blessing** is in the earth and the curse is in the earth, man has a choice between the two. The nation of Israel could not sustain its obedience for any length of time, so they had to contend with the curse continually. Israel was constantly in and out of bondage, but God always showed them His mercy because they had the nature of Adam's father the devil. Mercy would invite the restoration of God over and over again, but the ministry of grace would not be available until the death and resurrection of Christ.



After God created man He **blessed** them and with this blessing they were empowered to accomplish five things. Empowered by the **blessing** they would be fruitful, multiply (not double), replenish the earth, subdue it and have total dominion. This **blessing** was for

Where is the Blessing?

Abraham and his descendants had access to the **blessing** under the law. Jesus fulfilled the law, so what has become of God's **blessing**?

Galatians 3:9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

live by faith. These people believe God despite not being able to see or touch God. They are obedient to God's Word, they do not require only tangible evidence. Born-again Christians are the recipients of every aspect of God's **blessing**. If a Christian believes God's Word then he can believe for

title, He was willing to go to his home despite the Jews home made rule.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.

God promised Abraham He would **ble**ss all the families through him. God gave us the gift of eternal life and the grace that changes a man from the inside out. Adam's father was our father the devil, grace supernaturally severed the ties we had with the devil and connected us to Christ. Now we are as Adam was before he sinned, we have a right to the same **ble**ssing God spoke over him. So, how do we get **ble**ssed? By faith! We must believe that Jesus gave up His life in order to restore the **ble**ssing and image of God.

Psalms 68:19 Blessed be the Lord who daily loads us up with benefits.

The word benefits are rewards, we can call them **ble**ssings and remain Scriptural. Notice how often God will **ble**ss us every day. If you believe God's Word then you should look to be **ble**ssed every day of your life. He said He would **ble**ss us in the city and the field, that is the only two places in the world, in town and out of town. Where is your **ble**ssing? It's in Christ waiting to overtake you, get ready, your **ble**ssings are here.

God gave us the gift of eternal life and the grace that changes a man from the inside out.



Abraham was **ble**ssed because he was faithful (obedient), so faith has something to do with obedience. The **ble**ssing that was spoken over Adam and then reiterated to Abram has been offered to the church of Jesus Christ. There is only one **ble**ssing that covers five elements of life.

Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, cursed is everyone on a tree.

Christ has redeemed us. Who is us? These are the people who choose to

the **ble**ssing every day of the world. Religion has done a good job of teaching folks how to walk in false humility. My pastor loved to quote what the Roman Centurion said to Jesus:

Lord I am not worthy that You should come under my roof.

Well, I have a Scripture that puts the centurion's quote to rest once and for all. When you get born-again Jesus comes to dwell in your heart, so forget the roof thing. The Jews considered the Romans to be dogs and were not worthy of entering a Jews house. Jesus didn't care about the man's

FOJ

Fortress of Joy Church
720 Faw Rd
Helena, MT 59602

Phone: 406-442-1819

E-mail: support.fortress@aol.com

FortressOfJoyChurch.com

**Restoring the
supernatural power
of God back
to the local church**

Growing up in Him

When I look back on my life I have come to realize that growing up was fun. I always looked forward to my next birthday because I got presents and got to do things that my age qualified me to do. When I left my childhood behind I had to deal with things that required a more serious attitude. I had to deal

with the military and all the things a new adult has to deal with. All my time as a student and a member of a large family prepared me for the responsibilities of life.

Growing up can take its toll on anyone who is not properly trained to accept all

the challenges. I slipped into the world and away from my relationship with God. Just like everyone else, life was hard because I became its student.

Ephesians 4:11,14 God gave some Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers for the maturing of the Saints. That we be no more children, tossed to and fro by deceivers.

GROW



I became a born-again Christian, a child of God, a babe in Christ. Now I'm growing up all over again for the first time. I'm back to enjoying my childhood all over again and I'm having fun growing up in Him. I will continue to grow until I see Him face to face.