

Palmetto Baptist Church: July 26, 2020
O Great God: Ephesians 3:20-21

Background of doxologies:

The dictionary defines **doxology** as “an expression of praise to God, especially a short hymn sung as part of a Christian worship service.” The word **doxology** comes from the Greek *doxa*, (“glory, splendor, grandeur”) and *logos*, (“word” or “speaking”).

Jewish people customarily ended their prayers with a blessing to God; sometimes the blessings closed with “forever and ever” (cf. 1 Chron 16:36; Ps 106:48). It was likewise customary to respond to prayers and benedictions with “Amen.”¹

Well known Doxologies:

Pastor Jason Ormiston: “Go and make disciples of the nations.”

God's Original Benediction²

Numbers 6:22-26 - The LORD said to Moses, “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ***“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.”***”

28 Benedictions for Your Church Service

1. Rom. 8:38-39 - For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. Rom. 11:33, 36 - Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

¹ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Eph 3:20–21.

²

<https://www.christianity.com/blogs/eric-mckiddie-pastoralized/28-ways-to-conclude-your-sermon-a-list-of-nt-doxologies-and-benedictions.html>

3. Rom. 15:5-6 - May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Rom. 15:13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

5. 1 Cor. 15:58 - Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

6. 2 Cor. 13:11 - Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

7. 2 Cor. 13:14 - The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

8. Gal. 6:18 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

9. Eph. 3:17-19 - (May) Christ dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

10. Eph. 3:20-21 - Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

11. Eph. 6:23-24 – Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

12. Phil. 4:7 - (May) the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

13. Col. 3:15 - And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

14. Col. 3:16-17 - Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

15. 1 Th. 3:12-13 - May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

16. 1 Th. 5:23-24 - Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

17. 2 Th. 2:16-17 - Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

18. 1 Tim. 1:17 - To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

19. 1 Tim. 6:15b-16 - He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

20. Philem. 25 - The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

21. Heb. 13:20-21 - Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

22. 2 Pet. 3:18 - (May you) grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

23. 2 John 3 - Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.

24. Jude 24-25 - Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to

the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

25. Rev. 1:5b-6 - To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

26. Rev. 5:12, 13 - Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing! ...To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!

27. Rev. 7:12 - Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.

28. Rev. 22:20-21 - He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

This morning, we will spend our time reflecting on #10.

Eph. 3:20-21 - Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

- God is able. (21a)
- God is powerful. (21b)
- God is wonderful. (22)

HE IS ABLE. – TO DO FAR MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK

- To answer your prayers
- To fulfill your dreams
 - Paul's prayer? (Eph. 1:18-23; 3:14-19)
 - Eph. 1:18-23: Spiritual insight for the believers in Ephesus to live in light of eternity (18), experience God's power at work within them (19-21), participate in the outworking of God's power through the church (22), and experience the fullness of God through fellowship with other members (23).

- Eph. 3:14-19: Spiritual strength in your inner man (16), a place in your heart for Christ to call His home (17), strength to comprehend with all the saints how much Christ loves you (18-19).
- Paul's dream (Eph. 2:11-21)
 - Peace between the Jews and Gentiles (11-14)
 - Two people groups become one to form the church (15-16)
 - Common Citizenship, Common Kinship, Common Worship (19-21)
- All with great excess!!!

HE IS ABLE. – TO DO FAR MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK

HE IS POWERFUL. – ACCORDING TO THE POWER AT WORK WITHIN US

- To do the impossible for you. (Eph. 2:1-9; Matthew 19:26)
- To work in and through you. (Eph. 2:10)
 - Reflect back on the description of this amazing power found in Ephesians 1:19-23
 - Power to raise Jesus from the dead (20a)
 - Power to seat Jesus back on His throne and regain total preeminence over all created beings in heaven and earth (20b-21)
 - Power to display the fullness of His glory through the church (22-23)

HE IS WONDERFUL. – TO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS

- He is worthy of your meditation
 - Where is His glory on display?
 - IN THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL:
 - Eph. 1:3-6 – His ability to choose us and adopt us into His family was to the praise of His glorious grace
 - Eph. 1:11-14 – His plan to work everything according to the counsel of His will so that we who are the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

- His gift of salvation (presented by a messenger of God who urged you to believe in the good news [13]; His gift of the Holy Spirit [14] who is the One who seals you until the day of redemption and guarantees your access to the riches of heaven [14]).
- Eph. 2:1-10 & 3:7-13 – Through the transforming power of the Gospel.

○ IN THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH (Eph. 3:21)

Here the wording *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus* is unusual, for this is the only doxology in the New Testament where the term ‘church’ and the phrase ‘in Christ Jesus’ appear (though cf. Rom. 16:25–27; Jude 24–25). But both are appropriate in the light of the immediate and wider contexts of chapters 1–3.

As the community of the redeemed, both Jews and Gentiles,

- The church is the masterpiece of God’s grace (cf. 2:7).
- It is the realm of his presence and authority (1:22, 23; 2:22),
- It is the instrument through which his wisdom is made known to the spiritual powers in the heavenly realm (3:10).³

- How long is His glory on display?
 - Throughout all generations, forever and ever

- He is worthy of your affirmation.

- AMEN. (LET IT BE SO!)

Writing about the issue of praise and glory, C. S. Lewis said:

The most obvious fact about praise escaped me for the longest time. I thought of praise in terms of a compliment, approval, or the giving of honor. I had never noticed that all enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise unless shyness or something else brings it into check. The world rings with praise ... lovers praise their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the

³ Peter Thomas O’Brien, [The Letter to the Ephesians](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1999), 268.

countryside, players praising their favorite game ... praise of weather, dishes, actors, motors, horses, colleges, countries, historical personages, children, flowers, mountains, rare stamps, rare beetles, even sometimes politicians or scholars. I had not noticed how the humblest, and at the same time most balanced and capacious minds, praised most, while the cranks, misfits, and malcontents praised least.

I had not noticed either that just as men spontaneously praise whatever they value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it: “Isn’t she lovely? Wasn’t it glorious? Don’t you think that magnificent?” The psalmists in telling everyone to praise God are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about (*Reflection in the Psalms*, New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1958).⁴

Illustration:

J. Wilbur Chapman used to tell the story of a gentleman who had grown up in a wealthy family but had become estranged, something like the prodigal son. Destitute and broken in spirit, the man had taken to a life of begging. He explained:

I got off at the Pennsylvania depot as a tramp, and for a year I begged on the streets for a living. one day I touched a man on the shoulder and said, “Hey, mister, can you give me a dime?” As soon as I saw his face, I was shocked to see that it was my own father. I said, “Father, Father, do you know me?” Throwing his arms around me and with tears in his eyes, he said, “Oh, my son, at last I’ve found you! I’ve found you! You want a dime? Everything I have is yours.

Think of it. I was a tramp. I stood begging my own father for 10 cents, when for 18 years, he had been looking for me to give me all that he had.

What an interesting story, and how illustrative of our lives as human beings. We go around tapping the world on the shoulder, asking for a dime, when our Heavenly Father is seeking us out to give us everything he has. We are far too easily pleased. We are content to scrounge around for crumbs, when an invitation for a banquet is

⁴ Max Anders, [Galatians-Colossians](#), vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 142.

laid at our feet. We are consumed with the frustrations of the world, when the fullness of God is ours.⁵

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Application:

- **Believe God is...** able, powerful, and wonderful.

- **Trust God to ...**
 - Do the impossible. (ABLE)
 - Provide the strength. (POWERFUL)
 - Work through the church. (WONDERFUL)
 - Participate in the magnification of God for all times among all peoples by joining a local church (PBC), supporting your church, and promoting your church.

- **Take time to ...**
 - Reflect on the doxologies.
 - See where He is at work around you.

⁵ Max Anders, [Galatians-Colossians](#), vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 133.