



**SERIES: Ephesians**  
**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**  
**Tuesday, January 5, 2021**  
**Scripture: Ephesians 1:6-8.**  
**TITLE: Increasing Your Joy**

Have you ever been bailed out? I have—several times. In my first year as a pastor, we hit some amazing trials. And by amazing, I mean lousy. In December of 2015, we had a transmission go out and a major home disaster. A transmission alone can wipe out a person's savings account, but having a \$6,000 home repair could cripple a person for years. Well, by God's grace, friends and family graced us out, by chipping in so we could get the necessary repairs to our home and our van.

That was amazing grace, but there's no more amazing grace than the bailout God did for our souls. Listen to Paul's words in Ephesians 1:6-8:

*"So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. <sup>7</sup> He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins. <sup>8</sup> He has showered his kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding."* <sup>1</sup>

Paul says we praise God for His glorious grace. This grace is for His children—those of us who He adopted through His Son, Jesus Christ. There are special and unique gifts that God gives His children.

What should our response be? It shouldn't be to demand more. It shouldn't be to act as if we deserved it. It should be praise and worship of our God and King. It should be an attitude of gratitude. It should be a life full of joy.

I don't know what hardship you're facing today. You may feel overwhelmed because of your financial crisis or debt. You may be feeling unhappy because you're working for a boss you don't like, in a job you hate. You may never feel good enough for a spouse or a parent. Whatever it is, remember, God chose you to be His child.

He bailed you out from your sin debt. You were dead in your sins, but God showered His kindness on you by purchasing our freedom with the blood of His Son. Think of that: God loved you so much, that he would allow his Son to suffer – to be rejected – to be beaten, flogged, and crucified for you. You were His enemy. You were spitting in His face with how you lived. But God chose you and bailed you out for all eternity.

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<sup>1</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [Holy Bible: New Living Translation](#) (Eph 1:6–8). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

If you feel rejected, underappreciated, out of place, remember, God chose you and saved you from your sins. And that's just where His grace begins. But all gifts flow from this gift of God.

My challenge for you today is to increase your joy by making an inventory of the gifts that God has given you. Make a list in three categories: 1) Spiritual gifts, 2) Practical gifts, 3) relational gifts. Write these out on a piece of paper or in your notes on your smartphone. When you begin to feel these negative feelings, look back at these lists. Allow God's kindness to overwhelm you to unrelenting joy.