

Rejoice  
September 1, 2019  
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Ephesians 1:3-14

Opening discussion: Let's talk about the word "chosen." When you were a kid and they chose up teams for sports were you a) one of the first picked, b) somewhere in the middle of the choosing, c) the last chosen? It feels good to be chosen because someone wants you on his or her team! Later in adult life remember the feeling of being chosen for that first really big job?

Another example that's personally relevant, this weekend is our wedding anniversary (for 34 years Susan has hung in there!) I feel blessed to be chosen by Susan to be her husband. Thinking about marriage, who chose whom?

In this first section of Ephesians chapter one Paul gives us a compelling list of the blessings that come to those who have trusted Christ as Savior and Lord. He reminds us to praise God from whom all those blessings came.

**BIG IDEA:** Followers of Christ should continually praise God because He has chosen us, has purchased us, and has adopted us as His heirs. It was all His idea! He wanted a relationship with us before He even created the world. He sent Jesus to die so we could have that relationship. He gave us His Spirit to guarantee our inheritance as His children forever!

- What is this letter to the church at Ephesus all about in a nutshell?
- *"Who wrote it? Paul the apostle. Where was it written? From Rome, where Paul was under house arrest (Acts 28:16, 30-31). To whom was it written? To the saints in the city of Ephesus in western Asia Minor (Eph. 1:1)...Why was it written? To strengthen the doctrine and practice of the believers in Ephesus. What is its basic theme? Because believers have new life through Christ, they ought to live a new life through the Spirit."*<sup>1</sup>

- *“Chapters 1–3 show that Christ, through His death, resurrection, and exaltation, has reconciled us to God [the theme is primarily doctrine]...chapters 4–6, instructs believers on how to live in light of the new identity we have in Christ...[the theme is primarily practical]”<sup>ii</sup>*
- To repeat the BIG IDEA: Followers of Christ should continually praise God because He has chosen us, has purchased us, and has adopted us.

Ephesians 1:3–14 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> 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,

- Verse three sets the tone: followers of Christ, get ready to give God unending praise because He has chosen to give us unending blessings!
- The Greek words for “blessed” and “blessing” in verse three are the root of our word “eulogy.” The double meaning is to shower someone with praise, and to be showered with “bountiful gifts.”
- Look at this verse in the NLT: *“All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.”<sup>iii</sup>*
- Believers have been blessed with every spiritual blessing.
- **What are some of the benefits we receive from being saved by God?**
- The fact that God chose us is our first and highest reason for praise.

<sup>4</sup> even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

- Take a moment to imagine this! Before God created the world, He planned to choose every person who would trust Christ as Savior and Lord.

- NLT: *“God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.”<sup>iv</sup>*
- If we’ve trusted Christ we are “accepted in the Beloved.”
- The Greek word for “accepted” means to “indue with special honor:—make accepted, be highly favoured.”<sup>v</sup>
- Charles Spurgeon wrote: *“It signifies that we are the objects of divine (satisfaction), nay, even of divine delight. How marvelous that we, worms, mortals, sinners, should be the objects of divine love!”<sup>vi</sup>*
- God delights in His beloved! If you’re a Christ-follower He delights in YOU!
- Remember my question about marriage, “who chose whom?”
- Let’s apply that to election (God chooses) and predestination (He chose before time began.) How do we wrap our small, finite minds around how and whom God chooses? **Anyone like to take that one?**
- Someone said, *“Try to explain predestination, and you may lose your mind. Try to explain it away, and you may lose your soul.”<sup>vii</sup>*

Listen to Chuck Swindoll’s take on this great imponderable topic: *“We aren’t asked to understand the ins and outs of election, how it fits with free will, or why God chose that person rather than this person. We’ll go mad if we try to get our minds around the infinite mind of God, to grapple with His wisdom, to understand His greatness, or to question His goodness. Instead, we’re expected to accept the doctrine of election by faith and praise God for it. When was the last time you did that? “Thank you, Lord, for choosing me.”<sup>viii</sup>*

Warren Wiersbe writes, *“Does the sinner respond to God’s grace against his own will? No, he responds because God’s grace makes him willing to respond. The mystery of divine sovereignty and human responsibility will never be solved in this life. Both are taught in the Bible (John 6:37). Both are true, and both are essential.”<sup>ix</sup>*

- Those two great theologians summarized it. Do you have other thoughts?

- Let's refocus: Before Genesis chapter one, before Adam and Eve, before the fall of man, God had a plan to make those He has chosen to be "holy and blameless before Him." THAT is something HUGE to praise God for!
- That can only happen if we are "in Christ" by "redemption through His blood (V.7)."

<sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup> which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup> making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

<sup>11</sup> In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, <sup>12</sup> so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- Verse seven contains the key elements of salvation: redemption, forgiveness, because of the "riches" of God's grace "lavished" on us.
- Verses eight through ten: God has revealed the "mystery" of His will. After Jesus was raised from the dead, God used the Apostles to "make known" God's plan that one day in the future all of the earth will be under the authority of Jesus as the King of Kings. It's the culmination of God's plan.
- Notice the words "in Him," "in Christ," and "His will" over and over. Each of those phrases point out the benefits of salvation in Christ.
- From verse three to verse fourteen, let's pick out the things God has done for those who have trusted Jesus as Savior and Lord.  
**What do you see?**
- This passage is all about praising God for the blessings of salvation. We have a term for that: doxology.

- **DOXOLOGY** *“Brief formula for expressing praise or glory to God. Doxologies generally contain two elements, an ascription of praise to God (usually referred to in third person) and an expression of His infinite nature. The term “doxology” (“word of glory”) itself is not found in the Bible, but both the OT and NT contain many doxological passages using this formula.”*<sup>x</sup> This is one of those “doxological passages.”
- Ever miss singing the doxology? Remember the last line? “Praise...[who?]”
- This passage addresses the work of every member of the “Godhead.”
  - The Father chose us as heirs according to His will and by His grace
  - The Son redeemed us [paid the price] by dying on the cross
  - The Spirit “seals” our inheritance forever
- All of this is done to the “praise of His glory.” God’s plan to save sinners was not born out of pity; it is to give Him glory!

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- Followers of Christ should continually praise God because He has chosen us, purchased us, and adopted us as His “beloved” children.
- In twelve verses there are at least ten reasons to continually praise God.

### PAUL’S “TOP TEN” REASONS TO GIVE GOD PRAISE IN EPHESIANS 1:3-14

(From Chuck Swindoll’s “Insights on Ephesians”)

1. He blessed us immensely.
2. He chose us unconditionally.
3. He adopted us adoringly.
4. He redeemed us graciously.
5. He forgave us completely.
6. He showed grace to us lavishly.
7. He revealed His mystery wisely.
8. He granted us an inheritance eternally.
9. He sealed us permanently.

10. He guaranteed our salvation personally.<sup>xi</sup>

- Everyone who has repented of sin and trusted Christ as Savior and Lord has been “blessed” by God “with every spiritual blessing” eternally guaranteed “in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ.”<sup>xii</sup>
- “He did this so we would praise and glorify him.”<sup>xiii</sup>
- The question for us this week: Are we praising Him in proportion to what He has done for us?

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<sup>i</sup> Swindoll, Charles R.. Insights on Galatians, Ephesians (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Book 8) (p. 159). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

<sup>iii</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). Holy Bible: New Living Translation (Eph

<sup>ii</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). Holy Bible: New Living Translation (Eph

<sup>iv</sup> ibid

<sup>v</sup> Strong, J. (2009). [\*A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament and The Hebrew Bible\*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 77). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

<sup>vi</sup> [https://www.preceptaustin.org/accepted\\_in\\_the\\_beloved](https://www.preceptaustin.org/accepted_in_the_beloved)

<sup>vii</sup> <https://www.firstdallas.org/icampus/blog/the-mystery-of-election/>

<sup>viii</sup> Swindoll, Charles R.. Insights on Galatians, Ephesians (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Book 8) (p. 167). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

<sup>ix</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [\*The Bible exposition commentary\*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 11). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>x</sup> Music, D. W. (2003). [\*Doxology\*](#). In C. Brand, C. Draper, A. England, S. Bond, E. R. Clendenen, & T. C. Butler (Eds.), *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (p. 441). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>xi</sup> Swindoll, Charles R.. Insights on Galatians, Ephesians (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Book 8) (p. 172). Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.. Kindle Edition.

<sup>xii</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [\*Holy Bible: New Living Translation\*](#) (Eph 1:3). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>xiii</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [\*Holy Bible: New Living Translation\*](#) (Eph 1:14). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.