

Ephesians 1: 1-14

Author: Paul

Recipients: Church in Ephesus

Location: Western shore of modern day Turkey; Aegean Sea

Key Theme: "The Body of Christ is Blessed"

v. 1-2

Identification and Greeting

- Paul identifies himself as he usually does
- Paul identifies the intended audience (saints in Ephesus)
- "Grace to you and peace..." Paul's typical intro

v. 3

Blessed

- *Eulogetos*: Well spoken of; blessed ⁽¹⁾⁽⁹⁾
- Paul describes God as *blessed*. Paul also describes the church as *blessed*.
- The Blessed One blesses His people.
- Who are His people?

v. 4-6

Chosen and Predestined

- *Eklego*: to select; to choose; to pick up ⁽²⁾⁽¹⁰⁾
- The timing of God's choosing is to said have been done before the foundation of the world. ⁽¹¹⁾
- What were we chosen for?: to be holy (*hagios*) and blameless.
- *Hagios*: sacred; holy. Used to denote "Holy" 92 times. Used as to denote "saints" 59 times. ⁽³⁾
- *Proorizo*: to predetermine; to foreordain ⁽⁴⁾⁽¹²⁾
- To what were we predestined? To become His children via the act of adoption through Christ.
- Why were we predestined? According to the purpose of His will
- What should be the response of our predestination? The praising of His glorious grace through Christ.

- *Charis*: Kindness; Grace ⁽⁵⁾
- We are saved by His kindness. This implies that we do not deserve it.

v. 7-10

Redemption

- *Apolutrosis*: to release on payment of ransom ⁽⁶⁾
- We were released from our sin condition based on the payment of ransom that Jesus paid on the cross.
- "Mystery of His will" This mystery is that Jesus came to save Jews and gentiles alike. ⁽⁷⁾
- This would unite all things. True Israel and the Church are now one body.
- People are no longer separated from God based on ethnicity as they were in the OT.

v. 11-14

Guaranteed Inheritance

- *Kleroo*: To assign by lot; obtained an inheritance ⁽⁷⁾
- "The first to hope" Who were the first to hope? This is referring to the Jews that believed on the name of Jesus. They were the first ones to receive the Gospel.
- Our inheritance, or salvation, is sealed at the moment of true faith. V. 13-14
- The Holy Spirit seals our inheritance.
- The Trinity at work: We were adopted as sons into the family of God by the decree of the Father, Jesus, the Son, paid for the ransom that allows that to happen, and the Holy Spirit seals and guarantees the inheritance of God's people all for the end result of praising His glory.

Summary

Ephesians is a prison epistle written by the Apostle Paul to the saints in Ephesus. He identifies himself and identifies his audience in his intro. Paul begins the meat of the letter with praise to God by calling him *blessed*. He then turns attention to the people being blessed by the Blessed One. How did God bless us? By choosing us before the foundation of the world. He lovingly predestined us to be adopted as His sons through the perfect life and sacrifice of Jesus. This work is salvific in nature.⁽⁸⁾ Why did He do this? Paul says that He did this according to the purpose of His will and His will is for us to glorify Him. Isaiah 43:7 says: “everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.” This is the chief reason that we were created as a species and why we were set apart by the Creator for salvation. Paul goes on to explain that a ransom was paid for our freedom, or redemption, and that ransom was paid in blood. There was a plan set forth in eternity past that God would reveal Himself to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. The OT is the story of God revealing Himself to the Jews all the while promising a Messiah. The NT is the story of how Jesus has torn down the dividing wall and created unto Himself a new body. This new body is not Jews vs. Gentiles. This new body is made up of believing Jews and Gentiles alike! All things have been united in Christ! Because of our adoption as sons into the family of God we have been allotted an inheritance. We are brought into the family of God at the moment of true faith. Paul explains that the Holy Spirit guarantees our inheritance. What is our inheritance? Eternal life with Him. The Father has decreed our election to be His sons, and daughters, Jesus paid the ransom that allows for that, and the Holy Spirit seals us for our inheritance. This means that no one who has been adopted into the family of God is cast out. This also means that no one of true faith leaves God. We have been sealed and kept by the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit.

Small Group Questions

- 1) Who wrote Ephesians? -
 - Paul
- 2) What is the theme of Ephesians?
 - The Body of Christ is Blessed
- 3) Paul says that God has blessed us. How does He bless us?
 - God blesses us in Christ even as He chose us from the foundation of the world. According to the text we were predestined to adoption as sons and daughters.
- 4) How are we to react to being chosen into God's family?
 - With praise and thanksgiving for Him showing us kindness that we do not deserve! That's what grace is; undeserved kindness.
- 5) Does it make you feel grateful that God has brought you into His family? Does it make you feel secure knowing that He doesn't cast His people out once they've been adopted? (Try to get them to share their feelings about it. Maybe start with how you feel.)

Citations

¹ **Blessed**: Strongest concordance, page 1532, reference 2128

² **Chosen**: Strongest concordance, page 1525, reference 1586

³ **Holy**: Strongest concordance, page 1503, reference 40

⁴ **Predestined**: Strongest concordance, page 1561, reference 4309

⁵ **Grace**: Strongest concordance. Page 1577, reference 5485

⁶ **Redemption**: Strongest concordance, Page 1511, reference 629

⁷ **Inheritance**: Strongest concordance, Page 1541, reference 2820

⁸ Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, by Walter Elwell, Page 950

⁹ Word Pictures in the New Testament, by A.T. Robertson, Page 516, #3

¹⁰ Word Pictures in the New Testament, by A.T. Robertson, Page 517, #3

¹¹ Word Pictures in the New Testament, by A.T. Robertson, Page 517, #4

¹² Word Pictures in the New Testament, by A.T. Robertson, Page 517, #5

¹³ Word Pictures in the New Testament, by A.T. Robertson, Page 518, #9