

**THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS**  
**“We Are His Workmanship”**

Date: 4-14-24 Lesson: 2

Pastor David Nehrenz – Trinity Lutheran Church – Norman, OK

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**THE TEXT**

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**(Ephesians 1:1-14)** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by **the will of God,**

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in **Christ Jesus:**

(2) Grace to you and peace from **God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**(v. 1)** (Acts 9:13; 18:19-24; 19:1-35; 20:16,17; 1 Cor 15:32; 16:8; 1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 1:18; 4:12; Rev 1:11; 2:1)

**(v. 2)** (Rom 1:17)

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

**(v. 3)** (Jn 20:17; 2 Cor 1:3; 1 Pet 1:3)

**(v. 4)** (Mt 25:34; Jn 17:24)

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( Rom 8:29-33; 9:6-26; 11:5,7,28; 16:13; Col 3:12)

**(v. 5)** (Lk 12:32; Rom 8:13-15; Col 1:19)

**(v. 6)** (Mt 3:17; 17:5; Mk 1:11; 9:7; 12:6; Lk 3:22; 20:13; Col 1:13; 2 Pet 1:17)

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

(11) **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,** (12) so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

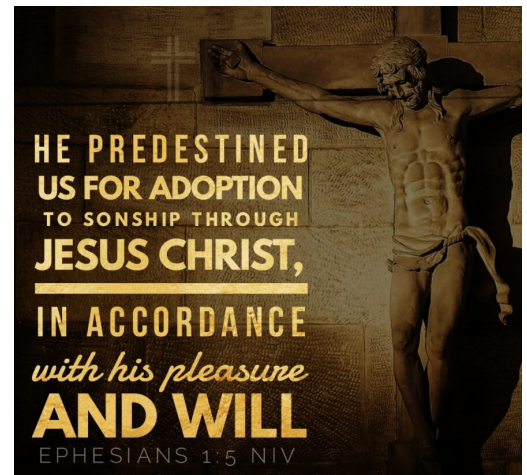
(13) **In him** you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed **in him,** were sealed with **the promised Holy Spirit,** (14) who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to **the praise of his glory.**

**(vv. 7,8)** (Rom 2:4; 3:24; Titus 2:14; Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 1:18,19)

**(vv. 9,10)** (Mk 1:15; Rom 5:6; 11:25; 16:25; Gal 4:4; Col 1:6,20)

**(vv. 11,12)** (Heb 6:17)

**(vv. 13,14)** (Jn 14:16,17; Ac 20:32; Rom 3:24; 16:3; 2 Cor 5:5; Col 1:5)



## **“Blessings in Christ: Past, Present, and Future”**

*(Sermon on Ephesians 1:3-14, by Pr. Charles Henrickson)*

**“Paul takes us from the past, the eternal past, and on into the future,** the eternal future, with stops in between. This is truly the big picture Paul is painting for us here, God’s blessings extending all the way back and then projecting all the forward, encompassing the whole universe—God’s plan for the ages, for all the heavens and earth and everything and everyone in them.

Notice the phrase, **“in Christ.”** Every blessing that we have from God comes to us in connection with Christ. In Christ we have these blessings, whether in the past, the present, or the future.

It says that God chose us in Christ, when? **“Before the foundation of the world.”** Before the foundation of the world! The eternal past. Before God laid the foundation of the world, before the act of creation, God already had in mind to choose you! To choose you for himself, that you would be holy and blameless before him. That you would belong to him. We call this matter of God choosing us the doctrine of “election by grace.” God graciously chose us to be his people long before we did any choosing about it.

And then Paul puts this another way: “In love he predestined us.” **“Predestined.”**

**What this does NOT mean,** though, is that because God chose you and other Christians for salvation, therefore he must have chosen other people to go to hell, like somehow he derives some pleasure from that. That is not what the Bible teaches, by no means. **God wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.** God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the fact remains that people can reject the gospel, say “no thanks” to God’s gift, and thus they remain in their unbelief and are heading to damnation..

**And then God has blessed us in Christ in the historical past,** that is, within human history. The coming of Christ, the eternal Son of God taking on our flesh at a certain point in history. This is the man Jesus of Nazareth going to the cross for our sake, the innocent for the guilty. Jesus is the innocent one, who shed his blood on the cross for us sinners, so that we would have forgiveness and everything that goes with it. This is the atonement, the Son of God dying for all the sinners of the world, taking the punishment we deserve upon himself.

**What is the result for you?** Redemption, forgiveness, grace. Paul pulls out all the stops here, bringing out this incredibly rich vocabulary of our salvation. That means it’s all a free gift, you don’t do anything to deserve it—you can’t—God just is rich and gracious toward us. Think of grace like this: G-R-A-C-E, God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.

**And there is your future.** There is your hope. It is an eternal future, to live forever with Christ and all his saints. It is an open-ended, glorious future—life, eternal life, filled to overflowing with blessings and joy. That is what you have to look forward to. It’s a sure thing. And this hope will carry you through all the difficulties and hardships of this life.

**Blessings in Christ, past, present, and future.** God planned your salvation from eternity past, before the foundation of the world. Christ accomplished your salvation in the historical past, winning your redemption and forgiveness by his blood shed on the cross, purely by his amazing grace. **The Holy Spirit has acted in your personal past, bringing you to faith in Christ, through Word and Sacrament.** And all this gives you strength in the present and a sure hope for the future, an eternal future more glorious than anything you can imagine.”

*<https://steadfastlutherans.org/blog/2015/07/blessings-in-christ-past-present-and-future-sermon-on-ephesians-13-14-by-pr-charles-henrickson/>*

### **THE LIFE APPLICATION**

“He chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”

What effect does this truth have on you?