

**The Epistle to the Ephesians**  
**(Special English Edition)**

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**BLESSED BEYOND MEASURE**

Ephesians 1:3-14

**INTRODUCTION**

In Ephesians 1:1, Paul wrote to the saints at Ephesus as "the faithful in Christ Jesus." This phrase, "in Christ Jesus," is found many times in Ephesians. When we add such phrases about Christ as "in him" and "in whom," the number is more than 100.

Every Christian lives in Christ from the moment he believes and is saved. In Christ is where God sees us and accepts us (Ephesians 1:6). In Christ is where we share all that Christ is and will ever be. In Ephesians 1:3 we saw the phrase "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places." We can also translate this phrase, "in heavenly places," as, "in the heavenlies." "In the heavenlies" is that environment of the walk of the Christian in which God blesses him with "all spiritual blessings" because he is in Christ.

In this lesson, we are going to see and explain seven of these great spiritual blessings. You will realize how wonderful it is to be in Christ. This lesson actually extends from Ephesians 1:3 through Ephesians 1:14. In the English King James Version of the Bible you will see that the whole passage is one sentence. Without doubt, it is the longest, and most glorious sentence in all literature and has the deepest meaning. It is also the most difficult to explain and fully understand.

**IMPORTANCE OF THIS LESSON**

- Nothing is more important to a Christian than to understand what he is and what he has in Christ.
- It is important to understand what God has done for you, and what He is doing for you now and what He will do for you in the future through His marvelous grace.
- In this lesson, we shall see that God chose, predestinated, accepted, redeemed, enlightened, enriched and sealed every believer.

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**THE LESSON**

**I. Ephesians 1:4 – "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"**

After you repent of your sins and receive Christ you are surprised, perhaps shocked, to learn that God knew you and chose you before He made the world. Of course, this raises questions that theologians have been debating for many years. I will try to answer some of these questions and make the idea that God chose us in Christ before He made the world as simple to understand as possible.

A. Here are some of the questions concerning this problem:

1. Q: Does God chose some people to be saved and all the rest of mankind to be lost?  
A: There is no verse in the Bible that says that God chooses anyone to spend eternity in hell.
2. Q: Does God love every human being?  
A: YES! Read 1 John 2:2, 4:10, and John 3:16-17.
3. Q: Did Christ die for every person ever born into this world?  
A: YES! Read 1 John 2:2 and 2 Corinthians 5:14.
4. Q: Does God want every person to become a believer?  
A: YES! Read 1 Timothy 2:4 and Isaiah 45:22.
5. Q: Is every person able to repent and does God want everyone to repent, to turn from sin and receive Christ as Savior?  
A: YES! Read Ezekiel 18:21-23; John 7:37-38; Matthew 11:28; and Revelation 22:17; Acts 17:30.

6. Q: Can sinners oppose the Holy Spirit and refuse the grace of God and call of God?  
A: YES! Read Acts 7:51; John 5:40; and Luke 13:34.

Since every person is able to reject or receive the Gospel of Christ and the begging of the Holy Spirit, what does Paul mean when he writes, "He (God) hath chosen us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world..." (Ephesians 1:4)? The answer, I think, lies in a word that is often overlooked or considered of little importance. It is the word "foreknowledge." Paul wrote in Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate..." In 1 Peter 1:2, Peter wrote, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God...." We must keep in mind that the God we serve, the God of the Bible knows everything. This means that His wisdom and knowledge is without limits. He knows and He has always known all things from eternity. This includes the knowledge of every person who will receive or reject Christ. In other words, God did not have to wait until you received Christ before He took you and welcomed you as one of His own. He knew you before you were born. He knew before He made the world that you would answer the call of the Holy Spirit and receive Christ.

God is never surprised. He knows the end from the beginning. Since God knew you as His child before He made the world, it was no problem for God to choose you as one of the chosen ones. Remember this: God did not make man a machine. Adam and Eve had the power to choose. Cain and Abel had the power to choose. Every person today has the power to choose. We can readily see this in both the Old and New Testaments.

As I understand it, before God made the world, He chose every person that He foreknew would choose Christ. God's foreknowledge removes pride, it makes the problem clear, and gives us an answer.

The following two statements are from great men of God and preachers of the WORD. Some theologians may consider these views as too simple, but consider the sources: Dr. H.A. Ironside, was a greatly beloved Bible teacher. He was one of the best known Bible teachers in America in the first half of the 20th century. D.L. Moody was also one of the greatest evangelists of the 19th century and founded the Moody Bible Institute.

◆ *"The fact that God knows all of mankind does not eliminate personal responsibility. Only after a person repents, turns to Christ, and receives Him as Lord and Savior does 'chosen in Christ' become a reality."* – H.A. Ironside

◆ *"The 'whosoever wills' are the elect and the 'whosoever won'ts' are the non-elect."* – D. L. Moody

B. "That we should be holy and without blame before him in love"

Here we see God's wonderful purpose in choosing us. His purpose is that some day you and I will stand before Him in glory, beloved, holy and without blame. What a remarkable, glorious, and undeserved future!

But how is this possible? We all know that we are unworthy sinners. We were saved completely by His grace. How will we stand as holy, and without blame before a holy God? Here is the answer:

1. Because of the sacrifice of Christ and the cleansing of His Word (Ephesians 5:25-27).
2. Through the righteousness of Christ that God puts on the believer (Romans 3:22-25).
3. Because Christ is our defense lawyer. "If any man sin, we have an advocate" (1 John 2:1-2). As the Sacrifice for our sins, Christ became our place of mercy. He shed His own blood for us and in that way He satisfied all the claims of a Holy God against us.  
(If you have a Scofield Reference Bible, read the footnote under Romans 3:25.)
4. By the continual cleansing of the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7).

## **II. Ephesians 1:5 – "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."**

A. Predestinate simply means "to determine in advance," or to pre-determine.

B. Predestination is broader and it includes more than election. It includes what God determined before for the ungodly (Acts 4:27-28).

C. Predestination is all about future events.

1. We are "predestinated UNTO the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself" (Ephesians 1:5).

2. "Whom he foreknew he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son" (Romans 8:29). This is another glorious expectation!
- D. "Unto the adoption...." What does this mean? In the Greek language, to adopt means "to place a son." You may be asking, "Are we not already children of God by faith in Christ"? Yes we are. Read Galatians 3:26. This is what you must realize and remember:  
We are children of God in two ways:
  1. Through regeneration – "new birth," by which we receive a new nature. This is called "positional sonship" (John 1:12-13,3:3-6).
  2. Through adoption – a divine, legal transaction by which God officially guarantees our full rights and benefits as sons of God and as joint heirs with Christ (Romans 8:15-17).

### **III. Ephesians 1:6 – "To the praise and glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."**

- A. Wonder of Wonders! God approved you and me, by our faith in Christ. He accepted us. He received us and welcomed us. What a blessing!
- B. God did not accept us because of what we are, but because of where we are as believers. We are "in the beloved." God does not see us any more in our dirty rags of sin (Isaiah 64:6). He sees us clothed with Christ and His righteousness. Because of where we are, God says, "Welcome Home" (Romans 3:21-22).

### **IV. Ephesians 1:7 – "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace"**

- ◆ *Never overlook the "in whoms" – they all refer to Christ.*
- ◆ *"Through his blood" – the price Christ paid for our redemption (1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23).*
- A. The basic meaning of redemption is to "buy back" or to "deliver and set free by paying a price."
- B. Before our salvation, God sees us and all of humanity as:
  1. sold under sin and enslaved by it (Romans 6:17, 20, 7:14).
  2. under the Law of Moses and cursed by it (Galatians 3:10, 3:23).
  3. blinded and controlled by Satan (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2).
- C. Because Christ shed His precious blood and had power to redeem us, we are:
  1. set free from the guilt and slavery of sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 6:6; 1 John 1:7).
  2. set free from the law and its curse (Galatians 3:13; Romans 10:4).
  3. delivered from Satan's kingdom, from his power, and from his control (Hebrews 2:14; Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13).
- D. Christ paid to deliver us through his shed blood that was a sacrifice for our sin. (1 Peter 1:18-19).
- E. "the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace"
  1. How wonderful! God included the forgiveness of all our sins in our redemption (Colossians 1:14).
  2. Grace is God's free favor that we do not deserve. It is the overflow of His love for us. Our complete redemption and total forgiveness are according to the riches of His immeasurable grace.

### **V. ENLIGHTENED**

#### **Ephesians 1:8 – "Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence"**

- A. Wherein – refers to God's abundant grace (2 Corinthians 9:8). In this verse the word "prudence" (KJV) means the same as the word "intelligence."
  1. God holds back nothing. God enlightens us and shares His wisdom and intelligence with us plentifully through Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:3,10).
  2. The lowliest saint, who has received Christ and in whom the Holy Spirit lives, has more wisdom regarding spiritual things than any professor in any great university who refuses Christ.

- B. Ephesians 1:9 – "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself."
1. *the mystery of his will* – What is a mystery? We must never think of a mystery in the Scriptures as a secret that we must fear. A mystery simply is a hidden truth. It is a truth God did not reveal to the prophets in the Old Testament. It is a truth God revealed and made clear in the New Testament. The word "mystery" occurs in Ephesians six times, and there are eleven mysteries mentioned in the New Testament. (These mysteries are listed in Matthew 13, Note 2 of the Scofield Reference Bible.)
  2. *his will* – According to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, God is giving us understanding concerning His plans for our future with Him.
- C. Ephesians 1:10 "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him"
1. What is a dispensation? It is sometimes translated as "stewardship" or "order." The original English usage was "economy."
  2. Since Adam and Eve, the world has passed through various dispensations or economies. Immediately before our present dispensation of grace was the dispensation of law. The dispensation of law ended with a shout when Christ cried on the cross, "IT IS FINISHED." We are presently under grace (Romans 6:14). This age of grace will end when Christ returns in glory and power and sets up His kingdom on earth (Matthew 25:31). According to our text that will be the time when the "dispensation of the fullness of times" will be established. This is when every knee will bow, of things in heaven and things in earth; when every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11). This is when Christ will bring all things back unto Himself, whether they are things in Heaven or things on earth (Colossians 1:20). What a time that will be! All the TIMES (dispensations) through which the world has passed will be completed and fulfilled. Jews and Gentiles will be one "in Christ." All the believers in Heaven and on earth will be gathered together.

"Jesus shall reign where 'ere the sun  
Does his successive journeys run,  
His kingdom stretch form shore to shore  
"Til moons shall wax and wane no more."

Think and rejoice in the light God gives to the believer. The humblest believer knows exactly God's purpose and God's will concerning this world. He shows us the mystery of His will in His Word.

## VI. ENRICHED

**Ephesians 1:11 – "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"**

- A. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance. Think of it. It is difficult to grasp such an amazing fact. You and I, as poor unworthy sinners, will surely receive a bountiful and glorious inheritance in the future. We were "begotten unto...an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4). "and if children, then heirs ... heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..." (Romans 8:17).
- Many pages could be filled describing the riches we are to inherit. I will just give a few examples:
1. We will inherit a new body (Philippians 3:21).
  2. We will inherit Christ's likeness (1 John 3:2).
  3. We will share Christ's glory (Romans 8:17-18).
- There are many more, but these should certainly be enough for anyone.
- B. Ephesians 1:12 "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."
1. Predestinated as discussed in Ephesians 1:5, actually means to decide or determine in advance or ahead of time.

2. Here we see that God, according to His own purpose and will, decided that all who have trusted Christ will be to the praise of His glory. Oh how rich we are! We are daily blessed by the "riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7). We will enjoy the exceeding riches of His grace in the ages to come (Ephesians 2:7).

## VII. SEALED

**Ephesians 1:13-14 – "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."**

We now arrive at the seventh spiritual blessing we enjoy, because we are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

- A. Something wonderful happened after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and you placed your trust in Christ. You were sealed with the Holy Spirit. The moment we trust Christ, the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts crying, "Abba Father" (Galatians 4:6), and witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God (Romans 8:16).
- B. The Spirit Himself is actually the seal. He did not seal us with anything or anyone else. The Holy Spirit Himself is the seal and in that way He becomes the "earnest of our inheritance" (Ephesians 1:14). The earnest is the first payment, the assurance, and the guarantee of our inheritance until Christ returns to complete our redemption "to the praise of his glory."

A seal can be a number of things:

1. It speaks of identification. "The Lord knoweth them that are his..." (2 Timothy 2:19).
2. It speaks of preservation. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption..." (Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit is responsible for our survival and arrival in heaven.
3. It speaks of ownership. Jesus said, "I know my sheep and am known of mine..." (John 10:14 and 2 Timothy 2:19).

**Ephesians**  
**Exam—Lesson 3**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Choice – Circle the letter in front of the correct answer. Only one answer is correct unless otherwise stated.

1. An important phrase that occurs many times in the book of Ephesians is: (Value 2 points)
  - a. "Walk with Him."
  - b. "In Christ."
  - c. "In the heavenlies."
  
2. The phrase "in the heavenly places" refers to: (Value 2 points)
  - a. the time when we will be in heaven with the Lord.
  - b. the promises of God to the believer.
  - c. that sphere of Christian experience in which we are all blessed with all spiritual blessings because we are in Christ.
  
3. Two reasons why the study of Ephesians is of such importance are: (**Circle two.**) (Value 6 points)
  - a. It helps the believer to understand what he is and what he has in Christ.
  - b. It helps us to be more spiritual.
  - c. It helps us to know what God has done, is doing and will do for the believer.
  - d. It helps us to know how wonderful it is to be "in Christ."

**(Circle the letter in front of the correct reference for questions 4-7. You may use your Bible)**

4. Does God love all mankind? (Value 2 points)
  - a. John 7:37-38
  - b. Isaiah 45:22
  - c. John 3:16-17
  
5. Did Christ die for all mankind? (Value 2 points)
  - a. 2 Corinthians 5:14
  - b. 1 Timothy 2:4
  - c. Isaiah 45:22
  
6. Does God want all people to be saved? (Value 2 points)
  - a. Revelation 22:17
  - b. 1 Timothy 2:4
  - c. Ezekiel 18:2-3
  
7. Does everyone have the ability and responsibility to receive Christ? (Value 2 points)
  - a. Acts 7:51
  - b. Matthew 11:28
  - c. Luke 13:34

8. The attribute of God that answers the problem and provides an answer to the phrase, "Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world" is: (Value 2 points)
  - a. the omnipotence of God.
  - b. the omnipresence of God.
  - c. the omniscience of God.
  
9. God's purpose in choosing us is that: (Value 2 points)
  - a. we should stand before Him as holy and without blame.
  - b. Satan should never be able to condemn us.
  - c. we might walk in the way of righteousness.
  
10. The meaning of "predestination" is: (Value 2 points)
  - a. that we are adopted into the family of God.
  - b. to determine something beforehand.
  - c. the same as being born again.
  
11. Predestination always looks: (Value 2 points)
  - a. to the past.
  - b. to the present.
  - c. to the future.
  
12. The difference between election and predestination is: (Value 2 points)
  - a. predestination is wider and more inclusive than election.
  - b. election is wider and more inclusive than predestination.
  - c. election includes the idea of adoption.
  
13. The meaning of adoption is: (Value 2 points)
  - a. to be chosen for salvation by God.
  - b. to be placed as a son in God's family.
  - c. to be redeemed by God.
  
14. We are acceptable to God because of: (Value 2 points)
  - a. where we are in Christ.
  - b. what we are.
  - c. what we have done for God.
  
15. The meaning of redemption is: (Value 2 points)
  - a. to take someone into your family.
  - b. to choose someone for salvation.
  - c. to buy back by paying a price.
  
16. The price Christ paid to redeem sinners was: (Value 2 points)
  - a. His prayer for every sinner.
  - b. His shed blood for every sinner.
  - c. His return to heaven to prepare a place for every sinner.
  
17. The forgiveness of sins is according to: (Value 2 points)
  - a. the shedding of His blood.
  - b. the power of Christ.
  - c. the riches of His grace.



26. State the believer's seven spiritual blessings mentioned in Ephesians 1:1-14. (Value 28 points)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_
- f. \_\_\_\_\_
- g. \_\_\_\_\_

**Decision Time**

At the beginning of this lesson I wrote: "Nothing is more important to a Christian than to understand what he is and what he has in Christ."

I am wondering if you can say for sure that you are a Christian. When you stand before God and God asks you the reason why He should allow you into heaven, can you say, "I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and all my sins were forgiven."

If you cannot say this, I want to give you an opportunity right now to accept Christ as your Savior.

You can say something like this to God, (this is no magical formula it is only a suggested wording) "Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner and you died for my sins on the cross. You rose from the dead and are living in heaven right now. I am sorry for my sins and ask you to forgive them. With your help I will turn away from my sin. Today I invite you to become Lord of my life."

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_