

A BLESSED PEOPLE

Ephesians 1:3-14

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Sunday, July 16, 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Comments from scholars on Ephesians

1. **F. F. Bruce**, noted New Testament scholar, calls Ephesians the “quintessence” of Paul’s writings, meaning the most refined and perfect example.
2. **C. H. Dodd** called Ephesians “the crown” of Paul’s epistles.
3. According to **William Hendriksen**, Ephesians has been called “the divinest composition of man,” “the distilled essence of the Christian religion,” “the most authoritative and most consummate compendium of the Christian faith,” “full to the brim with thoughts and doctrines sublime and momentous.”

IMPORTANT FACTS CONCERNING THIS PASSAGE:

- Written while Paul was under house arrest in Rome.
- In the Greek, these twelve verses make up **one long, complex sentence!**
- God’s blessings spoken of here are SPIRITUAL, not financial or material.
- Paul gives us THREE different blessings to behold.

I. THE PAST BLESSING – CHOSEN IN HIM

Paul has now jumped the time/space continuum. He is drawing us to a place that was before the very foundation of the world, to an event that happened within the Godhead, when only the Father, Son and Spirit existed in perfection.

“HE CHOSE US IN HIM” (verse 4).

Friends, Scripture has said this...it is not a doctrine that came from the invention of a man. It came from God Himself.

Commenting on this passage, John Stott describes the kind of thoughts that some have...

“‘Didn’t I choose God’, somebody asks indignantly; to which we must answer, ‘Yes, indeed you did, and freely, but only because in eternity God had first chosen you.’ ‘Didn’t I decide for Christ?’ asks somebody else; to which we must reply ‘Yes, indeed you did, and freely, but only because in eternity God had first decided for you.’”

~ John Stott

Two things we must remember concerning God’s choosing us...

1. These were HIS words. This concept was not the idea of an early church leader. It is the Bible – and we have to reckon with it. Jesus said in John 6:44, **“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws**

him.” Seeing this freshly should produce a thankfulness and humility – as we realize that IT IS GOD THAT CHOSE US!...

2. His choosing us is marked by a call to respond in life by becoming more like Him, “holy and blameless before Him.” This does not mean perfection...but it does mean that our calling by God bears the charge to deny ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow Him. God’s pre-destined call on our lives should lead us to righteousness and gratefulness to God.

II. THE PRESENT BLESSING – ADOPTED AS SONS

“...he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will...”

God chose us before we were born...but once alive, we come to the realization in Him that His love for us was so great that He ADOPTED us as sons and daughters.

Even in Paul’s time, Roman law recognized adopted children, giving them the same rights as naturally born children.

Our being adopted by God is huge.

He could have just spared us hell.

He could have just forgiven us.

He could have just allowed us access to Heaven.

He did all that – and so much more. He adopted us as His own dear children, joint heirs with His Son Jesus.

Paul said in Galatians 2:20:

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

III. THE FUTURE BLESSING – ALL THINGS UNITED IN HIM

Having looked back at eternity past, and to the present in our stated of adoption as sons, Paul now glances forward – to the future when the fullness of time merges into eternity again, and the children of God will receive in full an inheritance that is **sealed by the Holy Spirit!**

An OT type of this blessing...**Mephibosheth.** (2 Sam. 9)

Like Mephibosheth, we are all cripples invited to the table:

- We were loved, and shown kindness apart from any merit.
- David showed extravagant love to Mephibosheth, making his table accessible to Mephibosheth continuously.
- David’s kindness was born out of his love for Jonathan, and his vow to Saul; our invitation is because of the great love God the Father has for His Son.