

"THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS" (# 2)

#2 Blessings Involving The Father (1:4-6)

INTRODUCTION

- A. Theme of the book: "The Believer's Riches In Christ" v.3
- B. Spiritual "possessions" can be outlined as:
 - 1. Blessings involving the Father (1:4-6)
 - 2. Blessings involving the Son (1:7-12)
 - 3. Blessings involving the Holy Spirit (1:13-14)
- C. We will study this section (1:4-14) in three separate lessons
- D. In 1:4-6, we focus on "Blessings Involving The Father"

DISCUSSION:

I. WE ARE CHOSEN (ELECTED) BY GOD (1:4)

- A. "Chosen" - From a Greek word which means "to pick out, choose, to pick or choose out for one's self". It is Related to idea of "election" comes from a word meaning "the act of picking out, choosing"
- B. The "time" of this choice v.4 1Pet 1:19,20; Tit 1:1-3
 - 1. "before foundation (idea of conception) of the world" before creation, God made His "choice" or "election"
 - 2. Christ, was foreordained "before foundation of world"
- C. Who are the "objects" of this choice v.4
 - 1. Calvinist believes certain, select individuals have been chosen and it is dependent solely upon God's will, without any foreknowledge of good or evil on the part of those selected. It is unconditional and final, no possibility of apostasy. Arminian believes only certain select individuals have been chosen, based upon foreknowledge of those who would respond to the gospel and persevere in the faith. It is unconditional and final, in the sense that God already knows those who will persevere to the end
 - 2. Paul says simply "...chosen us in Him (Christ)",
 - a. General, not particular; corporate, not individual
 - b. The church as a whole, which God chose for His divine purposes He planned to carry out in Christ
 - c. In "corporate" sense this is unconditional and final. But, "individuals" must be "diligent to make calling and election sure" - 2Pet 1:10
 - d. Israel (as a nation) had been chosen by God to receive His blessings, but individually, they also had to "make their calling and election sure"
- D. The "purpose" of this choice v.4
 - 1. Be holy and without blame before Him in love"
 - 2. To produce a people in Christ Jesus who would be:
 - a. "holy" - set apart for a special purpose
 - b. "without blame" - free from condemnation
 - c. walk before God in "sphere" of love Eph 5:1-2
- E. In Christ, we are God's "chosen" people 1Pet 2:9

II. WE ARE PREDESTINED BY GOD (1:5-6a)

- A. Term "predestined" Means "to predetermine, decide beforehand".
- B. Who are the subjects of God's "predestination"?
 - 1. Paul simply says "us"
 - 2. As with election, Paul speaking of the whole church
 - 3. "The whole line of argument is general instead of particular." (The People's N. T. by B. W. Johnson)
- C. Purpose of "predestination" "adoption as sons" (nkjv) Note Gal 4:5,6
 - 1. Adoption describes acceptance into God's family.
 - 2. Many words describe our relationship: "temple of God"; "family of God"; "bride of Christ"; "vineyard of the Lord"; "church of the firstborn" etc. Each one describes some aspect of this "new creation".
 - 3. "Adoption seems to stress privileges in God's family undeserved, (child adopted, legally bestowing on the child all rights and privileges of the family with no regard to any merit of the child. 1Jhn 3:1,2
 - 4. Also suggests child being different kind, (different family). Even though we are God's creation, we became child of Devil because we sinned Rom 3:23
 - 5. So, Paul reveals that which was predetermined was all those who are saved would be "adopted" into God's family
- D. Basis for accomplishing God's "predestination"
 - 1. "according to the good pleasure of His will" 1:9; Heb 13:20,21; Matt 7:21
 - 2. His will made salvation possible through obedience Heb 5:8,9

III. ACCEPTED BY GOD (1:6b)

- A. Term "accepted" means:
 - 1. To be highly favored; endue with special honor; honor with blessings
 - 2. Used in Lk 1:28 about Mary ("highly favored one")
 - 3. Those in Christ are "highly favored" in God's sight!
- B. Basis upon which we are "accepted"
 - 1. "in the Beloved" (Jesus Christ) Gal 3:26,27
 - 2. Therefore it is by our being "in" Christ that we are privileged to be "highly favored" by God, and showered with wonderful blessings!

CONCLUSION

- A. And what should our reaction be?
 - 1. To praise God for His glorious grace! Eph 1:6
 - 2. Offering such praise is a form of "spiritual sacrifice" by which we can say "thank you!" Heb 13:15
- B. How can God afford to be so gracious to those who are sinners? Our next lesson will examine how in detail, but notice Eph 1:7
 - 1. Are you "in Christ"? Not unless redeemed by His blood, thereby receiving forgiveness of sins?
 - 2. To learn how, all we need do is read Acts 2:36-41...

(from Mark Copeland's outlines revised by jlh)