

Our Wealth in Christ (Part 1)

Text: Ephesians 1:4-7

Introduction:

1. Outline of the Book:
 - Our Wealth in Christ (Chp. 1-3)
 - Our Walk with Christ (Chp. 4-6:9)
 - Our Warfare for Christ (Chp. 6:9-24)
2. Verse 3-14 are all one sentence in the Greek text indicating that they are one unit of thought. They reveal the many facets of our salvation. It is like picking up a beautiful jewel, holding it to the light and looking at it from different angles, and enjoying its various sparkles and flashes of color. In these verses we have the golden chain that links our salvation with eternity past and eternity future. The whole truth is immense and beyond our comprehension. Little did we know in that moment when we believed, that we had been swept into the eternal plan of God.)
3. The Three Persons of the Godhead are seen in these verses, each performing a role in my salvation.
 - Blessings from God the Father (Vs. 3-6)
 - Blessings from God the Son (Vs. 7-12)
 - Blessings from God the Spirit (Vs. 13-14)
4. For our outline, we will study 4 key words in the verses before us today.

I. CHOSEN (VS. 4)

A. The Person in whom we are Chosen (Vs. 4a)

1. What Election does **not** mean:
 - a. Election does not mean God does not desire all men to be saved.
 - i. 1 Tim. 2:4 “Who will have **all men to be saved**, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”
 - ii. 2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, **not willing that any should perish**, but that all should come to repentance.”
 - b. Election does not mean man does not have a genuine choice to receive God’s offer of salvation:
 - i. John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that **whosoever** believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
 - ii. Rom. 10:13 “For **whosoever** shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
 - iii. Rev. 22:17 “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever** will, let him take the water of life freely.”
 - c. Election does not mean Christ only died for the elect and not the whole world:

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- i. 1 Tim. 2:6 “Who gave himself a **ransom for all**, to be testified in due time.”
 - ii. Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death **for every man**.”
 - iii. 1 John 2:2 “And he is the propitiation for our sins: **and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world**.”
2. What Election **does** mean
- a. Election means we are chosen in accordance with God’s attribute of foreknowledge – 1 Peter 1:2 “**Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father**, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.” The word foreknowledge comes from the Greek word προγνωσις (prognosis) which means “to foreknow, to know before.”
 - i. Vine notes, “God’s foreknowledge involves His electing grace, but this does not preclude human will. He foreknows the exercise of faith which brings salvation.”
 - ii. In relation to my own salvation, I am at rest in this truth, namely, that before the foundations of the world were laid, God the Father, looking down through the ages to come, saw me as a five year old boy under conviction of the Holy Ghost, repenting of my sin and receiving by faith the Son of God as my personal Saviour. On the basis of His foreknowledge, His justice, His mercy, His love, His holiness, and every other divine attribute, God chose me and made some plans concerning my life in time and in eternity.
 - iii. Part of our problem in understanding this truth is the fact that we are finite and God is infinite. We are time bound creatures but God inhabits eternity. “Since God lives in the present tense, there is to Him no time difference between the moment He chose me and the moment I chose Him.” (Phillips)
 - b. Election means we are chosen in Christ – “in him”. This is key to understanding our election. Christ is the chosen One of the Father and because we are in Christ as believers, we are also His chosen ones.
3. Illustration by Harry Ironside – Imagine the door of salvation, the entrance into the narrow way that leads to life eternal. On it is plainly depicted the text, “Whosoever will, let him come.” Every man is invited, no one need hesitate. God’s invitation is absolutely sincere. For those who enter that door, they find written on the inside of the door the words, “Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.”

B. The Period when we were Chosen (Vs. 4b)

1. “before the foundation of the world” = salvation finds its source in the heart of the eternal God in eternity past. This is impossible for

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us to fully comprehend as finite, time bound creatures. But it means that in eternity past, God foreknew that I would respond to the call of the Gospel and chose me on that basis. These words breath with the truth of the believer's eternal security. If I am truly saved, it is impossible for me to lose that.

2. Jesus Christ is described as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8)

C. The Purpose why we were Chosen (Vs. 4c)

1. "that we should be" = we are chosen to a blessed position in Christ. Election and Predestination primarily have in view my privileged position in Christ after salvation.
2. 'holy' = set apart (same root word as 'saints' in Vs. 1). We are separated unto God. "Thus, we are in our character as Christians, a separated people, separated from evil and dedicated to the worship and service of God."
3. "without blame" = the word means to be without defect or blemish. The same word is translated "without blemish" (Eph. 5:27; 1 Peter 1:19); 'unblameable' (Col. 1:22); "without spot" (Heb. 9:14); 'faultless' (Jude 1:24); "without fault" (Rev. 14:5). In Christ, so far as my position before God is concerned, I am without spot or blemish, clothed in the perfect garments of His pure righteousness. This standing will be fully realized when I am glorified with a new body.
4. "in love" = God's choice was made out of His love.

II. PREDESTINATED (VS. 5-6A)

A. The Position of our Predestination (Vs. 5a)

1. "predestinate" = means "to mark out the boundary or limits of any place or thing. When used of persons it means to determine his destiny." (Wuest). It means "to appoint beforehand" (A.T. Robertson), "to predetermine" (Wuest). The word refers primarily to what God does for saved people and it has to do with our predestination to a special position of blessing in Christ. It is not God from eternity saying, "This man goes to heaven and this man to hell."
 - a. John Phillips writes, "This word is not used in connection with the lost. God does not predestinate certain people to go to hell and others to go to heaven. The concept of predestination is reserved in Scripture for those who are in God's family."
 - b. Harry Ironside adds, "There is no such thing taught in the Word of God as predestination to eternal condemnation. If men are lost, they are lost because they do not come to Christ. When men do come to Christ, they learn the wonderful secret that God has foreknown it all from eternity, and that He had settled it before the world came into existence that they were to share the glory of His Son throughout endless ages. D. L. Moody used to say in his quaint way, when people talked about the subject of election, — 'the whosoever wills are the elect, and the whosoever wont's are the non-elect.' And so, you can settle it for yourself whether you will be among the elect of God or not."
2. 'unto' = with a view to, indicates the purpose of our predestination.

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3. “adoption of children” = the word is made up of “to place” and “an adult son”. Thus, the word refers to the act of God placing these selected ones as adult sons.
 - a. The word literally means the full placing as sons (Ironside). In the N.T. adoption “means placing a believer in the family of God as a mature, adult son with all the privileges and responsibilities of sonship (Gal. 4:4-7).” (Macdonald)
 - b. Historical background as explained by Harry Ironside: “In the day when our Bible was written a man might have a number of wives and some who were really his slaves. He would have to select those children among whom he wished to divide his estate...He would take those whom he selected down to the forum (public square), and there confess them openly before the proper authority as his sons and then go through a ceremony of adoption. From that day on they were recognized as his heirs. We have been born into the family of God by regeneration and thus made children of God. We have received the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption, and God has marked us out as those who will share everything with the Son for all eternity. We are adopted sons and born-again children.”
 - c. Illustration: A business sign that reads Henry Brown and Sons. It implies Henry Brown’s sons are partners in their father’s business with positions of responsibility and privilege.
 - d. Through salvation we enter into the privileged standing of our adoption now but there is also a future aspect of our adoption when we will receive a resurrection body. Romans 8:23 “And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting for the adoption, to wit**, the redemption of our body.”

B. The Person of our Predestination (Vs. 5b)

1. “by Jesus Christ” = Christ is the channel, the agent through whom we are brought to this standing of mature sons and daughters before the Father.
2. Again, we see the truth of the mediatorial ministry of the Son of God (1 Tim. 2:5). Christ is everything and everything is in Christ for the believer.

C. The Purpose of our Predestination (Vs. 5c-6a)

There are two Divine purposes behind this truth of the believer’s predestination both introduced by the preposition ‘to’:

1. For the Pleasure of God (Vs. 5c)
 - a. “to himself” = for Himself, for His own satisfaction. What blessed words! God is the focus and the grand purpose of it all. The desire in the heart of the eternal God is that I might be for Him, that I might be His.
 - b. “the good pleasure of His will” = this answers the question, “Why did God do it?” “The word “good pleasure” means “because it pleased him.” The word ‘will’ means a desire which proceeds from one’s heart or emotions.” (Wuest)

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- c. John Bunyan: "Oh, this Lamb of God! He had a whole heaven to himself, myriads of angels to do His bidding, but these could not satisfy Him. He must have sinners to share it with Him."
2. For the Praise of God (Vs. 6a)
 - a. "to the praise" = God is working for His own glory, that He might be praised and magnified for His glorious grace.
 - b. "of the glory" = glory is an attribute of grace. In the New Testament, 'glory' has the idea of the reflection of the essence of one's being, the summation of all of one's attributes. In reference to God it refers to His splendour, power and radiance."
 - c. Challenge: How often do we praise God for His saving grace?

III. ACCEPTED (VS. 6)

There are two points in relation to our acceptance. We are...

A. Accepted in God's Grace – "wherein"

1. The word 'wherein' means "in which" and refers to the previous word 'grace'. We are only accepted on the basis of God's grace and never on the basis of our own works. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone.
2. 'accepted' = also comes from the root word 'grace' (charis). "The word means to bestow with grace, to begrace with grace and refers to an abundant demonstration of grace." (Hoehner) The same word is translated "highly favoured" in Luke 1:28 (Gabriel's words to Mary).

B. Accepted in God's Son – "in the beloved"

1. Jesus Christ is the Beloved One of the Father.
 - a. Mark 1:11 "And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my **beloved** Son, in whom I am well pleased."
 - b. John 17:24 "...for thou **lovedst me** before the foundation of the world."
 - c. Jesus could say concerning His relationship to the Father, "...I do always those things that please him." (John 8:29)
 - d. Col. 1:13 "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his **dear Son**:" (lit. the Son of His love)
2. Because as a believer I am in "the beloved" that means I am also the object of the Father's eternal love. "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, **and has loved them, as thou hast loved me.**"
3. The world by and large works on the principle of conditional acceptance. As long as you perform to a certain standard the world will accept you among its company. God's acceptance of the believer is on the basis of his relationship in Christ, the King's Son.

IV. REDEEMED (VS. 7)

With the mention of Christ in Verse 6 ('beloved'), the focus now turns to the second Person of the Trinity, God the Son. Observe three truths concerning our redemption:

A. The Picture of our Redemption (Vs. 7a)

1. "we have" = present tense. "This redemption is an abiding fact from the past, through the present, and into the future. The fact of redemption is always a present reality with the believing Christian." (Wuest)
2. 'redemption' = the word is made up of 'apo' (away from) and 'lutrosis' (to be free, loosed). So, it literally means "to be loosed away" from something. We have been loosed away (set free) from sin, condemnation and the law's curse. (Ironside) It means "to redeem one by paying the price, a releasing effected by payment of ransom." (Wuest) It means "to purchase and set free by paying a price." (Wiersbe)
3. Webster defines the word as follows – "To purchase back; to ransom; to liberate or rescue from captivity or bondage, or from any obligation or liability to suffer or to be forfeited, by paying an equivalent; as, to *redeem* prisoners or captured goods; to *redeem* a pledge."

B. The Price of our Redemption (Vs. 7b)

1. "through his blood" = the price that was paid for our salvation. Salvation is free but it is not cheap. We are bought with a price (1 Cor. 6:19-20).
2. The blood speaks of atonement – it is more than just death that is in view here. It is sacrificial death that involves the shedding of blood as the payment for sin. The blood of bulls and goats provided a temporary covering for sin but could never wash away sin (Heb. 10:4). Christ's blood provided a perfect and eternal covering for our sin.
 - a. We are purchased by the blood (Acts 20:28)
 - b. We are justified by the blood (Rom 5:9)
 - c. We are redeemed & forgiven by the blood (Eph 1:7, Col 1:14)
 - d. We are cleansed by the blood (Rev. 1:5; 7:14)
 - e. We have peace by the blood (Col 1:20)
3. The blood speaks of life – Lev. 17:11 "For the **life** of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: **for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.**" Don't you see? Christ gave His life for you that you might live.

C. The Power of our Redemption (Vs. 7c)

1. 'forgiveness' = means to send or carry away. "In classical literature the word was used to describe the cancellation or release from a legal charge, financial obligation, or punishment. The basis meaning is 'release'. In the New Testament it refers to the permanent cancellation of or release from the punishment for sin because it has been paid for by Christ's sacrifice." (Hoehner)
Forgiveness is the fruit/result of our redemption. We can be forgiven because the price of our sin was paid when Christ's blood was shed

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on Calvary. God's forgiveness was so complete, we stand before His throne as clear as if we had never committed a sin.

a. Illustration: The scape goat (goat of departure) in the O.T.

Leviticus 16:21-22 *"And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and **confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities** unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."*

b. "As far as the east is from the west, **so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**" Psalm 103:12

c. John 1:29 "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which **taketh away** the sin of the world."

2. "riches of his grace" = the measure of our forgiveness. "The degree of this forgiveness was controlled, dominated by the riches, wealth, abundance, plenitude of God's grace." (Wuest) "If we can measure the riches of God's grace, then we can measure how fully He has forgiven us. His grace is infinite! So is His forgiveness!" (Macdonald)
Can you estimate the riches of God's grace?

Conclusion:

1. Have you received God's gift of grace?
2. Are you saved? If so, are you praising God for His grace? Are you living a holy life consistent with your new position in Christ?
3. Where are you getting your sense of worth and acceptance from? Does it come from your position in Christ or are you seeking it from men?